

## Table of Contents

JOB DESCRIPTION.....	6
Expanded Guidance (Supplemental).....	7
KEY POINTS OF BARTENDING.....	10
Sales Person vs. an Order Taker.....	11
Ambiance.....	11
Serving Liquors.....	11
Liquor Service Standards.....	12
Expanded Guidance (Supplemental).....	12
MIXING DRINKS.....	14
Expanded Guidance (Supplemental).....	15
Efficiency (Execution Guidance).....	16
Accuracy (Execution Guidance).....	17
Practical Scenarios (Real-World Examples).....	18
SERVING BEERS.....	19
Expanded Guidance (Supplemental).....	19
Glassware Standards and Presentation.....	20
Bottled Beer Service.....	20
Draft Beer Pouring Technique.....	20
Draft System Awareness and Cost Control.....	20
Temperature and Storage Discipline.....	21
Sanitation and Maintenance.....	21
Guest Experience and Professionalism.....	21
SERVING WINES.....	22
Expanded Guidance (Supplemental).....	22
Purpose of Wine Service.....	22
Presentation and Bottle Handling.....	23
Taste Pour and Guest Interaction.....	23
Serving Order and Etiquette.....	23
Wine Sales and Confidence.....	23
Professional Standards.....	24
BAR SEQUENCE OF SERVICE.....	25
Expanded Guidance (Supplemental).....	26
1. Greet and Welcome.....	26
2. Offer Seating and Present Menu.....	26
3. Take Drink Order.....	26

4. Prepare and Serve Drinks.....	27
5. Suggest Food or Offer Menus.....	27
6. Answer Questions and Take Food Orders.....	27
7. Offer Water and Additional Drinks.....	27
8. Set Up Place Setting.....	27
9. Present Food.....	27
10. Check-In and Refill.....	28
11. Clear Empty Dishes.....	28
12. Present Check and Process Payment.....	28
13. Thank and Invite Back.....	28
14. Reset and Prepare for Next Guest.....	28
<b>OPTIMUM SERVICE STANDARD.....</b>	<b>29</b>
Service   Time.....	29
Expanded Guidance (Supplemental).....	29
Initial Greeting – Mini Greet (1 Minute).....	29
Full Greeting (2 Minutes).....	29
Order Rung In (2 Minutes).....	30
Server Beverage Delivery (2 Minutes).....	30
Bar Beverage Delivery (Within 4 Minutes).....	30
Breakfast Delivery (8–10 Minutes).....	30
Appetizer Delivery (6 Minutes).....	30
Lunch Delivery (8–10 Minutes).....	31
Dinner Delivery (10–14 Minutes).....	31
Check Back (2 Minutes / 2 Bites).....	31
Espresso/Coffee Delivery (Within 4 Minutes).....	31
Dessert Delivery (4 Minutes).....	31
Change or Voucher Return (2 Minutes from Being Offered).....	31
<b>SUGGESTIVE SELLING.....</b>	<b>33</b>
The Six Philosophies of Suggestive Selling.....	33
Selling by Suggestion.....	34
Expanded Guidance (Supplemental).....	35
Mindset: Selling Is Hospitality.....	35
Language That Drives Sales.....	35
Reading the Guest.....	35
Beverage-Focused Selling Opportunities.....	36
Handling Objections Gracefully.....	36
Personal Favorites and Best Sellers.....	36
Long-Term Impact.....	36
<b>UPSELLING BEVERAGES.....</b>	<b>37</b>
Expanded Guidance (Supplemental).....	38
Cocktail Upselling: Control the First Question.....	38
Premium Brand Transitions.....	38

Guiding the Undecided Guest.....	38
Wine Upselling at the Bar.....	39
Using the Wine List as a Tool.....	39
Non-Alcoholic Upselling.....	39
Consistency Builds Income.....	39
<b>UPSELLING APPETIZERS AND DESSERTS.....</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>Expanded Guidance (Supplemental).....</b>	<b>41</b>
Painting the Picture.....	42
Choosing Your Go-To Items.....	42
Timing Matters.....	42
Direct Questions Drive Decisions.....	42
Desserts as a Final Impression.....	43
Income Mindset.....	43

# JOB DESCRIPTION

TITLE: BARTENDER

REPORT TO: RESTAURANT MANAGER

## Summary of Position

Provide timely, accurate and friendly service while preparing the highest quality beverages for our guests.

## Duties & Responsibilities:

- Take beverage orders from guests and servers
- Host the guest's experience
- Be aware of sales, cost percentages and goals
- Full knowledge of all products and inventories
- Prepare and serve alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks consistent with the restaurant's standard drink recipes,
- Perform all opening and closing side work for the bar
- Satisfy the needs of FOH staff from the service bar in a timely manner
- Maintain current with intervention procedures and house policies concerning establishing limits, cutting off a patron, and dealing with an unruly patron
- Learn the names and personally recognize our regulars  
Record drink orders accurately and immediately after receipt into the register system
- Accept guest payments, process credit card charges and make changes (if applicable)
- Wash and sterilize glassware
- Prepare garnishes for drinks and replenish snacks, and appetizers for bar patrons
- Maintain bottles and glasses in an attractive and functional manner to support efficient drink preparation and promotion of beverages
- Clear and reset tables in the bar area
- Present drink menus, make recommendations, and answer questions regarding beverages
- Maintain cleanliness in all areas of the bar including counters, sinks, utensils, shelves, and storage areas
- Receive and serve food orders to guests seated at the bar

- Report all equipment problems and bar maintenance issues to the restaurant manager
- Control all pours
- Assist in the restocking and replenishment of bar inventory and supplies
- Be available to fill in as needed to ensure the smooth and efficient operation of the restaurant as directed by the restaurant manager or immediate supervisor

#### Qualifications:

- Be of legal age as required by your state
  - Be able to communicate and understand the predominant language(s) of our guests
  - Have a working knowledge of beer, wine, and liquor and common drink recipes
  - Possess basic math skills and have the ability to handle money and operate a cash register
  - Be able to work in a standing position for long periods of time (up to 5 hours)
  - Be able to reach, bend, stoop, and frequently lift up to 40 pounds
- 

#### Expanded Guidance (Supplemental)

The bartender is a key operational leader within the restaurant and is responsible for controlling the pace, tone, and efficiency of the bar environment. This position requires constant awareness, professional discipline, and the ability to multitask without sacrificing accuracy or hospitality.

Providing timely, accurate, and friendly service begins with immediate acknowledgment. Guests approaching or seated at the bar must feel recognized right away, even during busy periods. Eye contact, a nod, or a verbal greeting establishes trust and sets expectations for service flow.

Hosting the guest's experience means guiding the guest from arrival to departure. Bartenders must read guest cues to determine the desired level of interaction—whether the guest prefers conversation, recommendations, efficiency, or privacy—and adjust their approach accordingly while remaining attentive.

Awareness of sales, cost percentages, and goals is part of daily execution. Bartenders are expected to protect beverage costs through accurate pours, recipe adherence, proper ringing of all drinks, and minimizing waste. Every drink—sales, spills, remakes,

or comps—must be rung into the system to maintain accountability and inventory accuracy.

Full product and inventory knowledge allows bartenders to work confidently and efficiently. Knowing what is available, what is running low, and what alternatives can be offered ensures uninterrupted service and enhances the guest experience. When an item is unavailable, bartenders should confidently suggest comparable options rather than simply stating an item is out.

Preparation and service of beverages must always follow established recipes and presentation standards. Consistency across shifts and bartenders reinforces brand identity and guest trust. Speed should never come at the expense of accuracy or balance.

Service bar responsibilities directly impact the dining room experience. Bartenders must prioritize service tickets appropriately and communicate clearly with servers and managers when volume or delays arise. Proactive communication prevents guest dissatisfaction before it begins.

Responsible alcohol service is a core duty. Bartenders must recognize signs of intoxication, pace drinks appropriately, and follow all intervention procedures calmly and professionally. When necessary, management should be involved early to ensure guest safety and compliance with the law.

Maintaining cleanliness and organization is a continuous responsibility throughout the shift. A clean bar supports faster service, reduces errors, and reinforces guest confidence. Glassware, tools, garnishes, and surfaces should be maintained consistently, not only at opening or closing.

Equipment awareness is essential to uninterrupted service. Bartenders are expected to monitor refrigeration, ice machines, draft systems, and glassware flow, and report issues immediately to management to avoid service breakdowns.

The bartender must remain flexible and team-oriented, assisting with restocking, supporting FOH operations, and adapting to business needs as directed. Professionalism, composure, and reliability are expected at all times.

# KEY POINTS OF BARTENDING

- Be a salesperson, not an order take
- Follow service standards
- Place a beverage napkin under every drink
- Ring in all orders as they are made
- Servers must present a ticket for every drink
- Never serve a minor
- Use an ID reference book
- No eating behind the bar
- Look the part, proper dress
- Continue to wipe down the bar during the entire shift; cleaning is essential for a successful bar

- Dry glassware with a clean dinner napkin to make certain glasses dry without spots
  - Do not eat or drink behind the bar
  - You must ring in all drinks regardless of if they are comps, spills, or sales. If you are unaware of how to ring something, ask a manager
  - Check filters on refrigerators at least once a week
  - SMILE, you are on stage!
  - Teamwork is the key when working with other employees. When two or more bartenders are working, make certain you always have good communication so the shift will run smoothly
  - Always take a credit card when starting a tab
  - Line up server's drinks in order of the ticket they are rung in on
  - Stock, Stock, Stock
  - Clean Compressors regularly
  - Check all refrigerator temperatures regularly
  - Engage with the guest. Do they want someone to listen? Do they want conversation with you or to be left alone? Do they want suggestions or do they just want you to make what they want?
  - Observe all local and state laws regarding service
  - Be creative, Have Fun!
- 

### Sales Person vs. an Order Taker

It is easy to provide great customer service when you use sales techniques. Allowing the customer to buy items without your assistance is similar to resigning yourself to being an order taker at a counter. When you direct the customer to the items you genuinely like, they feel good about the attention you give them. Use the following techniques when selling and watch as your sales increase and your customers light up!

Suggest Options- Unless you inform the customer of all the choices available they will be tempted to go for the lowest price items

Anticipate the customer's wants and needs- there is room to impress when you suggest exactly what the guest would like

Be real, sell what you believe in- tell the customer your favorites, it may become theirs too

Know your product- the more you know the more creative you can get with suggestions

---

## Ambiance

Look at your bar through the eyes of a customer. He or she is ready to judge. Are you ready to impress?

Lights and Music - does the lighting suit the time of the day? Is the music volume appropriate?

Bar Appearance - step out from behind the bar and see it as a customer would see it. Is the bar organized? Bottles facing customers? Clutter removed from register? Bar top and drink rails wiped? Bar stools clean?

---

## Serving Liquors

Serve all drinks on a beverage napkin

Know your products

Be able to describe in detail our specialty drinks

Be able to properly pronounce all liquor we sell

---

## Liquor Service Standards

Large beverage straws should be black and placed in every drink made in pint or Collins Glass

Stir stews should be black and placed in all drinks made in a highball or double rocks glass

Lemons and limes should be cut into wedges with a thin slit cut through the middle,

The Lemon or lime is placed on the rim of the glass in the drinks requiring one.

Oranges should be cut in slices with a thin slit in the middle

Olives should be placed on bar picks before being placed in drinks.

A “flag” is an orange and a cherry. Flags are served on a bar pick when put into glasses.

---

### Expanded Guidance (Supplemental)

The key points of bartending exist to protect speed, control, consistency, and guest trust. Every rule listed above is operational, not optional, and directly affects guest experience, safety, and profitability.

Being a salesperson rather than an order taker means actively guiding guests toward choices that enhance their experience. This includes suggesting premium spirits, specialty cocktails, food pairings, and alternatives when guests are undecided. Guests rely on bartender confidence; hesitation reduces trust and sales.

Service standards create consistency. Following standards ensures that every guest receives the same quality of experience regardless of time, volume, or bartender. Consistency is what turns first-time guests into regulars.

Ringling in all orders immediately protects accuracy, inventory, and accountability. Delayed ringing leads to forgotten drinks, incorrect tabs, and cost discrepancies. This includes spills, comps, and remakes—nothing is exempt.

ID verification is mandatory. Never assume age. Using an ID reference book protects the bartender and the business. When in doubt, always verify or involve a manager. Compliance with alcohol laws is non-negotiable.

Professional appearance matters. Guests judge competence before the first word is spoken. Proper dress, grooming, and posture signal professionalism and reinforce confidence in the product being served.

Cleanliness is continuous. Wiping the bar, drying glassware properly, and maintaining an organized station improve efficiency and prevent service breakdowns during peak periods. A messy bar slows service and damages perception.

Teamwork keeps service smooth. When multiple bartenders are working, communication about tickets, priorities, restocking, and guest needs is essential. Silence creates errors; communication creates flow.

Tabs must be controlled. Always taking a credit card at the start of a tab protects the business and prevents uncomfortable situations at close. This is a standard practice, not a suggestion.

Stock awareness prevents emergencies. Constant restocking, checking temperatures, and maintaining equipment ensure uninterrupted service. Running out of essentials during a rush is avoidable with awareness and preparation.

Guest engagement must be intentional. Some guests want conversation, others want efficiency. Observing cues and adjusting accordingly is a core bartending skill. The goal is to enhance the guest's experience, not impose interaction.

Creativity and fun are encouraged, but never at the expense of standards, safety, or control. Professional bartending balances personality with discipline.

## MIXING DRINKS

Drinks should be made with efficiency and accuracy. Make sure you have confidence in your pouring technique and recipes. A lack of confidence invites customers to return drinks which results in lower sales and product spillage. Here are some guidelines to follow when mixing:

### EFFICIENCY

Be ambidextrous.

Don't isolate your movements to your favored hand.

Ice 2 to 3 glasses at a time

Pour 2 liquors at a time

Garnish while placing straws

Be organized.

When you are messy, you become less efficient. · Remember that you're sharing your workspace

Return bottles to speed racks after each pour

Rinse the shaker can and mixing glass immediately after use

Use the ice scoop.

Although icing the glasses seems quicker, it risks breakage and it takes much more time and wasted effort to burn a well. You can always hold 2 glasses in one hand while you scoop ice with the other. Do not leave the ice scoop in the bin, it is a health code violation.

Don't waste movement.

While drawing beer, wipe spillage on the surrounding counters

While taking an order, bus the bar and place napkins in front of each new customer

Always be thinking of your next move  
Maximize every movement and prepare for the next task

Serve the round of drinks after completion

Don't place a drink in front of one person at a party and make the others wait for their drinks

Make all drinks then serve to entire party. Take the entire order before you start drinks.

Ask the customer about the specifics of the order. Lemon or Lime? Salt or no salt? This cuts down time spent backtracking.

Prepare drinks in the order that best presents them

Ice cocktails first, tap beers last. The head on the beer falls while waiting for the others to be made.

## ACCURACY

Pour evenly and accurately

We use a 1 ½ ounce shot for a single-pour drink. First practice with a cut pour using a jigger. Once comfortable with the cut pour, practice the free pour count. IT IS BETTER TO BE ACCURATE WITH A JIGGER POUR THAN TO BE INCONSISTENT WITH A FREE POUR.

Grasp the bottle by the neck, holding the pour spout securely between your fingers. This grasp will give you more control over the accuracy of the pour.

Don't trust that the pour spout is anchored in the bottle. Never grab the bottle from the bottom to pour.

Sharply invert the bottle to pour. Don't weakly tip it because accuracy is lost in the vagueness of the first count.

Build cocktails to the washing line

This refers to ½ inch from the rim of the glass. It helps the customer walk away with the cocktail without spilling it.

Fill glasses full of ice

Overfill with ice, ice will melt under liquor. 4. Shake the mixed shooters thoroughly

Makes drinks colder

Rinse the shaker well after each use to assure that the next cocktail doesn't taste like the previous one

Mixing drinks at a professional level is about building habits that produce fast, consistent, clean results even under pressure. Guests may not see every step behind the bar, but they always feel the outcome: the temperature, balance, presentation, and speed.

### Efficiency (Execution Guidance)

Set your station before the rush. Efficiency is earned before service starts. The bartender should confirm:

- Ice bin is full and scoop is clean and positioned correctly
- Speed rack and wells are stocked, labels forward and consistent
- Garnish tray is full, fresh, and organized (citrus, olives, cherries, flags)
- Bar tools are present and functional (shaker tins, strainers, bar spoon, jigger)
- Glassware is staged and accessible (do not “hunt” during volume)

Build in “clean as you go” discipline. Rinsing the shaker can and mixing glass immediately is not just sanitation—it is speed. A sticky tin or contaminated mixing glass slows service and creates remake risk. The fastest bartenders are the cleanest bartenders.

Batch your movements without batching your mistakes. Pouring two liquors at a time and icing 2–3 glasses works only when the bartender maintains ticket accuracy. When volume increases, use a simple internal check:

- What am I building?
- For which guest or ticket?
- What is the correct glass and garnish?

Order management prevents backtracking. Taking the entire order before starting drinks reduces interruptions. If a guest is undecided, guide quickly with two confident options to keep momentum moving.

Sequence building is a real skill. Your guideline “Ice cocktails first, tap beers last” protects presentation. Expand that logic:

- Drinks that melt fastest should be served fastest (tall shaken drinks, ice-heavy builds)
- Drinks that hold structure can wait briefly (stirred spirit-forward cocktails)
- Draft beer should be poured and delivered immediately so head and temperature are correct

Serving the round after completion controls perception. Guests judge speed as fairness. If one person receives a drink and the others wait, it feels slow. Serving a completed round feels organized and professional.

## Accuracy (Execution Guidance)

Recipe consistency is the core standard. Guests return because their favorite drink tastes the same every time. Accuracy protects guest trust, reduces comps/remakes, and protects cost.

Jigger accuracy is always acceptable. A precise jigger pour is better than a “confident” but inconsistent free pour. If the bar uses a free pour count, the count must be trained, audited, and consistent across bartenders.

Confirm modifiers before you build. Salt/no salt, lemon/lime, up/no rocks, single/double, brand preference—these details must be confirmed up front to avoid remakes and waste. A single missed modifier creates a slow domino effect during volume.

Use controlled bottle handling. Grasping the bottle by the neck protects pour accuracy and prevents spills. A pour spout can loosen—never assume it is secure. Spill control is cost control.

Build cocktails to a consistent finish line. The “washing line” standard prevents spills, supports consistent presentation, and helps the guest handle the drink comfortably at the bar or while walking.

Ice is part of the build, not an afterthought. Filling the glass full of ice supports correct dilution and temperature. Incomplete ice creates warm drinks, rapid melting, and an unbalanced final product.

Shaking standards must be consistent. Shaking thoroughly chills, dilutes properly, and integrates ingredients. Under-shaken drinks taste harsh and warm; over-aggressive shaking can create excess foam and messy presentation. The goal is consistent, controlled agitation.

Prevent flavor carryover. Rinsing the shaker and tools protects flavor integrity. Guests notice when a cocktail tastes like the previous one. This is a preventable quality failure.

## Practical Scenarios (Real-World Examples)

### Example 1: “Vodka Soda” with preferences

When a guest orders a vodka soda, avoid defaulting silently. Ask one quick guiding question:

- “Do you have a vodka preference, or may I recommend one?”  
This supports sales, confidence, and guest satisfaction without slowing service.

### Example 2: Round of mixed drinks for four guests

Take the full order, confirm modifiers, then build in a sequence that preserves quality:

- Ice and build the shaken cocktails first
- Stir and strain spirit-forward cocktails next
- Pour draft beer last  
Serve as one round.

### Example 3: Remake prevention during volume

If a guest says "Make it strong," do not guess. Respond professionally and within policy:

- "I can make it a double if you'd like, or I can recommend a cocktail that's more spirit-forward."  
This prevents over-pouring, protects costs, and maintains standards.

## SERVING BEERS

Ensure beer pints are clean and cold

Check the lip of bottles and pints for chips

Offer to pour bottled beer for guests

Pour tap beer with a 1/2-inch head

- Draft Beer Concerns
  - Keep the draft beer delivery system properly pressurized
- Keep the draft beer delivery system properly maintained
- Store the beer under proper conditions
- Serve draft beer at the proper temperature
- Industry average loss 1 out of 5 kegs, or 20%
- Keeping a constant uniformed pressure in the feed lines is crucial
- A normal keg has 12-14 psi at 380 additional gauge pressure of 12-14 psi is

required to propel the beer through the lines and dispenser, to prevent the beer from losing its natural carbonation. If the pressure drops below 12 psi, the natural carbonation in the beer will dissipate and go flat.

If the pressure is 16 psi or more, wild and foamy beer is the result.

Feed lines and the spigot must be cleaned on a regular basis to prohibit off-tastes or odors from forming and preventing yeast and bacteria buildup.

- Cleaning is done by a professional draft distributor
- If beer is stored below 36 degrees, it loses its carbonation and goes flat. If beer is stored at a too high of a temperature, the beer turns cloudy, sour, or unpalatable.
- After delivery, the keg should not be tapped for 24 to 36 hours, practice FIFO and label to prevent this from happening.
- 40 degrees is the normal serving temp
- The spigot should never touch the glass

---

## Expanded Guidance (Supplemental)

Beer service is a high-volume, high-loss category that requires discipline, consistency, and constant attention. Guests expect beer to be cold, fresh, properly carbonated, and visually appealing every time. Any failure in beer service is immediately noticeable.

### Glassware Standards and Presentation

Beer glasses must be visibly clean, cold, and odor-free. Residue, lipstick marks, sanitizer film, or food particles compromise carbonation and appearance. Always inspect glassware before pouring, paying special attention to the rim and lip for chips or cracks. Damaged glassware must be removed from service immediately.

Cold glassware helps preserve carbonation and temperature, but frozen glasses should be avoided unless specifically required, as ice crystals can damage foam structure and alter flavor.

### Bottled Beer Service

Offering to pour bottled beer is part of professional service. Some guests prefer the bottle, while others appreciate a proper pour that releases aroma and enhances presentation. When pouring bottled beer:

- Use a clean, appropriate beer glass
- Pour smoothly down the side of the glass, finishing with a controlled head if desired
- Never allow the bottle lip to touch the glass

Always check bottle caps and lips for defects before opening.

### Draft Beer Pouring Technique

Draft beer should be poured with confidence and control:

- Hold the glass at a 45-degree angle
- Open the tap fully in one smooth motion
- Straighten the glass as it fills
- Finish with approximately a 1/2-inch head

A proper head protects aroma, appearance, and carbonation while signaling quality to the guest.

### Draft System Awareness and Cost Control

Draft beer systems must always remain within correct pressure ranges. Inconsistent pressure leads to excessive foam, flat beer, waste, and guest complaints. With industry losses averaging 20% per keg, bartenders play a critical role in protecting profitability.

Bartenders must be alert to warning signs such as:

- Excessive foam
- Flat or lifeless beer
- Cloudy appearance
- Off smells or tastes

Any irregularity should be reported immediately to management.

### Temperature and Storage Discipline

Beer must be stored and served within correct temperature ranges to maintain quality.

- Storage below 36°F causes carbonation loss
- Storage above proper range leads to spoilage and flavor degradation
- Ideal serving temperature is approximately 40°F

Newly delivered kegs must rest for 24–36 hours before tapping to allow carbonation to stabilize. FIFO labeling and rotation are mandatory to prevent premature tapping.

### Sanitation and Maintenance

Draft lines and spigots must be cleaned regularly by a professional distributor to prevent yeast and bacteria buildup. Bartenders must never attempt unauthorized cleaning methods that could damage the system or contaminate product.

The spigot should never touch the glass, as this creates contamination risk and violates sanitation standards. Always maintain a clean distance between the tap and glass.

### Guest Experience and Professionalism

Beer service may appear simple, but guests quickly notice inconsistencies. A properly poured, cold, fresh beer reinforces trust and professionalism. Sloppy pours, flat beer, or warm temperatures damage the guest experience and reduce repeat business.

Consistent beer service demonstrates attention to detail, respect for the product, and pride in the bar program.

## SERVING WINES

There are different reasons why we sell wine. Wine makes food taste better. Wine brings out the flavor of the food. Different types of wine correlate with different entrees. When selecting a wine, we must know our products so we can help the guest select a wine that they would enjoy.

### Opening Wine

- Wipe residue off the bottle
- Remove the foil with a clean cut below the lowest lip of the bottle
- Center corkscrew on top of the bottle
- Turn slow, and be careful not to break the cork
- Pull the cork with the opener elbow (do not pop the cork but instead twist the cork until it is free. Popping causes wine to bruise)
- Place the cork in front of the person who ordered the wine
- Taste pour the host
- Serve the other guest first and finish with the guest who ordered the wine.

---

### Expanded Guidance (Supplemental)

Wine service is both a hospitality moment and a sales opportunity. Guests often rely heavily on bartender confidence and knowledge when selecting wine. The goal is not to impress with technical language, but to guide the guest toward a wine they will enjoy and that complements their food.

### Purpose of Wine Service

Wine enhances the overall dining experience by balancing flavors, textures, and aromas. Proper wine recommendations elevate food, increase check averages, and create memorable guest experiences. When wine is suggested confidently and appropriately, guests feel cared for rather than sold to.

Bartenders must understand basic wine styles, flavor profiles, and how they pair with the menu. This knowledge allows bartenders to ask simple guiding questions such as:

- “Do you prefer something lighter or fuller-bodied?”
- “Are you in the mood for something crisp or something richer?”

These questions help narrow choices quickly without overwhelming the guest.

### Presentation and Bottle Handling

Before opening any bottle, inspect it for cleanliness and condition. Wiping residue off the bottle ensures proper presentation and avoids contamination. Removing the foil below the lip prevents wine from contacting the foil during pouring.

Opening wine should always be calm and controlled. Sudden movements or popping the cork creates unnecessary attention and can negatively affect the wine. Twisting the cork gently preserves carbonation in sparkling wines and prevents bruising in still wines.

Placing the cork in front of the host allows the guest to inspect it if they choose. This gesture reinforces professionalism and respect for wine service tradition.

### Taste Pour and Guest Interaction

The taste pour is not about approval—it is about confirming the wine is sound. Pour a small amount for the host and step back slightly, allowing them time to taste without pressure. If the guest approves, proceed immediately with service.

If the guest indicates a concern, respond calmly and professionally. Never argue or dismiss feedback. Notify a manager if there is uncertainty about the wine’s condition.

### Serving Order and Etiquette

Always serve other guests first, moving clockwise around the bar or table, and finish with the guest who ordered the wine. This demonstrates awareness and proper etiquette.

Hold the bottle with the label facing the guest when possible. Pour smoothly, avoiding drips by twisting the bottle slightly at the end of the pour and wiping the lip if necessary.

## Wine Sales and Confidence

Wine should be suggested naturally during service, especially when guests are ordering food. Avoid asking yes/no questions such as “Do you want wine?” Instead, guide with confident language like:

- “This dish pairs really well with...”
- “Many guests enjoy this wine with...”

Confidence builds trust. Guests are far more likely to accept recommendations when the bartender speaks clearly and comfortably about the wine.

## Professional Standards

Wine service should always feel unrushed, even in busy periods. Guests notice when wine is treated with care. Proper handling, calm movements, and confident explanations elevate the bar experience and reinforce the restaurant’s standards.

# BAR SEQUENCE OF SERVICE

1. **Greet and Welcome:**  
Greet each guest warmly and promptly as they arrive at the bar.  
Make eye contact, smile, and provide a friendly greeting.
2. **Offer Seating and Present Menu:**  
Escort the guest to an available seat or allow them to choose.  
Present a drink menu and highlight any featured cocktails or specials.
3. **Take Drink Order:**  
Give the guest a moment to review the menu.  
Return promptly to take their drink order.  
Place a cocktail napkin in front of the guest, if needed.
4. **Prepare and Serve Drinks:**  
Prepare the drinks according to the guest's order.  
Serve the drinks with appropriate garnishes and presentation.
5. **Suggest Food or Offer Menus:**  
Inquire if the guest intends to dine and offer menus if needed.  
If dining, suggest appetizers or specials to complement their drinks.
6. **Answer Questions and Take Food Orders:**  
Address any inquiries the guest may have about the menu.  
Provide recommendations and take the food order if applicable.
7. **Offer Water and Additional Drinks:**  
Offer bottled or iced water to the guest.  
Check if they require more drinks throughout their stay.
8. **Set Up Place Setting:**  
Place a clean napkin, silverware, and salt and pepper in front of the guest.
9. **Present Food:**  
Serve the food according to the guest's order.  
Ensure proper presentation and utensils are provided.
10. **Check-In and Refill:**  
Regularly check on the guest to ensure satisfaction.  
Refill drinks as needed without being intrusive.
11. **Clear Empty Dishes:**  
Promptly clear empty dishes and glassware to maintain a tidy bar area.
12. **Present Check and Process Payment:**  
Present the check to the guest when they are ready to settle.  
Process payment efficiently, and offer receipt options (paper or digital).
13. **Thank and Invite Back:**  
Express gratitude for the guest's visit.  
Extend an invitation for them to return.

#### 14. Reset and Prepare for Next Guest:

Clear and sanitize the bar area.

Set up for the next guest by providing clean napkins and utensils.

---

### Expanded Guidance (Supplemental)

The Bar Sequence of Service is designed to ensure consistency, efficiency, and hospitality while allowing bartenders to personalize the guest experience. Every step matters, from the first greeting to the final reset.

#### 1. Greet and Welcome

The greeting sets the tone for the entire experience. Guests should feel acknowledged immediately, even during busy periods. If service is momentarily delayed, eye contact and a verbal acknowledgment reassure the guest that they are seen and valued.

A warm greeting establishes trust and openness, making guests more receptive to recommendations later in the service.

#### 2. Offer Seating and Present Menu

Allowing guests to choose their seat when possible gives them a sense of control and comfort. Present menus cleanly and confidently, pointing out featured cocktails or specials without overwhelming the guest.

This is the first opportunity to introduce the bar's personality and highlight unique offerings.

#### 3. Take Drink Order

Timing is critical. Give guests enough space to decide, but do not leave them waiting. A cocktail napkin placed in front of the guest signals readiness to serve and reinforces cleanliness and professionalism.

Listen carefully, clarify preferences when needed, and confirm the order mentally before preparing drinks.

#### 4. Prepare and Serve Drinks

Drinks should be prepared efficiently while maintaining accuracy and presentation standards. Garnishes, glassware, and beverage napkins must always be correct. The visual appeal of a drink strongly influences the guest's perception of quality.

Serve drinks confidently and place them purposefully in front of the guest.

## 5. Suggest Food or Offer Menus

Once drinks are delivered, guests are more relaxed and receptive. This is the ideal moment to suggest food. Keep recommendations simple and relevant to what they are drinking.

Food suggestions should feel helpful, not sales driven.

## 6. Answer Questions and Take Food Orders

Guests seated at the bar often ask more questions than table guests. Be patient, knowledgeable, and honest. If unsure, seek clarification rather than guessing.

When taking food orders, ensure proper pacing with drinks and communicate clearly with the kitchen.

## 7. Offer Water and Additional Drinks

Water service should be proactive. Offering bottled or iced water early improves comfort and reduces repeated requests later.

Monitor drink levels discreetly. Anticipate refills rather than reacting to empty glasses.

## 8. Set Up Place Setting

Setting the place properly prepares the guest for dining and signals attentiveness. Cleanliness and order at this stage prevent interruptions later.

## 9. Present Food

Food must be served promptly and with the correct utensils. Confirm placement and ensure the guest has everything they need before stepping away.

Presentation matters as much at the bar as it does in the dining room.

## 10. Check-In and Refill

Check-ins should be purposeful and brief. Ask questions that invite feedback without interrupting the guest's experience.

Refill drinks smoothly and without excessive conversation unless the guest invites engagement.

## 11. Clear Empty Dishes

A clean bar top is essential. Clearing should be continuous but respectful—never rush a guest or remove items prematurely.

An uncluttered bar improves comfort and visual appeal.

## 12. Present Check and Process Payment

When the guest signals readiness, present the check promptly. Handle payment efficiently and discreetly. Accuracy and speed at this stage leave a lasting impression.

## 13. Thank and Invite Back

Every guest should leave feeling appreciated. A sincere thank-you reinforces hospitality and encourages return visits.

## 14. Reset and Prepare for Next Guest

The reset must be thorough and immediate. A clean, organized bar ensures readiness for the next guest and maintains service flow.

# OPTIMUM SERVICE STANDARD

## Service | Time

- Initial Greeting – Mini Greet | 1 Minute
- Full Greeting | 2 Minutes
- Order Rung In | 2 Minutes
- Server Beverage Delivery | 2 Minutes
- Bar Beverage Delivery | within 4 minutes
- Breakfast Delivery | 8 – 10 minutes
- Appetizer Delivery | 6 minutes
- Lunch Delivery | 8 – 10 minutes
- Dinner Delivery | 10 – 14 minutes

- Check Back | 2 minutes / 2 bites
  - Espresso/Coffee Delivery | Within 4 minutes
  - Dessert Delivery | 4 minutes
  - Change or Voucher Return | 2 minutes from being offered
- 

## Expanded Guidance (Supplemental)

The Optimum Service Standard establishes clear, measurable expectations for timing throughout the guest experience. These benchmarks are not suggestions—they are performance standards designed to ensure consistency, efficiency, and guest satisfaction during all levels of volume.

Bartenders must understand why these times matter and how to execute them without appearing rushed or mechanical.

### Initial Greeting – Mini Greet (1 Minute)

Guests must be acknowledged immediately upon arrival. Even during peak volume, eye contact, a smile, and a verbal acknowledgment such as “I’ll be right with you” establishes awareness and prevents frustration.

This moment buys time and sets a positive tone while the bartender completes current tasks.

### Full Greeting (2 Minutes)

Within two minutes, the bartender should fully engage the guest. This includes greeting by name if known, presenting menus, and beginning the conversation. The guest should feel like service has officially begun.

Delays at this stage create a perception of slow service that is difficult to recover from later.

### Order Rung In (2 Minutes)

Orders must be entered promptly to ensure production timing remains accurate. Delays here affect every downstream step—drink delivery, food timing, and guest satisfaction.

Bartenders should never “hold” orders mentally during volume. Ring immediately to protect accuracy and pacing.

### Server Beverage Delivery (2 Minutes)

When preparing drinks for servers, speed and organization are critical. Drinks must be prepared in ticket order, lined up clearly, and completed with garnishes and napkins.

Efficient service bar execution supports the entire front-of-house operation and prevents bottlenecks.

#### Bar Beverage Delivery (Within 4 Minutes)

Guests seated at the bar expect rapid beverage service. This window allows for proper preparation while maintaining quality.

If delays occur due to complexity or volume, communication is essential. A brief acknowledgment maintains trust.

#### Breakfast Delivery (8–10 Minutes)

Breakfast service emphasizes speed and efficiency. Bartenders supporting breakfast must be aware of time-sensitive items and coordinate closely with the kitchen.

Hot food must arrive hot, and beverages must remain full throughout the meal.

#### Appetizer Delivery (6 Minutes)

Appetizers should arrive quickly to maintain momentum and prevent guests from ordering additional items due to delays. Timely appetizer delivery sets expectations for the rest of the meal.

#### Lunch Delivery (8–10 Minutes)

Lunch guests often operate on tighter schedules. Bartenders must be mindful of pacing, especially when guests are dining at the bar.

Efficiency and anticipation are critical during lunch periods.

#### Dinner Delivery (10–14 Minutes)

Dinner service allows for a slightly longer window, but consistency is key. Guests should never feel forgotten.

Bartenders should monitor pacing, refill drinks proactively, and communicate delays immediately if necessary.

#### Check Back (2 Minutes / 2 Bites)

Checking back too soon feels intrusive; too late allows problems to escalate. The 2-minute or 2-bite standard ensures guests have had time to assess quality.

Questions should be specific and purposeful.

#### Espresso/Coffee Delivery (Within 4 Minutes)

Coffee and espresso service should feel seamless and intentional. Delays at this stage can interrupt the flow of the meal or dessert service.

Bartenders should ensure cups, saucers, spoons, and accompaniments are ready before delivery.

#### Dessert Delivery (4 Minutes)

Dessert should arrive promptly once ordered. Guests are often deciding whether to linger or leave, and timing here influences their final impression.

#### Change or Voucher Return (2 Minutes from Being Offered)

Payment completion is the final operational touchpoint. Delays at this stage leave a lasting negative impression, regardless of how good the service was earlier.

Bartenders must close checks promptly and accurately while thanking the guest.

# SUGGESTIVE SELLING

A server is a “friendly” salesperson who works for commissions. Your commission is your tip! There are two ways to control your tips as a server. First, you need to be friendly, hospitable and use your great personality. Secondly, you control your tips by the total check average. Guests generally tip 15% - 20% of the total check amount. To raise the check amounts, the server needs to become a “friendly” salesperson and a suggestive seller. Your job is to provide each guest everything they could want to get the total check as high as you can.

Think of yourself as a Salesperson – not an order taker!!!  
Salespersons control their own income!

If you have 10 tables per shift and upsell to increase your tips by \$5 per table, you will increase your income by \$12,000 per year.

## The Six Philosophies of Suggestive Selling

1. Selling is simple: Ask. You are not an order taker. It is your job to guide the guest through the menu and beverage lists. If you don't try to up-sell, you are depriving your guest of the opportunity to try a new menu item they may have never tried, a bottle of wine they will enjoy, or a dessert that they may have never seen.
2. Your guests are here to buy, not browse! They are hungry and want to have a good time. As a server, why would you ever say to a table, “Can I get you

something to drink?" If you don't offer wine, they probably won't order it. Go for the sale! It's not being pushy...it's giving the guest the option to try something exciting and new.

3. You are tipped 10 to 20% of what you sell. To make more money, you need to get your check average up. If you just hope your customers order wine, appetizers, and desserts, you are not controlling your tips. As a server, you really do control your own income. You make it happen and you make it not happen.
  4. Remember, suggestive selling is not being pushy; it is helping customers make decisions that are good for them. You help them enhance their meal so they enjoy their dining experience more.
  5. You have everything to gain and nothing to lose! What is the worst that could happen when you recommend appetizers, desserts, or beverages? The guest says "No". Try again with the next guest.
  6. A salesperson easily makes more tips than an order-taker.
- 

## Selling by Suggestion

Use the power of suggestion with our guests. It's a powerful tool. Remember, your guests have come to the restaurant to eat. As a result, the entrée order, for the most part, is a given. This means you must exercise your best skills for those additional selling opportunities such as appetizers, drinks, and desserts.

To practice your suggestive selling techniques, avoid using general terms like drink, cocktail, appetizer, or dessert. Since our food and beverage products are the best, this should be easy for you. There will always be those guests who are having trouble making a decision on what to drink or whether to have a cocktail at all. There is nothing wrong with asking a guest what he/she feels like, a certain favorite liquor, and making suggestions using your knowledge of our extensive recipe list.

Know your product line and how to describe it

Our drink names are much more likely to entice guests to purchase than if you merely ask whether or not the guests want a cocktail before dinner. Again,

forget common terms like a drink, cocktail, appetizer, or dessert. These don't go beyond the guest's expectations. Everyone uses them.

Know how to respond when guests ask for recommendations

When this happens, use it as a selling and guest satisfaction opportunity. Since our products are the best available you can help your guest narrow their selection field by recommending:

Your personal favorite and why. If you enjoy it, your enthusiasm for it will show.

Your best seller. Your previous guest will let you know whether or not it is good.

---

### Expanded Guidance (Supplemental)

Suggestive selling behind the bar is about confidence, timing, and authenticity. Guests seated at the bar are often more open to interaction and guidance than table guests. When executed properly, suggestive selling enhances the guest experience while increasing revenue.

### Mindset: Selling Is Hospitality

Bartenders must understand that selling is not manipulation—it is service. Guests rely on your expertise to navigate options. When you do not make recommendations, you force guests to guess, often resulting in lower satisfaction and lower check averages.

Selling well means caring enough to guide.

### Language That Drives Sales

Avoid passive or open-ended language that places the burden on the guest. Instead of:

- *"Can I get you something to drink?"*

Use:

- *"Are we starting with one of our signature cocktails or a glass of wine?"*

This approach feels confident and helpful, not aggressive.

### Reading the Guest

Every guest wants a different level of engagement. Some want conversation, others want efficiency. Good bartenders adjust their selling style accordingly.

Key signals to watch:

- Eye contact and body language
- Speed of responses
- Willingness to ask questions

Adapt without abandoning standards.

### Beverage-Focused Selling Opportunities

Bartenders have constant opportunities to upsell without pressure:

- Suggesting premium spirits when guests order well drinks
- Offering a second round before glasses are empty
- Recommending wine pairings with food
- Highlighting seasonal or featured cocktails

These moments feel natural when done with confidence.

### Handling Objections Gracefully

If a guest declines a suggestion, acknowledge it smoothly and move on. Never argue or push. A simple “No problem at all” keeps the interaction positive and preserves trust for the next opportunity.

### Personal Favorites and Best Sellers

Guests trust enthusiasm. When you genuinely enjoy a product, your excitement communicates value. Use personal favorites and proven best sellers to narrow choices quickly and confidently.

### Long-Term Impact

Consistent suggestive selling compounds income over time. Small increases in average checks across many guests produce significant annual gains. Bartenders who embrace this mindset control their earnings and build stronger guest relationships.

# UPSELLING BEVERAGES

## Cocktails

Guests do not come to a bar or restaurant to browse for a drink. They are there to buy. So sell them!

Know your products! What are the daily specials, premiums, super-premium brands, house specialties, current and upcoming promotions?

Start out by suggesting daily specials or wine, instead of saying, "What would you like to drink?"

If a guest wants a specific drink, such as a vodka and tonic; suggest a premium brand. (Example: Do you have a vodka preference? We serve Kettle One, Belvedere, Stolli, etc.)

If a guest is undecided about what they want to drink, make some recommendations based on: season/weather, time of day, and guest profile. (Example: "We have great...; the bartender makes a terrific...")

## Wine

Wine must be suggested to every table. A good question that servers often wonder, but are sometimes afraid to ask is, "When do you sell wine?" The most logical time to take a wine order is while you are taking the food order. For this to be done, it is important for the wine list to be handed to the guest when they receive the menu. If you do not make this attempt, then your chances of a wine sale are 99% shot.

A wine list is nothing more and nothing less than a selling tool. Its sole purpose is to enhance the sales of wine. The wine list never sells the wine...the server sells the wine! As you will know all the dishes featured on a food menu, it is also important to know all the wines on your wine list. One very good suggestion here would be for you to select one wine from each of the basic categories of red, white, and blush dinner wines. This way you will have no problem at all in quickly recommending the proper wine for every dish.

## Non-Alcoholic

Not all guests are out to party. These guests still are looking to have a great

time and be included in the fun. This is still an opportunity to upsell. Offer designer drinks, something different or fun.

---

## Expanded Guidance (Supplemental)

Upselling beverages is one of the most controllable revenue drivers behind the bar. Unlike food, beverage decisions are often made emotionally and in the moment. Bartenders who guide confidently shape the guest experience while increasing check averages naturally.

### Cocktail Upselling: Control the First Question

The first question sets the ceiling for the entire transaction. When bartenders ask open-ended questions, guests default to safe or low-cost choices. When bartenders suggest, guests follow.

Effective opening language includes:

- "Are we starting with one of our signature cocktails or a glass of wine?"
- "We have a great seasonal cocktail that's been very popular tonight."

This positions premium options as the default, not the upgrade.

### Premium Brand Transitions

When a guest orders a standard cocktail, always offer a brand choice. This should be done confidently and without apology.

Example execution:

- "Do you have a vodka preference, or may I recommend one?"

If the guest declines, move on smoothly. If they accept, you have increased the check without changing the guest's experience—only enhancing it.

### Guiding the Undecided Guest

Indecision is an opportunity. Guests who say "I'm not sure" are asking for leadership. Use three filters to guide them quickly:

- Season/Weather: lighter and refreshing vs. rich and spirit-forward
- Time of Day: bright and crisp earlier, bolder later
- Guest Profile: adventurous vs. classic

Offer one or two confident options, not a full list.

### Wine Upselling at the Bar

Wine must always be suggested, especially when food is involved. The bartender's role is to narrow choices, not recite the list.

Knowing one dependable wine from each category (red, white, blush) allows fast, confident recommendations that reduce guest hesitation and increase sales.

Wine language should be approachable, not technical. Guests respond better to flavor descriptions than regions or production methods unless they ask.

### Using the Wine List as a Tool

The wine list supports the sale—it does not make it. The bartender must introduce, guide, and close the sale. Presenting the list without guidance dramatically reduces the chance of an order.

Handing the wine list early signals that wine is part of the experience, not an afterthought.

### Non-Alcoholic Upselling

Non-alcoholic guests should never feel excluded. Offering creative, well-presented options communicates hospitality and inclusivity.

Designer sodas, mocktails, and specialty non-alcoholic beverages often carry strong margins and enhance the guest experience just as much as alcoholic drinks.

### Consistency Builds Income

Upselling is not about pushing—it is about offering. When bartenders make suggestions consistently, guests come to expect guidance. Over time, this habit increases average checks, improves tips, and builds bartender confidence.

## UPSELLING APPETIZERS AND DESSERTS

Our guests are on a journey and our restaurants are their destinations. Our menu is unique and there will be many questions to answer. Your job is to guide these guests on their journey. You need to paint a picture in the guest's head. To accomplish this you must use sizzling words when describing our appetizers and desserts.

Put yourself in the guests' position. We all have been to those restaurants where the server asked, "Would you like to start out with an appetizer?" It sounds like they are reading from a script. The guests cannot picture the appetizer in their heads. Pick a couple of appetizers that are your favorites and know everything there is to know about them. This way you can approach the

table with,  
“May I suggest the..., or, One of my favorite appetizers is the...”

The same procedures go when it comes to our desserts. We have awesome desserts on our menus that guests need to visualize in their heads while you suggest them.

#### Ask Direct, not In-direct Questions

Do not ask questions that can be answered with a yes/no. Ask specific questions, not general questions. For example, instead of asking,

“Is your steak

o.k.?” say something like,

“How is that perfect medium-rare steak? How do you like the seasoning?”

#### Have Fun and Make Money

The amount of money you ultimately make as a server is up to you!!!

The great thing about this business is that you don’t have to sell an appetizer, bottle of wine, and dessert to every customer to make thousands more each year; only every tenth or twelfth guest.

---

#### Expanded Guidance (Supplemental)

Upselling appetizers and desserts is about creating desire, not asking permission. Guests often don’t plan to order these items until they are guided visually and emotionally. Bartenders play a critical role in this process because bar guests are more conversational and receptive to suggestion.

#### Painting the Picture

Guests buy what they can imagine. Descriptions should engage the senses—texture, temperature, aroma, and indulgence. Avoid menu recitation and instead focus on experience-based language.

Effective phrasing examples:

- “It’s crispy on the outside, warm and rich in the center.”
- “It’s one of those desserts people end up sharing and ordering again.”

The goal is to make the guest feel like they are missing out if they don’t try it.

#### Choosing Your Go-To Items

Every bartender should have:

- Two appetizer favorites
- Two dessert favorites

Know how they are prepared, what they taste like, how large the portion is, and whether they are ideal for sharing. Confidence comes from familiarity.

When you recommend what you genuinely enjoy, guests trust you more.

### Timing Matters

Appetizer suggestions should come after drinks are delivered, when guests are relaxed and open. Dessert suggestions should come after the entrée is cleared, once guests have had a moment to reset.

Rushing the suggestion feels transactional. Waiting too long misses the opportunity.

### Direct Questions Drive Decisions

Direct questions guide guests toward action. Yes/no questions allow guests to disengage. Specific questions invite conversation and decision-making.

Examples:

- Instead of "Would you like an appetizer?"  
Use: "Are we sharing the [appetizer name] or the [appetizer name] to start?"
- Instead of "Do you want dessert?"  
Use: "Are we finishing with the chocolate dessert or the seasonal special?"

### Desserts as a Final Impression

Dessert is often the last emotional touchpoint of the experience. Even guests who say they are full may be tempted by something light, shareable, or indulgent.

Bartenders should frame dessert as part of the experience, not an extra step.

### Income Mindset

Upselling is cumulative. You do not need to succeed every time. Consistent effort produces results over time. Selling to just a fraction of guests dramatically increases income.

Bartenders who embrace this mindset control their earnings while enhancing the guest experience.

