SHOWHOW · ONBOARDING

Employee Onboarding Checklist

Small teams lose new hires in the first few weeks, usually because nobody had time to show them the ropes. This checklist is for owners and managers of cafés, shops, salons and cleaning crews who hire a few people a year and want each one to settle in fast. It covers the week before they start, their first shift and the first month, so nothing depends on who happens to be working that day.

What you'll need

- Signed offer letter
- Uniform or name tag
- Keys, door codes or logins
- Their first week's schedule

Steps

01 **Send the new hire their first week's schedule.**

Do it at least 3 days before they start. Include the start time, who to ask for, where to park and which door to use.

02 **Collect the paperwork you need for payroll before day one.**

Tax and work eligibility forms, direct deposit details and an emergency contact. Follow the rules where you operate; ask your accountant if you're unsure.

> **Watch out:** Don't let anyone work a paid shift before their payroll paperwork is in.

03 **Get their uniform, name tag, locker and logins ready.**

A new hire who waits 40 minutes for a password feels unwelcome before they've done anything.

04 **Pick one person to look after them for the first week.**

Tell that person in advance and give them time on the schedule to actually do it.

05 **Start day one with a 10-minute walk-around.**

Restrooms, break area, where to leave their things, emergency exits, the first aid kit and who is in charge on each shift.

06 **Introduce them to everyone working that shift.**
Say what each person does and who to ask about what.

07 **Go through the safety basics before they touch any equipment.**
Hot surfaces, sharp tools, chemicals, lifting and what to do if they get hurt.

08 **Share the procedures they need this week, not all of them.**
Three to five is plenty for week one. Add more once they've done the basics a few times.

09 **Let them watch a task, then do it while someone watches them.**
Watch, do it with help, do it alone. Skipping the middle stage is where most mistakes come from.

10 **End the first shift with a 5-minute check-in.**
Ask what was confusing and what they'd like to see again tomorrow.

11 **Sign off each task once they can do it alone.**
Keep a simple record so the next manager on shift knows what they're ready for.

12 **Hold a short review at the end of week one.**
What's going well, one thing to improve, and what they'll learn next week.

13 **Check in again at 30 days.**
Ask how they feel about the job and whether anything still isn't clear. Most people decide whether to stay during this first month.

How to adapt it

- Plan week one before you post the job ad. It forces you to plan the training.
- Pair new hires with your most patient person, not always your fastest one.
- Keep a list of the questions every new hire asks, and answer them in a procedure.
- If you have several locations, keep one checklist and add the local details as a separate step.