

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.

- Turn on all lighting, including bar lights, dining room, patio, etc. Make sure any music, digital display boards, or electronic elements are also turned on.
- Start up your Point of Sale System, self-serve kiosks, tabletop devices, etc.
- Check that any handheld devices, like tablets, are fully charged.
- Check ink and paper levels in your receipt printers; replace if low.
- Count money in the register and make sure you have adequate change.
- Sweep and vacuum the floors, including bathrooms and waiting areas.
- Inspect and clean the bathrooms, making sure all soap, towel, and toilet paper dispensers are full.
- Take chairs down from tables and place them at each seating spot. Clean tables thoroughly.
- Set dishware, including plates, silverware, napkins décor, glassware, etc., on every table. Roll additional silverware to have on hand for rush hours.
- Fill water pitchers and make any non-alcoholic beverages, like iced tea, and lemonade.
- Check all condiments (ketchup, mustard, creamers, individual jams, etc.) for proper fill levels.
- Preview reservation lists and check in with the host about any critical reservation information or guests' service needs.
- Meet with the culinary team to learn about daily specials, sold-out items, or any changes to the menu.
- Check in with bar staff for any drink specials or changes to the beer, wine, or cocktail list.
- Consult with the floor manager regarding any customer incentives, service changes, or promotions.

Pro Tip:

For a closing checklist, use the above list in reverse, and edit for specific circumstances as necessary.