

Back flushing home espresso machines (Models with solenoid valve)

Back flushing is done only in models that have a solenoid valve in the machine located just above the group head or attached to the boiler valve body (as in Classic Coffee and Baby Gaggia semi automatic models).

Back flushing is done to clean the shower (diffusion) screen, and the decompression solenoid valve.

In the Gaggia semi automatic models with solenoid valve, the solenoid valve closes as the hot water button is turned on and the pump pressure allows the water to pass through the coffee.

When the hot water button is turned off, the pump stops pumping and solenoid valve opens to allow the pressure from the portafilter escape. The pressure and any water remaining in the system will drain with a whoosh sound through the outlet pipe on the left of the group head, into the drip tray.

In Gaggia semi automatic models the solenoid valve acts as a decompression valve. It opens and closes as needed when using hot water for espresso or for dispensing steam.

If the diffusion screen and the solenoid valve is not clean, it interferes in the extraction pressure and decompression of pressure from the portafilter. This can affect the quality of espresso.

Back flushing is done using a blind cup (filter cup without holes in it). A Viton rubber disc is also used to block the holes in the filter basket. This eliminates the need for removing the filter basket and inserting the blind cup in the filter holder. This procedure can be cumbersome and discourage back flushing process.

Step 1 - Replace blind cup in the filter holder.

Step 2 - Place a tablet or ½ teaspoonful Coffee cleaning liquid in the blind cup.

Step 3 – Insert the filter holder in the group (like when making an espresso).

Step 4 - Turn the hot water switch on for 8 to 10 seconds and turn switch off.

As water cannot pass through the blind filter, it will build pressure as high as 10 Bars.

As soon as the hot water switch is turned off, the solenoid valve opens and allows the high pressure from the filter holder to pass through the diffusion screen, then through the solenoid valve and be released through drain outlet pipe (left of the group head).

The pressure is released with a distinct “Whoosh” into the drip tray.

The back flushing process is done daily using liquid coffee cleaner that will clean any coffee deposits. The back flushing should also be done every week using descaling solution. After the back flushing is done with cleaners, the process should be repeated without cleaners to flush the diffusion screen and solenoid valve with clean water.

If back flushing is not done every day, one may do it every two or three days. In such a case it is recommended that back flushing with coffee cleaner is done twice to ensure removal of coffee deposits in the diffusion screen holes and the passage through the solenoid valve. The back flushing without coffee cleaner is performed once to flush the valve clean.

We recommend the back flushing process to be done three or four times during the descaling of the machine. This will ensure removal of any Calcium sediment in the diffusion screen and the solenoid valve.

For optimum temperature for extraction of espresso and optimum pressure of steam, descale your espresso machine every two months. Cleancaf, Cafiza, Purocaff, Brew Rite, Brita may be labeled as descaler but they are not. Order Best descaler DSC-6 from Internet store <http://www.shop.partsguru.com/DSC6x2-Descaler-DSC6x2.htm>

The liquid Coffee cleaner is also available from the Internet store as a kit sold with descaler DSC-6. Here is the link to order the kit: <http://www.shop.partsguru.com/DSCCL-Descaler-Cleaning-liquid-DSCCL-TwinPack.htm>

Have questions or need to order parts, e-mail inquiries to granita@rcn.com