SHOWHOW · CHECKLIST

# Bar Opening Checklist

A bar that opens half-ready loses the first hour's sales to bartenders running for ice and cutting limes. This checklist is for bartenders opening a small bar or the bar in a restaurant. It covers stock, ice, garnishes, glassware, taps and the register, in the order that keeps the bartender behind the bar instead of in the back. Add your own spirits and garnish list to make it yours.

## What you'll need

- Keys and alarm code
- Stock list with par levels
- Cutting board, knife and garnish trays
- Starting cash for the register

## Steps

- [ ] **Turn off the alarm and switch on the lights and coolers.**
  Check that the glass washer and the fridges are running.

- [ ] **Read last night's shift log.**
  Breakages, low stock, kegs changed and anything that needs fixing.

- [ ] **Fill the ice wells with fresh ice.**
  Use an ice scoop, never a glass.

  **Watch out:** If a glass breaks near the ice, empty and refill the whole well.

- [ ] **Restock beer, wine, mixers and spirits to par.**
  Oldest stock to the front. Tell the manager about anything you can't restock.

- [ ] **Pour a little from each tap and check the gas.**
  Change any empty keg now, not mid-rush. Follow your bar's keg-changing procedure.

- [ ] **Prepare garnishes for the night.**
  Cut citrus, refill olives and cherries, and cover the trays. Prep about as much as last night used.

- [ ] **Make fresh juices and syrups, if your bar does.**
  Label each one with the name and date. Throw out anything past your bar's time limit.

- [ ] **Polish and stock glassware for each station.**
  Check every glass for chips and throw out any chipped glass right away.

- [ ] **Set out bar tools: shakers, strainers, jiggers, spoons and towels.**
  Same place every night, so anyone can find them.

- [ ] **Count the starting cash into the register.**
  Check that the card terminal works and have the open tabs screen ready.

- [ ] **Wipe down the bar top, stools and menus.**
  Check the restrooms too, if nobody else does.

- [ ] **Check the ID policy and today's specials with the manager.**
  Know the legal drinking age where you work and how your bar checks ID.

  **Watch out:** If there's any doubt about someone's age, ask for ID before you pour.

## How to adapt it

- Write your par levels into the restock step so the opener knows how much to stock.
- Add a photo of a fully set garnish tray to the garnish step.
- Keep keg changing as its own procedure, with photos of your coupler.
- If the bar and the restaurant open together, combine this with the restaurant checklist.