

The Bodum Caffettiera French Press

1.0 Introduction

The Caffettiera French Press (shown in Figure 1) is one of Bodum's many models of manual coffee makers. Coming in multiple variations, this one is the green, 12-ounce, glass version, standing at approximately 19 cm tall with a diameter of 7 cm. In general, a French press brews coffee by allowing ground coffee beans to steep in hot water and then filtering out these grounds to produce hot coffee. A beaker, base, handle, plunger, filter, and lid all combine to make the French press (as shown in Figure 2).



Figure 1: The Bodum Caffettiera French Press.

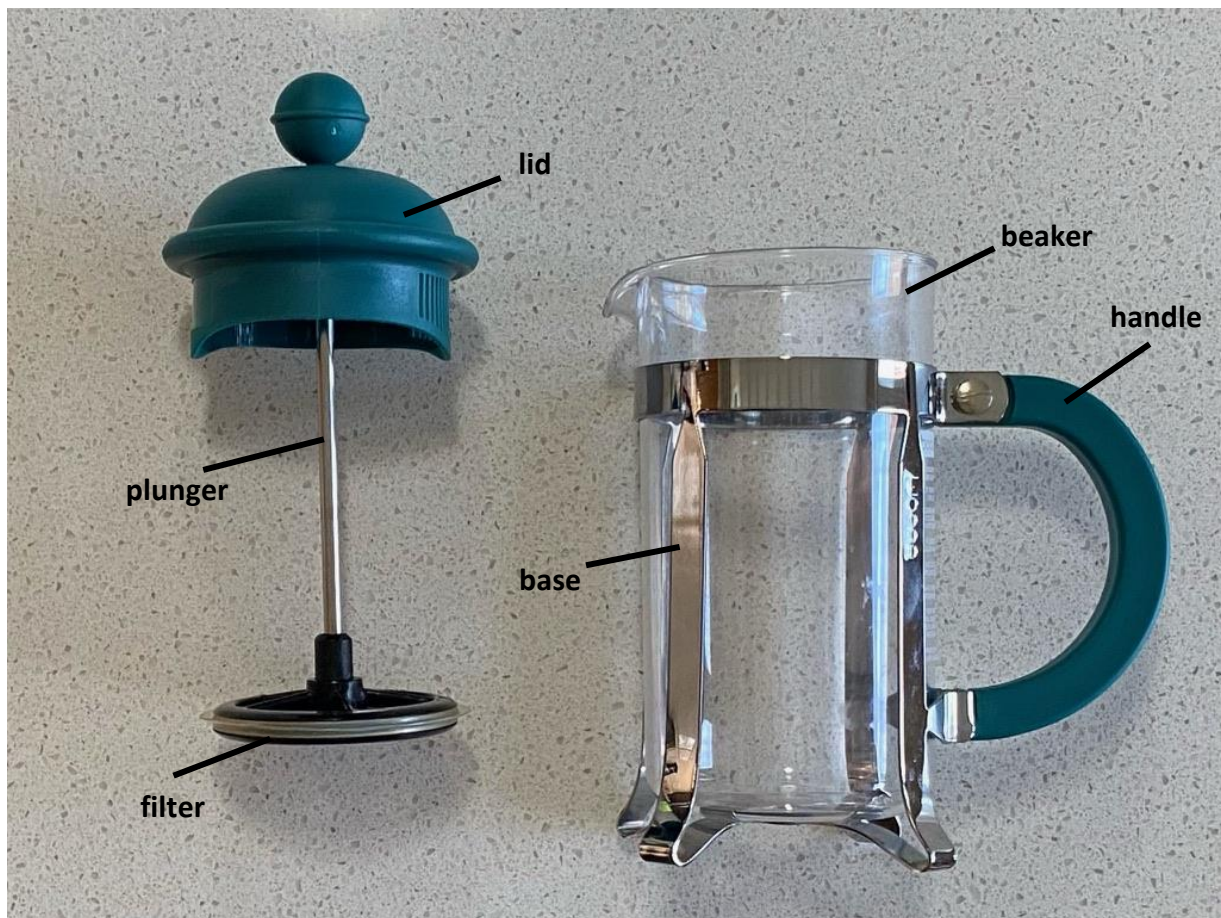


Figure 2: Parts of the Bodum Caffettiera French Press, labeled.

2.0 Parts

2.1 Beaker

The beaker (shown in Figure 3) is the cylindrical vessel that holds the coffee (initially ground coffee beans and hot water). Made of heatproof glass, which has an approximate thickness of 2 mm, it can withstand high temperatures of liquid without shattering, which is important when brewing hot coffee. With a diameter of 7 cm and a height of 13 cm, it can perfectly hold its 12-ounce capacity of liquid. At the top, the beaker smooths out to avoid sharp edges and includes a small spout with an approximate width of 2 cm (as shown in Figures 4 and 5) to make pouring easier. A warning label (shown in Figure 6) is also printed directly onto the side of the beaker in white – in English and French – to provide the user with reminders and general brewing tips. The bottom of the beaker also has a warning etched into the glass stating that the glass is not safe for stovetop use. Finally, the metal base surrounds this beaker.



Figure 3: Beaker, labeled.



Figure 4: Aerial view of beaker, showing spout from top.



Figure 5: View of spout from side.



Figure 6: Warning label.

2.2 Base

The base (shown in Figure 7) provides the beaker with a foundation and protects countertops from the heat coming from the beaker by raising it up by 1 cm. It consists of four main segments, which each flare out by 1 cm into “feet” to give the French press some more width at the bottom for extra sturdiness. Also, a band around its circumference holds everything together. The base is not directly attached to the beaker (with glue, screws, or any other means), but is perfectly snug around the glass, making the beaker fixed within the base. Each segment and the band are approximately 1 cm wide and 1 mm thick. Made with a shiny metal, it can handle higher temperatures that radiate from the glass. However, this metal is not rust resistant, shown by the way the section under the beaker – which is hard to air out or dry – has begun to rust. This metal is one continuous piece with only a few breaks. First, the metal must crisscross (as shown in Figure 8) to create the stand portion of the base. This cross shape is made by overlaying opposite pieces which are welded on top of one another. Then, where the base transitions into the handle (as shown in Figure 9), it splits to provide an opening for the handle to attach. Lastly, just for design purposes, the Bodum logo is etched into the base by the handle.

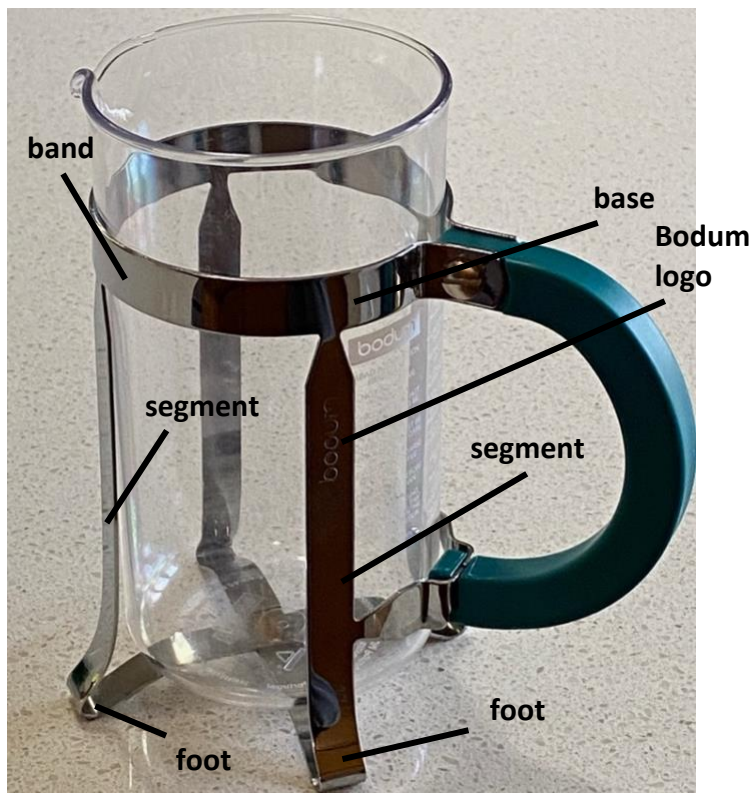


Figure 7: Base, labeled.

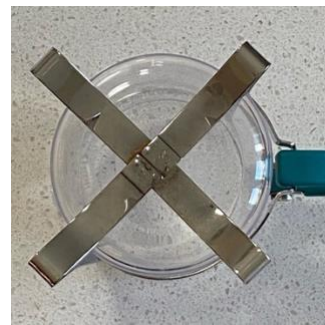


Figure 8: Bottom view of base.



Figure 9: Close up of attachments to handle.

2.3 Handle

The handle (shown in Figure 10) provides an easy way for the user to pick up the French press without getting burned. Made of a heat resistant, green plastic, it attaches to the base at the top with a 0.75-cm-diameter bolt, and at the bottom it is held just because of its geometry. Due to the way the metal base and the handle are cut and shaped, they fit perfectly together without any reinforcement needed besides the bolt (as shown in Figures 11-14). The handle has a uniform width of 1 cm by 1 cm, which makes it sturdy enough to grab without being too bulky. The gap between the handle and beaker has a height of 6.5 cm and width of 4.5 cm, making it easy to hold. Especially impressive for a French press on the smaller side, it can easily fit three or four fingers for a comfortable grip.

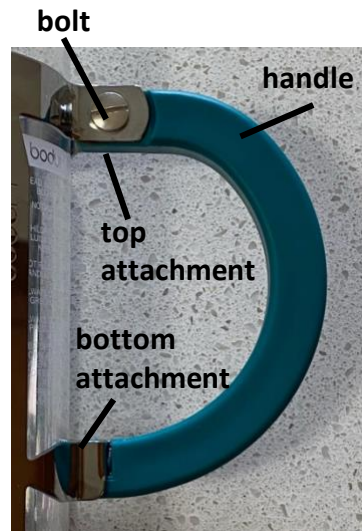


Figure 10: Handle, labeled.

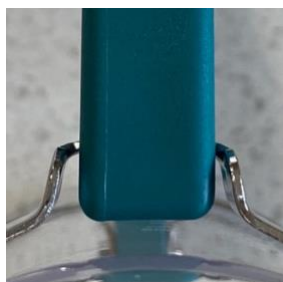


Figure 11: Bottom view of bottom attachment to handle.



Figure 12: Top view of bottom attachment to handle.



Figure 13: Bottom view of top attachment to handle.

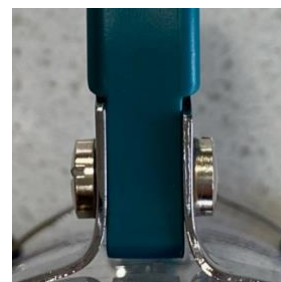


Figure 14: Top view of top attachment to handle.

2.4 Plunger

The plunger (Figure 15) stabilizes and controls the filter's position, and it threads through the lid which holds it in place. The plunger itself is a very simple piece, and its usefulness comes in combination with other parts. Alone, the plunger is just a 13-cm-long metal rod with a spherical knob. The rod portion is just a smooth heatproof and food safe metal, and features a screw-like, threaded bottom so that the filter can easily be attached and removed. It has an approximate diameter of 4 mm, adding to its sturdiness at high temperatures. Then, the knob is permanently attached at the top. It is made of the same heatproof, green plastic as the handle, so that the user can safely hold it without getting burned. With a diameter of around 2.5 cm (around the size of a large marble), the user can comfortably hold it. The knob also has a 2 mm ridge around its circumference so that it can be grabbed and moved up and down with ease.

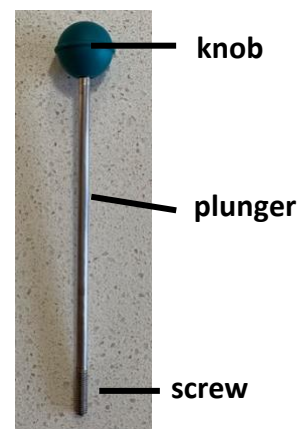


Figure 15: Plunger, labeled.

2.5 Filter

The filter (Figure 16) is arguably the most important part of the French press. It is the part that separates the not-so-pleasant mixture of coffee grounds and liquid, producing coffee and conveniently leaving the grounds behind. Unlike many French press filters, this one cannot be taken apart into layers. Instead, it combines the layers into one cohesive piece. A wheel-shaped piece sandwiches in the mesh, and the scraper wraps around it. This whole piece has a bolt apparatus in the center, so that it can easily be screwed on to the plunger. All of these parts are heatproof and food safe.

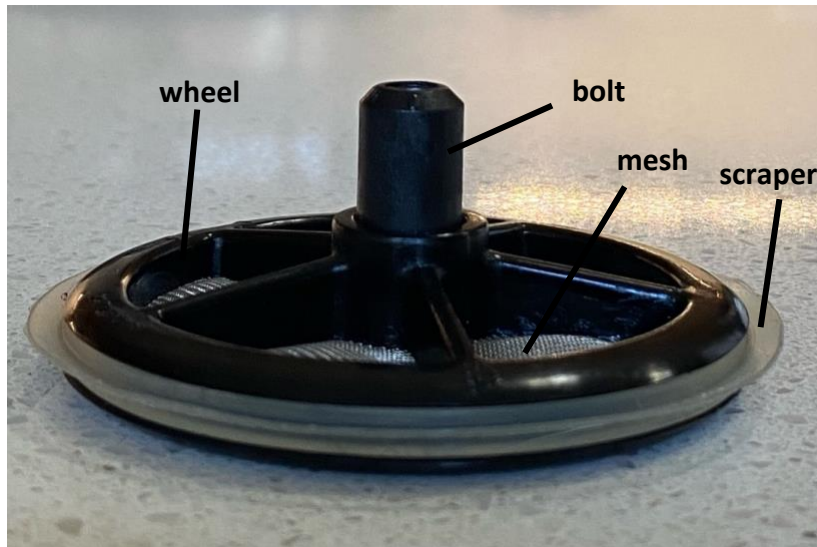


Figure 16: Filter parts, labeled.

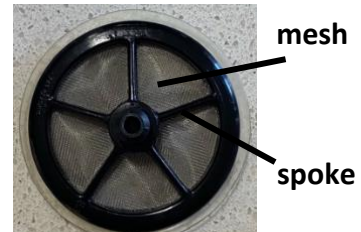


Figure 17: Top view, labeled.

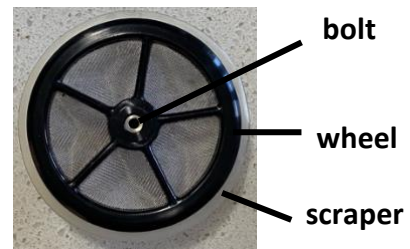


Figure 18: Bottom view, labeled.

The wheel-shaped piece (which can be more easily seen in Figures 17 and 18) is what stabilizes the flexible parts of the filter, like the flimsy fine mesh and the bendy silicone scraper. Its plastic material ensures it is sturdy enough to do so. With a diameter of 6 cm, it can easily fit inside of the 7-cm-wide beaker with a good 0.5 cm around its circumference to spare for the scraper. The wheel also has five “spokes” with gaps in the middle, which sandwich together the mesh. It also has a groove around its circumference which gives the scraper a perfect place to sit.

The ultrafine metal mesh has the most important task: letting brewed coffee pass through without letting grounds escape to the other side. As mentioned before, the wheel holds it in place so that it cannot bend around, due to its extreme fineness.

Another crucial part of the filter, the scraper, creates a seal around the wheel so that no rogue coffee grounds can escape around the perimeter. As a very thin (less than 1 mm), clear silicone piece, it does this job very well. Its thinness gives it enough flexibility to allow the filter to slide inside of the beaker without suctioning to the glass, but its material ensures that it is still sturdy enough to fit snugly. It also helps that the scraper makes the total diameter of the wheel just slightly bigger than 7 cm, which adds to the reliability of the fit.

Finally, at the center of the filter, the bolt apparatus provides a point of attachment for the plunger to screw into. With a metal interior, a plastic exterior, and a reasonable height of around 2 cm, it can sturdily fit onto the plunger, making sure that the filter is not wobbly.

2.6 Lid

The lid (Figures 19-23) traps in heat while the coffee is brewing, while also stabilizing the plunger in the center of the beaker. Made of the same green, heatproof plastic, the lid has an interesting shape that adds to its functionality. First, it has an inner piece with a diameter of 6 cm that goes around 4 cm down on the inside of the beaker. This creates an extra precaution against spilling, while not fitting so tightly that it is difficult to remove from the beaker when hot. One side of this inner piece is solid (for a closed position, as shown in Figure 22) while the other side has 1 mm wide slats (for an open position that allows coffee to get through, as shown in Figure 23). Then it has an extra 1 cm thick ridge that gives the lid a total diameter of 8 cm. This ridge provides the perfect width for the lid to sit comfortably on top of the beaker. Then, in the center of the dome-shaped lid, a hole just over 4 mm lets the plunger slide through, while still holding it perfectly in the center.

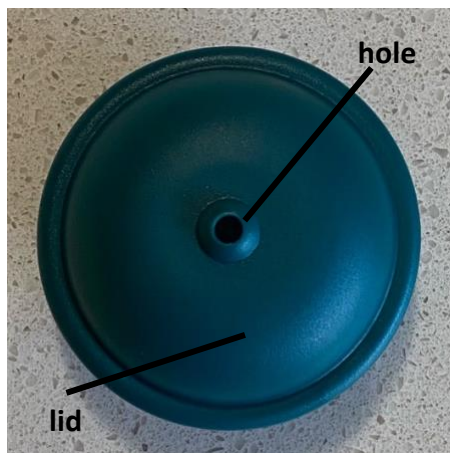


Figure 19: Top view of lid, labeled.

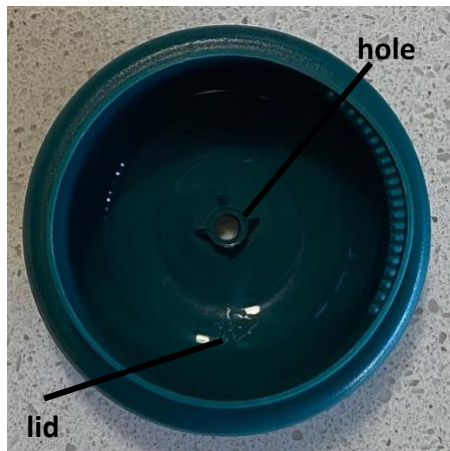


Figure 20: Top view of lid, labeled.

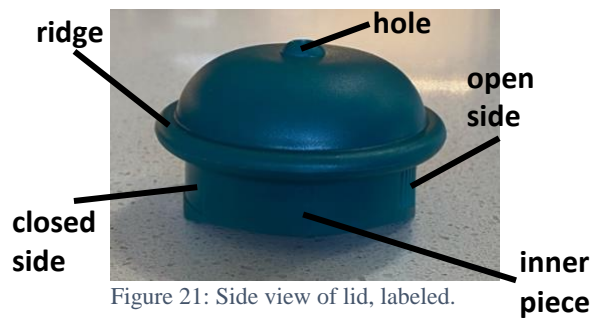


Figure 21: Side view of lid, labeled.



Figure 22: Closed side of lid.



Figure 23: Open side of lid.

3.0 User Guide

3.1 Ingredients and Extra Materials

- 3-4 tablespoons of coarsely ground coffee beans
- 12 ounces of hot water, around 195°F (which can be achieved by bringing water to a boil and letting it cool for a minute)
- spoon
- mug or another heatproof container

3.2 Brewing Instructions



1. Add coffee grounds to the beaker.



2. Add just enough hot water to cover the grounds, around a centimeter above the original level of the beans.



3. Use the spoon to stir the grounds and water.



4. Let this mixture sit for 30-45 seconds.



5. Add the remaining water (should go to the top of the beaker near the top metal band).



6. With the plunger pulled all the way up, place the lid onto the French press with the closed side towards the spout. The filter should be at the very top of the beaker, near the top metal band.



7. Let sit for four minutes.



8. Gently press down the plunger until the filter is at the bottom of the beaker.



9. Rotate the lid so that the open side is facing the spout.



10. Pour coffee into your mug or container immediately.

3.3 Cleaning

There are a couple of different ways you can clean the French press. After you take apart the French press, you can do either depending on your preference. First, since the parts are dishwasher safe, you can simply put each part through a dishwasher cycle. Alternatively, you can handwash each part. Either way, make sure to let the French press dry as thoroughly as possible before you reassemble and store.

4.0 Conclusion

The Bodum Caffettiera French Press is a great tool for brewing a small amount of good hot coffee. However, it can also do so much more. Like other French presses on the market, it can work for alternate uses like brewing loose-leaf tea, making cold brew, and even frothing milk (briefly shown in Figures 24-26, respectively).



Figure 24: Brewing loose-leaf tea. By adding tea leaves to the beaker with hot water, leaving to steep, and then pushing down the plunger to strain the leaves out, a user of a French press can make hot tea without a tea infuser/strainer.

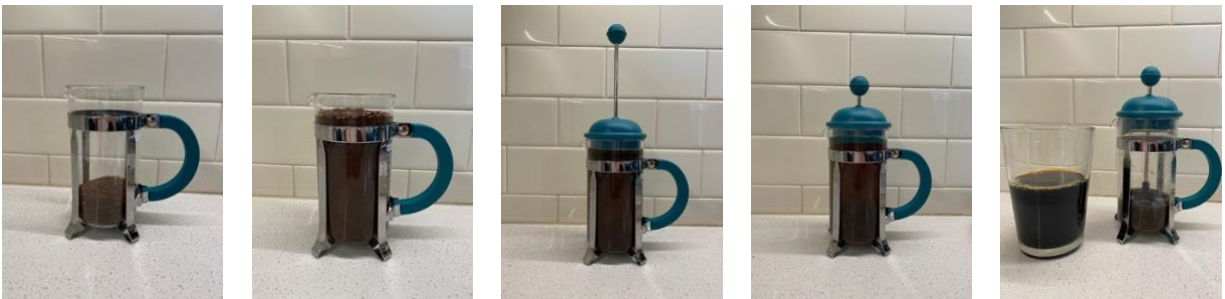


Figure 25: Making cold brew. By adding coffee grounds and cold water to the beaker, leaving in the refrigerator for at least 12 hours to brew, and then pushing down the plunger to strain out the grounds, a user of a French press can make cold brew without a cold-brew specific brewing device.

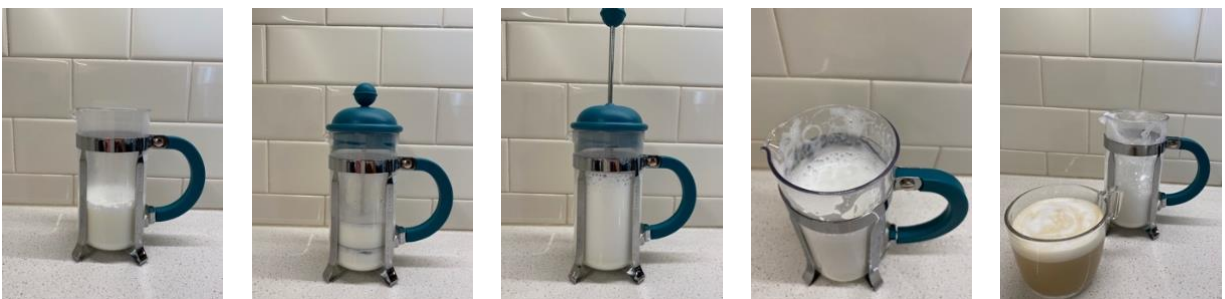


Figure 26: Frothing milk. By adding hot milk to the beaker, and then vigorously pulsing the plunger up and down for around 30 seconds, a user of a French press can get frothed milk to add to their coffee without an expensive machine.

Even on top of these things, there are plenty of other unconventional uses too. Just to name a few more, a French press can even be used to easily rinse rice, strain vegetables, and rehydrate dried foods. At its core, a French press is just a container with a fine strainer, so, with a little creativity, it has countless uses. This makes it a versatile addition to coffee drinkers' and non-coffee drinkers' kitchens alike.