

Good Practice

The following represent examples of good response scale practice in common use today

Binary scales

Is this beer good enough to package?

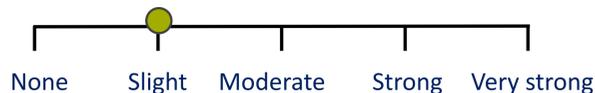


Category scales

Rate the overall flavour quality of this sample

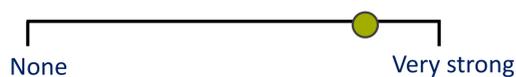


Rate the intensity of bitter taste in this sample



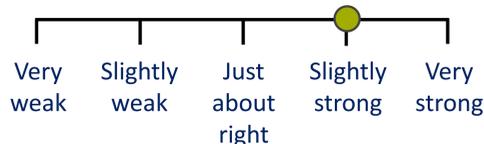
Line scales

Rate the intensity of catty aroma in this sample

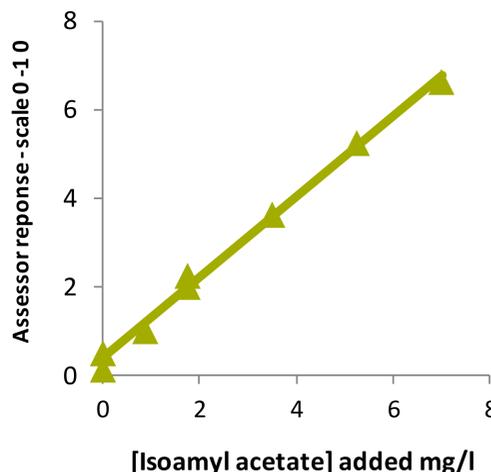
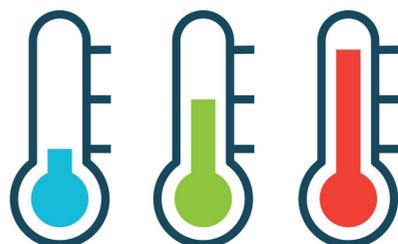


Just about right (JAR) scales

Rate the intensity of carbonation in this sample



Estimates of parameters such as height, weight, temperature, aroma intensity or flavour quality benefit greatly from the use of response scales. Our choice of scale has a profound influence on the measurements we make, so great care has to be taken in their selection. This poster presents some options and provides guidance on their use.



The use of sensory-pure single flavour reference compounds, as recommended by the ASBC, can facilitate training of assessors in the correct use of response scales. They can be used to generate different intensities of flavours in beer, or to re-create the symptoms of specific flavour quality problems.

Bad Practice

The following are real-life examples from breweries with otherwise sound sensory practices

Rate the overall quality of this sample



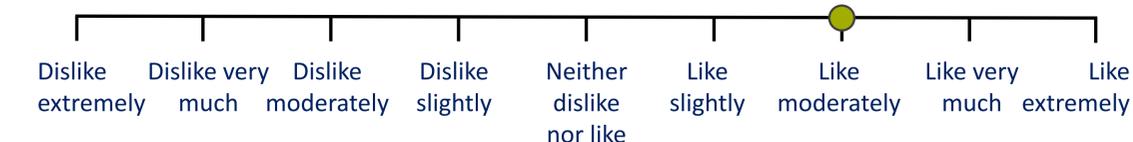
This brewery believed that since they would “never” package bad beer, their scale should start at five. And since the reason their beer was never bad was because they always blended their best beer with their worst, the highest score they could expect was eight.

Rate the intensity of sweet taste in this sample



This brewery believed that bitterness and sweetness represented opposite ends of the same spectrum. Rather like “light” and dark”. The result? Confusion for all concerned.

How much do you like this sample?



Nothing at all wrong with the scale, or how it has been executed. The problem is that brewery tasters represent a “strain” of *Homo sapiens*, separated from “real” beer consumers by dint of their talent, training and experience. A rare breed indeed! When you need to know what consumers think about your beer, ask consumers. Don’t ask your brewery tasters.

