

OPENING CHECKLIST FOR RESTAURANT SERVERS

Improving efficiency is key to helping restaurant owners keep payroll and inventory costs in check. One way to streamline employee tasks is to create a thorough and easy-to-follow checklist. The list below offers owners a base for crafting a comprehensive opening checklist for servers.

SERVER OPENING CHECKLIST FOR FLAWLESS RESTAURANT SET UP

POWER & TECHNOLOGY

- Turn on all lighting (bar, dining room, patio, etc.).
- Ensure music, digital displays, and other electronic elements are on.
- Start up the Point of Sale (POS) system, self-serve kiosks, and tabletop devices.
- Confirm handheld devices (tablets, etc.) are fully charged.
- Check ink and paper levels in receipt printers; replace if low.

FRONT-OF-HOUSE PREP

- Count money in the register and ensure there is adequate change.
- Sweep and vacuum floors, including bathrooms and waiting areas.
- Clean and restock bathrooms (soap, towels, toilet paper, etc.).
- Take chairs down from tables and arrange them properly.

TABLE SETUP & GUEST ESSENTIALS

- Set tables with dining ware (plates, silverware, napkins, décor, glassware, etc.).
- Fill water pitchers and prepare non-alcoholic beverages (iced tea, lemonade, coffee).
- Check condiment levels (ketchup, mustard, creamers, jams, etc.).

TEAM COORDINATION & SERVICE PREP

- Review reservation lists and check in with the host about any key guest needs.
- Meet with the culinary team to discuss daily specials, sold-out items, or menu changes.
- Check with bar staff for drink specials or updates to the beer, wine, and cocktail list.
- Consult with the floor manager on any customer incentives, service adjustments, or promotions.



PRO TIP

Need a closing checklist? Use this list in reverse and adjust as necessary for specific circumstances.