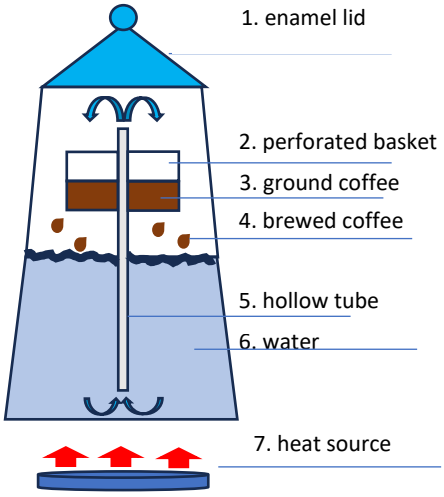
English How does it work?

Coffee Percolator

1. Have a look at the sketch below and place the words from the box in the correct spots.

water	perforated basket	brewed coffee	hollow tube
heat source	ground coffee	enamel lid	



2. Components of the Coffee Percolator

Describe the functions of the following parts of a Coffee Percolator.

A) **Water Chamber** – This is the bottom part of the percolator, where cold water is added before brewing begins.

B) **Heat Source** – In electric percolators, this is built-in, while stovetop models require an external heat source like a gas or electric stove.

C) **Hollow Tube** – A hollow metal tube that runs vertically from the water chamber to the top of the percolator. This allows hot water to rise and distribute over the coffee grounds.

D) **Perforated Basket** – A small metal or plastic container that holds the coffee grounds. The holes in the basket allow water to flow through and extract the coffee flavour.

3. **How does the Coffee Percolator work?** Describe in your own words.

A **coffee percolator** works by cycling boiling water through ground coffee beans using steam pressure. Unlike drip coffee makers, which only pass water through the grounds once, a percolator continues the process multiple times, making the coffee stronger with each cycle.

4. Give a Step-by-Step Brewing Process

a) **Adding Water**

- The first step in using a percolator is filling the **water chamber** with the desired amount of cold water. The amount of water used will determine how many cups of coffee are brewed.

b) **Adding Coffee Grounds**

- Next, the **coffee basket** is placed inside the percolator, and ground coffee is added.
- The grind size is important—**medium-coarse** works best. If the coffee is too finely ground, it can pass through the perforations, making the coffee gritty.

c) **Heating the Water**

- When the percolator is placed on a **heat source**, the water at the bottom begins to heat up.
- As the water reaches boiling temperature, **steam pressure forces the water up through the central tube**.

d) **Percolation Process**

- The **hot water reaches the top of the tube** and is spread evenly over the coffee grounds using the **spreader plate**.
- Gravity causes the water to drip through the coffee grounds, extracting the flavour.
- The now coffee-infused water returns to the bottom of the percolator.

- This process repeats **continuously** until the desired strength is reached.

e) **Monitoring the Brew**

- Many percolators have a **clear glass or plastic dome** on the lid that allows users to see when the water starts percolating.
- The colour of the coffee gets darker as it cycles through the system multiple times.
- The brewing process usually takes **5 to 10 minutes**, depending on how strong you want the coffee to be.

f) **Stopping the Brewing Process**

- Once the coffee reaches the desired strength, the **percolator is removed from the heat** (for stovetop models) or automatically shuts off (for electric models).
- The coffee basket is then removed to prevent over-extraction, which can make the coffee bitter.

g) **Pouring and Enjoying the Coffee**

- The brewed coffee is now ready to be poured and enjoyed. Some people prefer to add **milk, sugar, or spices** like cinnamon to enhance the flavour.

5. Compare a coffee percolator and a moka pot. Look into the brewing process, brewing time, coffee taste and strength and ease of use. Are there advantages or disadvantages using either of these?

- Brewing Process

Coffee Percolator

A percolator works by continuously cycling boiling water through coffee grounds.

The process starts with cold water in the bottom chamber. As it heats up, steam pressure pushes the water up a central tube, where it drips over the coffee grounds.

The brewed coffee then drips back into the water chamber, and this process repeats multiple times until the coffee reaches the desired strength.

This means the coffee is re-extracted, making it progressively stronger.

Moka Pot

A Moka pot brews coffee using steam pressure, similar to an espresso machine but at a lower pressure.

Water in the bottom chamber heats up and turns to steam, creating pressure. This forces the hot water through the coffee grounds and into the upper chamber in one continuous process.

Unlike a percolator, the water only passes through the coffee grounds once, producing a concentrated, espresso-like coffee.

- Coffee Strength and Taste

Coffee Percolator

Produces a strong and bold coffee, but because the coffee is cycled multiple times, it can sometimes taste over-extracted and bitter.

Moka Pot

Produces a strong, rich, and concentrated coffee, similar to espresso but without the crema.

- Brewing Time

Coffee Percolator

Takes about 5 to 10 minutes, depending on the desired strength.

Requires monitoring to prevent over-extraction.

Moka Pot

Takes about 3 to 5 minutes to brew a pot of coffee.

Requires careful heat control to avoid burning the coffee.

- Ease of Use and Convenience

Coffee Percolator

✓ Pros:

- Can brew larger quantities of coffee at once (ideal for multiple people).
- Some modern electric percolators have automatic shut-off features, making them easier to use.
- Stovetop percolators are durable and great for camping.

✕ Cons:

- Requires attention to avoid over-extraction.
- Harder to control the final taste compared to a Moka pot.

Moka Pot

✓ Pros:

- Compact and easy to use, with fewer parts to clean.
- Produces espresso-like coffee without the need for an expensive espresso machine.
- Ideal for small households or single servings.

✕ Cons:

- Can only brew a limited amount of coffee at a time.
- Requires precise heat control to avoid overheating and burning the coffee.

6. Additional task – Which one should you choose?

Choose a Coffee Percolator if:

✅ You **need to make multiple cups** of coffee at once.
✅ You like **strong, bold coffee** with a full-bodied texture.
✅ You enjoy **traditional coffee brewing** and don't mind monitoring the process.
✅ You go **camping** often and need a **portable coffee maker**.

Choose a Moka Pot if:

✅ You want **espresso-like coffee** without an expensive machine.
✅ You like **smooth, concentrated coffee** without bitterness.
✅ You make **coffee for one or two people** at a time.
✅ You enjoy **lattes, cappuccinos, or Americanos** and need a strong coffee base.

