



Build Your Own Grain Mill

by **Graham Sanders**

If any brewer in Australia want to get into grains of any kind, one of the biggest problems they will come across is how to crack the grain. This can be one of the biggest stumbling blocks to getting into all-grain brewing.

Many home brew shops will have grain cracked for you, or will crack it for you, But there is a big cost in this. Firstly if you buy the pre-cracked grain in packets at the shop, it will not be fresh. It would have stood on the shelf for a while and all those wonderful flavours will be lost, as well as loss of other factors like enzyme strength. Also shops tends to put huge mark-ups on the price of cracked grain. This of course is to be expected, after all they are in business. Unfortunately, some shops mark up the price 10-fold, which is unacceptable. So if you can get a mill, you can save money immediately, by first buying in bulk, which is very cheap, and also by not having to pay the shop to crush it. And the uncracked grain seals in all the flavours. Grains like this will last years and still be fresh when you crack them. So when you crack them, all the flavour is there. But getting a mill in Australia is near impossible.

Ideally, you need a roller mill, and you can only get commercial versions from America. Now there will be no change out of \$300.00 (or more) obviously a big expense. I have attached photos of my mill - you can click on the images to get a larger picture. This is a home made job, solid stainless steel rollers, running on bearings and cost \$120.00 to make. It is stronger than anything you will buy and cracks easily a kilo of grain a minute. The \$120.00 dollars expense I recovered after 5 brews, with the savings I had made on grain purchases.



Adjustable Roller Mill

There is nothing stopping you making an adjustable roller mill. I personally would not bother. Everyone I have talked to who has one never moves it once they are happy with their setting.

Still you may want that option. Here is one I made for a friend.



Its basically the same design as my none adjustable model, running on bearings and solid stainless steel rollers. The metal frame sticking out the side has one of the rollers bedded in it, and that is how you adjust the gap.

Looking down you can see it is of solid construction. Also note the cheap feeder for the grain. Holds more than enough for most CraftBrewers.

You will see strong springs on the inside of the metal plate. This ensures the setting is permanent and wont move. You adjust the gap with a spanner on the two bolts on the outside.

The metal plate on the inside is where the adjusting bolts screw into. The felt is used to stop dust clogging up the slide mechanism. If you look carefully you can see I have reset the metal slide into the wood frame.

The bearings the rollers turn on are set in the metal frame. This set up does require a lot of patience to make, plus good woodworking and metal skills. But the results are an adjustable mill that is far stronger than anything you can buy.

If you are unsure on making one, hire someone to make the parts then just put it together.



Consider building one yourself!

Shout!

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