

Bar

The Drink Delivery Standard

Five steps from the order to the glass on the table. A guest tastes a cocktail for a few seconds and looks at it, and at how it arrived, for half an hour.

Who Bartenders and bar waiters, checked by the bar manager	When Every drink served, at the counter or at a table	You need Dry trays, coasters, the glass on each spec, garnish cut today
Measured by Simple drinks served within 4 minutes · Cocktails served within 7 minutes · Every glass set down on a coaster		

1 Keep the time

Our target is four minutes from order to guest for wine, beer and soft drinks, and seven for a cocktail. If a drink will take longer, tell the guest before the fifth minute and give a new time.

"The Ramos Fizz takes a little longer to shake, Mrs Tanaka. About five more minutes."

Common mistake Saying nothing and hoping. The guest watches three later orders leave the bar before theirs.

2 Glass and garnish

Use the glass named on the spec, chilled where the spec says so, and check it against the light for chips and lip marks. The garnish goes on last, just before the drink leaves the bar.

"Coupe, chilled, twist expressed over the top. Ready for table four."

Common mistake Swapping the glass because the right one is in the washer. A Martini in a tumbler is a different drink to the guest.

3 Carry on a tray

Every drink travels on a dry tray with a mat, even one glass three steps from the bar. Hold stemmed glasses by the stem and tumblers low on the base, never near the rim.

"Table 4: seat 1 Old Fashioned, seat 2 tonic without ice."

Common mistake Carrying a single glass by hand because it is quicker. Fingers end up where the guest's lips will go.

4 Set down and name

From the guest's right where possible, put the coaster down first, then the glass, with any logo facing the guest. Name the drink as you set it down, so nobody has to say whose it is.

"Your Old Fashioned, Mr Novak, with the Japanese whisky you asked for."

Common mistake Asking "Who had the Old Fashioned?" across the table. The order was taken by seat, so the server should know.

5 Check back

Return within two minutes of the first sip and ask about the drink itself. If it is not what the guest wanted, take it away without discussion and make it again, or offer something else.

"How is the balance, Ms Haddad? I can make it a little drier if you prefer."

Common mistake Calling "Everything okay?" while walking past. The guest says yes so that you will leave.

Before the Drink Leaves the Bar

Twelve checks in the ten seconds between the bar and the guest. A bar inspection scores each of them on its own.

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| ☐ Glass matches the spec for this drink | ☐ Tray dry, with a clean mat |
| ☐ No chips, cracks or lip marks against the light | ☐ One coaster ready for every glass |
| ☐ Chilled glass still frosted, not wet | ☐ Straw or stirrer only where the spec says |
| ☐ Ice the right format and freshly scooped | ☐ Seat number known for every glass |
| ☐ Garnish cut today and placed as on the spec | ☐ Order time under 4 minutes, or 7 for cocktails |
| ☐ Rim clean, no drips down the outside | ☐ Guest told of any delay before minute five |

How to use this with your team

Pin it at the pick-up point. For one week the bar manager stops one tray a night at the pass and checks it against the list in front of the team. The point is the habit, not catching anyone out.

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