

# BARTENDER AND SERVER WORKBOOK

**VOL5**

## Preventing Guest Intoxication

Coaching the Experienced Bartender & Server



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**VOL5**

## **Preventing Guest Intoxication**

Coaching the Experienced Bartender & Server

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## **Welcome and Introduction**

The Coaching the Experienced Bartender series is designed for bartenders and servers like you who are already skilled in the basics of serving alcoholic beverages. The objective of the workbook is to refresh your knowledge and awareness and build on your current skills and training to help you reach a new level of responsible alcohol service.

One of the most important duties you have as a bartender or alcohol server is helping your guests drink responsibly to promote a satisfying hospitality experience. It helps ensure the safety of your guests and others in the community. Just like first responders, bartenders, alcohol servers, and other front of the house staff have a responsibility to protect the community. You accomplish this task by preventing your patrons from becoming intoxicated, by not serving intoxicated patrons, and by not allowing intoxicated patrons to drive away from your location. Your knowledge of responsible alcohol service and your ability to apply this knowledge is absolutely vital to the success of your establishment and to the safety of your community.

**One of the most important duties you have as a bartender or alcohol server is helping your guests drink responsibly to promote a satisfying hospitality experience.**

Public safety must be a personal and professional consideration of everyone in the alcoholic beverage industry. Professionals in the retail beverage alcohol industry must adopt and employ a personal value system for the safe service of alcohol and commit to preventing the the sale of alcoholic beverages to underage persons, persons who are intoxicated, and/or persons habitually addicted to alcohol.

It may be counterintuitive to those in the hospitality business to deny someone alcohol service. Refusing service can place employees in a challenging and stressful situation. Sometimes putting limits on alcohol service is the best thing you can do for your patron. Alcoholic beverage service policies, practices, training, and management prepare and help you to provide your guests with a wonderful experience and help you to protect your guests, yourself, and others from alcohol-related harms. In the long run, guests and the community



## Preventing Guest Intoxication

Why do you believe your patrons drink alcoholic beverages?

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People drink for many reasons. For some, wine, beer, or spirits are an enjoyable part of a good meal. Others drink during special celebrations or social gatherings. They are celebrating. Their favorite team is winning or their team is losing. They are just hanging out with friends, or they could be lonely. Sometimes, they don't even need a reason. Guests who drink for the wrong reasons and guests who don't have to pay for their drinks are more likely than other guests to drink too much alcohol.

Unfortunately, people also drink when they are upset or depressed. This may lead them to drink more than they would normally. Thus, knowing why your guests are drinking is an important part of preventing intoxication.

What makes alcohol enjoyable in moderation can make it dangerous if moderation is not maintained. When moderation is not maintained, incidents may occur that have serious consequences for everyone involved.

Even if your position does not involve the service of alcohol, at some point you will probably have contact with guests who have been drinking or who are intoxicated. It is the responsibility of every employee associated with the front of the house to understand alcohol and how it can affect guests. The more you know about the physical impact of alcohol, the better equipped you will be to serve alcohol with care and ensure that all guests have an enjoyable time.

Putting the emphasis on preventing patron intoxication may seem counterproductive to those in the business of providing alcohol service to guests. Preventing alcohol intoxication can cause challenging and stressful situations, but putting limits on alcohol service is the best and only way to prevent patron intoxication and to protect your guests, yourself, your establishment, and your community.



Can bartenders and servers intercede in patron drinking so to prevent patron intoxication and prevent alcohol-related harms? Or is the amount of alcohol consumed by a patron up to the patron?

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You have seen situations in which patrons drink too much. Many bartenders and servers believe they can do nothing to prevent that intoxication. There are times when providing a patron with whatever he or she wants is not the right thing to do. Your guest's freedom to get drunk is limited by the risks he or she might cause harm to your other patrons and the community. You know what is at stake. This booklet explains how to take control over patron intoxication in a way that actually provides better service.

Do bartenders and servers have a professional and ethical responsibility to help patrons avoid alcohol related harms?

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Being a professional means being ethical and moral, and following the law. Preventing service and sales to intoxicated persons or underage people is in the best interest of the customer, the establishment and yourself. Experienced managers know the way to achieve these objectives is to have sales and service procedures that are understood and practiced by everyone in the establishment.

Intervention involves more than stopping alcohol service to guests who are intoxicated. It includes everything you, your coworkers, and managers do to influence guests' attitudes and behaviors as they drink alcohol. In fact, not letting guests become intoxicated is just as important as not serving alcohol to guests who are already intoxicated.

## Speak With Patrons on Arrival

At which point should hosts and hostess, bartenders, managers, and other front of the house staff be evaluated for intoxication?

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Monitor guests from the moment they arrive on the premises until they are ready to leave. To be successful when evaluating guests, you will need input from coworkers who have come in contact with them. These coworkers include valets, wait staff, bus staff, bartenders, security, hosts, hostesses, and greeters, and coat check or restroom attendants.

Take a few moments to talk with your customers when they first arrive to assess service needs and their condition. Engage them to determine if they have consumed alcoholic beverages before arriving. Use this opportunity to assess indications of intoxication. The behaviors and emotions of your patrons on arrival is useful for establishing a baseline for comparison of any changes throughout their visit that might indicate intoxication. Make a mental note of the patron's gender, approximate weight, age, and body type (e.g., muscular or overweight) to factor into the equation as you count their drinks. Examples of conditions to note when customers first arrive include mood and initial behavior (e.g., quiet, boisterous, relaxed, or tense), signs of illness or fatigue (sniffles, drowsiness, and cough), indications of use of medicines or drugs, or having already consumed alcohol (alcohol on the breath, glazed or bloodshot eyes, references in conversation to prior drinking).

Engage your customers in a conversation rather than asking questions they can answer with yes or no. Is the person in a good mood? If the customer is a previous guest, how has he or she behaved on prior visits? This knowledge allows you to set the pace and tone of service to avoid trouble, as well as to make note of customers who are



depressed, impaired, aggressive, or out to get drunk. Your observations will be based upon what you see, hear, and elicit from your customers during normal contact, conversations you initiate, and observations of the customer's interactions with other people. Careful observation can provide a great deal of the information that will enable you to serve your guests responsibly.

During the conversation, look directly at the patron. Are his or her eyes bloodshot, glassy, or dilated? Listen to the customer's answers. Was your question understood? Was the answer delivered in a normal tone of voice? Is the posture steady? Find out if the customer has had anything to eat, and if so, how long ago, and what was consumed. If you suspect that the guest has been consuming alcohol, you may need to ask more questions.

### **Some Questions You Might Want To Ask**

- “Hi, how are you today?”
- “What have you been doing to enjoy the day today?”
- “What have you been doing to take advantage of this weather?”

Try asking the customer questions about the weather or about the local sports team. When he or she answers you, listen closely and intently to what the customer says. Show that you are interested by making eye contact, nodding. Ask yourself whether the train of thought follows your question, the speech is clear, and the response is appropriate to the question. If

not, the guest may already a step or two ahead of you on the path to intoxication.

In many situations, observing people and reading body language are more important than listening. Be alert to loudness or quietness of conversation and orders, facial expressions and gestures, tone of voice, and posture.

Your initial conversation with a guest is an opportunity to pick up information and clarify concerns you might have as the evening ensues. Find out who is driving and what his or her intentions are for the remainder of the evening.



## Look for Clues of Intoxication

What actions should you take to engage patrons when they first arrive at the premises?

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You may only have a few minutes with each customer, but there are certain clues that you can look for. Some of these clues are obvious and are common indicators of possible intoxication. Some intoxicated persons may not display any clues at all and you must learn to recognize possible warning signs. Other guests may inadvertently show you they are intoxicated. Clues of intoxication include:

- **Stumbling or staggering when entering or leaving the establishment;**
- **Leaning against the wall, furniture, or other people for support;**
- **Slurring of words when speaking;**
- **Ask the same questions repeatedly; and being inappropriately loud, excited, or roughhousing with others.**

When you observe a customer, what you are really doing is rating him or her. Use the FBI mnemonic (memory aid) to identify the guest's status in the hierarchy of inebriation:

**F.B.I** > **F** = Fine  
**B** = Beginning Intoxication  
**I** = Intoxicated

Look for signs of impaired reactions, loss of train of thought, swaying or drowsiness, slurred or irregular speech, violent or difficult behavior, and loss of coordination or any of the other indicators impairment. The extent of impairment is a clue to the extent of intoxication. By familiarizing yourself with each person, their personality, and behavioral clues, you should be able to tell whether or not to serve that person.

## Eight Serving Practices to Prevent Intoxication

What are some serving practices that can be used to prevent patron intoxication?

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Once you determine that the patron is not intoxicated and you make the decision to serve him or her alcoholic beverages, your responsibility shifts from determining intoxication to preventing intoxication. Your goal should be to ensure that guests have a wonderful time at your establishment but do not reach the level where you need to cut off service to them.

Offering a wide variety of beverage choices, both alcohol and alcohol-free, welcomes and accommodates a larger part of the community. On-premises establishments should promote food, not just have it available. Educating guests about beverage choices creates a safe social gathering place. Provide water and appropriate non-alcoholic beverages. Drinking alcohol causes dehydration, making guests thirsty. Thirst can cause guests to drink more than they ordinarily would to quench their thirst. You can help by offering water with drinks and refilling water glasses often.

There are a number of interventions bartenders and alcohol servers can use to prevent intoxication:

### **#1: *Monitoring Alcohol Service, Consumption and Pacing of Alcohol Service***

What are some common methods to bartenders and servers can use to prevent patron intoxication?

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The average person metabolizes about 2/3 of a standard drink unit each hour. If you limit alcohol service to one drink per hour, the patron will ultimately build up sufficient excess alcohol to become intoxicated, but that will take many hours. As a practical rule, however, serving patrons only one drink per hour will prevent intoxication. Other common methods include: Waiting for your customers to reorder alcoholic beverages before bringing a new beverage, refrain from encouraging your patron to reorder when his or her drink is still part full, serving one drink at a time, removing a glass before serving the next drink, and discouraging or prohibiting multiple drink orders, especially at closing time. For steady customers who tend to drink too much, discuss and set a limit with them personally, with input and support from your manager.

There are many ways to track drink service. Often the business point-of-sale (POS) system allows the bartender or server to track the amount of alcohol served to each person on a tab. Other ways include a paper tab for each patron, tracking the number of straws taken from consumed beverages, or using beverage napkins.

For example, a bartender can keep a paper tab on the bar in front of the guest. It can include the name of the patron facing the bartender and the bartender's name facing the patron. The bartender can ring each beverage on the tab as the patron orders and receives the drink. It is a good idea to make a note of the time the drink was delivered to help in keeping track of how many standard drink units (SDUs) the patron has consumed per hour. If there is more than one guest in a party, you can create one tab for the party, but the tab should reference each patron separately by seat number so you can keep track of each patron's drink consumption.

In many establishments, patrons may start a tab in the bar and then move to a dining table. Keeping track of alcohol service requires transferring the tab or the knowledge of the number of drinks consumed by each patron to the table. When a guest leaves the bar and goes to a table, note the table number on the tab and transfer the tab to the table server. It may be appropriate to hand the tab to a manager to perform the transfer.

It is important to transfer the tab or information about the amount of alcohol served to and



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consumed by each patron when staff changes. The incoming server has a responsibility to base additional drink service on the amount of alcohol previously served and not to start each patron's drink service as if the patron had just arrived.

Large venues and properties such as hotels and cruise ships present unique situations when there are multiple alcohol serving locations. If the POS system connects each service location, then requiring each patron to have a tab, even for cash sales, allows the bartender and server to track alcohol consumption as patrons move from serving location to location. An alternate process is to use wristbands to track alcohol service by having the bartenders or servers notch the wristband for each alcoholic beverage served.

Is it a good practice to notify a manager when the guest has ordered their 3rd or subsequent alcoholic beverage at the premises? Why?

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### **#2:** *Notify a Manager When the Guest has Ordered a Third Alcoholic Beverage*

An excellent practice to use to prevent intoxication is to ask a manager to talk with and assess any patron who has ordered his or her third alcoholic beverage and any subsequent beverages.

### **#3:** *Providing Water and Non-Alcoholic Beverages*

What is the benefit of providing a water-back with each alcoholic beverage served?

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Providing water to drinkers is an excellent practice to prevent intoxication. Not only does water help to dilute the alcohol in the drinker's system, but also holding the glass of water gives the drinker something else to do while at the premises, thus occupying his or her time. In addition, having water available offers the guest an alternate beverage with which to quench thirst.

Providing “mocktails” for designated drivers is a great way to keep a driver sober, but allow him or her to feel like part of the party or social gathering.

When a guest asks for a drink served straight up, bring a glass of water along with it. Serve water with all drinks. To help you guests consume water along with alcoholic beverages, alcohol servers should always carry glasses of water on their tray. A glass of water should be provided with every alcoholic beverage served.

As an alternative to water, many bars and restaurants focus on creating and providing non-alcoholic beverages to compliment their alcoholic beverages. When guests know that non-alcoholic beverages are available, they are more likely to ask for them. However, guests usually fail to ask for these beverages because establishments do not promote them.

People who don't drink alcohol want beverage choices just as alcohol drinkers do. Many guests are willing to pay the same amount for quality non-alcoholic drinks as they would for alcoholic drinks. In addition, guests may like to switch to a non-alcoholic beverage after drinking a couple of alcoholic drinks. However, if the selection of alternative drinks is limited or unappealing, guests may continue to drink and overconsume alcohol or stop purchasing beverages altogether.

Providing “mocktails” for designated drivers is a great way to keep a driver sober, but allow him or her to feel like part of the party or social gathering. On occasion, guests may want to have non-alcoholic beverages or virgin drinks. Having recipes on hand for good non-alcoholic beverages is a good idea.



## **#4: Offering and Encouraging Food Consumption**

Is food an important factor in preventing patron intoxication? Why?

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Check the best types of food a patron can consume to slow the absorption of alcohol and thus reduce intoxication?

- |                                        |                                         |
|----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bread         | <input type="checkbox"/> Onion rings    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pizza         | <input type="checkbox"/> Pretzels       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potato Chips  | <input type="checkbox"/> Peanuts        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cheese Sticks | <input type="checkbox"/> Fried Calamari |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chili         | <input type="checkbox"/> Chicken wings  |

Offering food and encouraging food consumption is one of the most important things you can do to help prevent intoxication. Food helps keep alcohol in the stomach, slowing the rate at which it reaches the small intestine, where 75% to 85% of alcohol absorption occurs.

Some types of food do a better job than others. Foods high in fat and/or protein, such as pizza, chicken wings, cheese, and deep-fried items, are the best types to serve because they are digested more slowly. Consider the table below identifying foods commonly available in alcoholic beverage service establishments and whether these foods can delay intoxication.

Many bars and restaurants provide snacks for their patrons. These snacks should be non-salty foods. Salty snacks tend to cause guests to become thirsty and consume more alcoholic beverages than they should to prevent intoxication. While foods such as peanuts, pretzels, and chips are common bar fare, these items can make guests thirsty and increase their consumption of alcohol.

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Provide food or snacks to customers at minimal or no cost. Offering food and snacks at minimal or no cost can help you to prevent or delay your patrons from becoming intoxicated.

<b>Food</b>	<b>Good or Bad Choice and Why or Why Not?</b>
<b>Bread</b>	Not a good choice. Bread is a carbohydrate, which is easily digested.
<b>Pizza</b>	Good choice. The cheese on pizza allows pizza to be categorized as a fatty food, which is digested more slowly.
<b>Potato Chips</b>	Not a good choice. While potato chips are fried, they are carbohydrates and they are salty. Carbohydrates are easily and quickly digested, and salt contributes to dehydration.
<b>Cheese Sticks</b>	A good choice. Cheese is a fatty food. It is also deep fried, making it a good choice.
<b>Chili</b>	A good choice. The meat in the chili is a protein, which is digested more slowly.
<b>Onion Rings</b>	A good choice. Deep-frying means onion rings are fatty and are therefore digested more slowly.
<b>Pretzels</b>	Not a good choice. Pretzels are carbohydrates, which are digested quickly. Also, they are also salty, which can cause thirst and an increase the consumption of alcohol.
<b>Peanuts</b>	Not a good choice. Although considered in vegetarian diets to be a source of both protein and fat, they are salty, which can cause thirst and increase the consumption of alcohol.
<b>Fried Calamari</b>	A good choice. Deep-frying means the fried calamari is fatty, and calamari is a good source of protein, both of which are digested more slowly.
<b>Chicken Wings</b>	A good choice. Deep-frying means the chicken wings are fatty, and chicken is a protein, both of which take time to digest.

## Serving Practice #5: *Follow Standard Drink Recipes*

Why is it important to follow standard drink recipes and not over-pour?

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What is the most effective pouring method to prevent over-pouring?

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To some extent, you can control how much people drink by always measuring the alcohol you serve. Studies show most bartenders over-pour. Never mix strong drinks. You aren't doing your guests any favors because strong drinks catch them off guard. You also aren't doing your establishment any favors because you're giving away expensive ingredients.

Frequently used drink recipes should be standardized to help employees more accurately count drinks. Everyone at the establishment should make these drinks exactly the same way, with exactly the same amount of alcohol.

Avoid over-pouring when mixing drinks. Over-pouring makes it difficult to count the actual number of drinks consumed by a guest. It also makes it difficult for guests to keep track of and regulate their own drinking. For example, let's say that the recipe for a gin and tonic calls for 1½ ounces of 80-proof gin. If you mix three gin and tonics for a guest, but you over-pour the gin in each drink by ½ ounce, you have actually served the guest four drinks instead of three! Follow house recipes and be consistent. Guests should not be able to tell when different bartenders are making their drinks. Measure alcohol shots using a shot glass or pouring system.



## **#6: *Use Smaller Glasses***

Does the size and shape of glassware influence the patron's perception of receiving a proper amount? How can this influence drink pours?

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Limit the size of drinks by using smaller cups or glasses. Studies show that most bartenders actually over-pour. Drinks served in short, fat glasses look insufficient and bartenders often add extra alcohol to make the drink seem like a regular pour.

While drinks served in large-capacity glasses or containers (e.g., 16-ounce Solo® Cups) may include one SDU, adding 14 to 15 ounces of ice and mixer can easily result in a drink that would seem weak to the patron. That same amount of alcohol served in an 8-ounce or 10-ounce glass might cause the patron to feel he or she was getting the expected drink for the price paid.

## **#7: *Slowing Alcohol Service***

What are some effective practices to slow alcohol service for patrons asking for frequent replenishment?

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Take time clearing used glasses and bringing fresh drinks. If a guest is drinking more quickly than his or her companions, offer a complimentary splash of mixer to extend the time before providing a new alcoholic beverage. Pass the buck when slowing beverage alcohol service. Make it someone else's fault or the fault of the establishment that the service was slowed. Do not serve a patron previously served by a coworker without checking with the

coworker first. Work as a team by relaying information about the customer's drinking situation to other staff.

## **#8: *Providing Entertainment and Activities***

You should provide entertainment and other activities that will involve customers, thereby reducing their reliance on alcohol to have a good time.

Prohibit contests that encourage or reward excessive consumption of alcoholic beverages, such as beer-chugging contests.

## **Speak with Patrons Throughout their Visit**

Take a few moments to chat with your customers throughout their visit to determine any signs of intoxication, including any emotional or behavioral changes over time. Interact with your patrons as part of each drink order. Assess the patron based on that interaction and observation to determine if he or she is a go for further drink service or a no-go.

## **Drink Counting**

Is drink counting a valuable tool in preventing patron intoxication?

Circle your answer:    **Yes**    **No**

Why?

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Establishments should have procedures to help bartenders and servers count the number of drinks served to each guest. Drink counting is the gold standard for preventing intoxication. Drink counting allows you to determine how many SDUs you can safely serve to that patron

and still protect him or her and others from intoxication.

If you can identify a guest's approximate weight and have counted the number of drinks he or she has consumed, you can get a rough estimate of the person's BAC using a BAC estimation chart. That estimation allows you to determine how close the guest is to 0.08 g% and helps you determine whether or when to serve additional alcoholic beverages. Experienced servers can accomplish these assessments instantly without making a patron feel uncomfortable or that he or she is being watched.

### Drink Counting: *Standard Drinks*

What is a standard drink unit (SDU)?

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For Beer? \_\_\_\_\_

For Wine? \_\_\_\_\_

For Spirits? \_\_\_\_\_

An standard drink unit (SDU) is a widely recognized standard for responsible alcohol service. The SDU is used by the federal government, state governments, and every national responsible alcohol retailing training program on which to based reasonable alcohol service. The current dietary guidelines for Americans published by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Service have defined a drink as one 12-ounce bottle of regular strength beer (approximately 4.0 ABV) or wine cooler, one 5-ounce glass of wine, and one 1.5-ounce serving of 80-proof distilled spirits. All of these drinks contain one SDU.



How many standard drink units are in:

\_\_\_\_\_ 3 ounces of 100-proof rum?

\_\_\_\_\_ Three 8-ounce imported beers?

\_\_\_\_\_ 3 ounces of 80-proof whiskey?

\_\_\_\_\_ 60-ounce pitcher of beer?

\_\_\_\_\_ Hurricane with 1.5 ounces of 80-proof light rum,  
1.5 ounces of 80-proof dark rum, and mixers?

When counting drinks, you must first establish the amount of alcohol in a specific drink. The following alcoholic beverages contain approximately the same amount of alcohol and should be counted as one drink: a 12-ounce beer, a 5-ounce glass of wine, 1½ ounces of 80-proof liquor, or 1 ounce of 100-proof liquor. Each of these beverages contains approximately 0.6 ounces of ethanol alcohol. Do not assume that the amount of alcohol in your establishment's serving size is the same as the standard measure. While these beverages serve as the standard measure when counting drinks, some will be counted differently. The proof of the liquor used and the serving size of the drink will affect the count.

### **Drink Counting:** *Beer*

One SDU = one 12-ounce beer. "Regular," normal-strength beer is about 4% alcohol. Micro-brews and malt liquors have a higher percentage of alcohol (look at the label). In beer, a rule of thumb is that the darker and more bitter the beer, the higher the alcohol content. There are exceptions to the rule of thumb. For example, Guinness is actually a low proof beer. However, some craft and specialty beers can have substantial alcohol content. For example, Brewdog's End of History beer clocks in at 55% alcohol. Schorschbrau Schorschbock is rated at 43%, and Brewdog's Sink the Bismarck is rated at 41%. By comparison, Samuel Adams' strongest beer, Utopias, clocks in at 25% and a Budweiser is listed at 5%. One 12-ounce End of History beer represents 11 SDUs.

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These high proof beers should be converted to a SDU in order to count the number of “drinks” your customer has consumed. For example, a 9 % craft beer is about twice as strong as a regular American lager and should be treated as 2 SDUs. A 12 % beer would represent about 3 SDUs. And of course, the size of the beer is equally important. A 22 oz. schooner of standard beer represents almost 2 SDU while a 22 oz. schooner of 9% craft beer is the equivalent of 4 SDUs.

### **Drink Counting:** *Wine*

One SDU = 5 ounces of regular table wine. This standard includes most table wines, whether white, red, rosé, or champagne. With the exception of Chardonnay, red wines have more alcohol content than white wine.

The alcohol content of wine has risen considerably in recent years. Many winemakers now leave grapes on the vines than in past years resulting in higher sugar contents which translate into higher wine alcohol levels. Many wines today have 13 % to 16 % alcohol levels, far more than average tables wines had a few years ago and on which the SDU was based.

Just like beer, not all wines have the same alcohol content. An SDU for fortified wine (wine typically at 13 % or higher alcohol content, resulting from the addition of spirits such as brandy, cognac, or sherry) is only 3 ounces. Remember that a 15% wine has 1/3 again as much alcohol as a 10% wine. Two glasses of a 15% wine is the same as three glasses of a 10% wine. This can make a great deal of difference in the possible intoxication of your patrons.

### **Drink Counting:** *Liquor*

One SDU of spirits is calculated as either 1½ ounces of 80-proof (40%) liquor or 1 ounce of 100-proof (50%) liquor. But just like beer and wine, there are exceptions. Drinks with a higher proof (like grain alcohol, Everclear, or 151-proof rum) far exceed an SDU.

### **Drink Counting:** *Know Your SDUs*

It is important to determine the number of SDU in each alcoholic beverage your establishment serves so that you do not overserve any patron. Some beverages contain more than a single serving of liquor. To determine the actual number of SDUs in these cocktails

when counting drinks, divide the liquor in the cocktail by the standard amount of that liquor found in one drink. Whether a liquor is served straight, such as a 1-ounce shot of 80-proof vodka, or diluted in a mixed drink, such as a vodka and tonic containing 1 ounce of 80-proof vodka, the alcohol content is the same. Adding a non-alcoholic beverage (mixer) to a drink does not alter the alcohol content; it just takes longer for the drinker to consume it.

For example, a dry gin martini containing 3 ounces of 80-proof gin is counted as two drinks because 3 ounces of 80-proof gin divided by 1.5 ounces in 1 drink = 2 SDUs. For another example, 3 ounces of 100-proof liquor = 3 SDUs.

Here's yet another example. A 12-ounce beer is counted as one drink, but how many drinks are contained in a 24-ounce beer? The answer is two. Here's why: 24 ounces by 12 ounces = 2 SDUs. A 60-ounce pitcher divided by 12-ounce standard beer servings = 5 SDUs. The problem with serving pitchers, though, is that more than one person is consuming from the pitcher.

Mixed drinks may contain liquors with different proofs. Some contain cordials and liqueurs, which may be as little as 20% alcohol, or 40 proof.

Counting drinks containing multiple liquors can be challenging, especially if those liquors have different proofs. For example, a Long Island ice tea contains three 80-proof liquors (1 ounce each of vodka, gin, and rum) and 1 ounce of 40-proof liqueur (triple sec). To determine the number of drinks in this cocktail, you must calculate the number of drinks for each liquor, and then add the totals together.

According to the recipe, the Long Island ice tea is counted as 2.5 drinks. Here's why:

### **Counting Drinks: Long Island Iced Tea**

$$\begin{array}{l} .7 \text{ SDU (1 ounce of 80-proof vodka divided by 1.5)} \\ + .7 \text{ SDU (1 ounce of 80-proof gin divided by 1.5)} \\ + .7 \text{ SDU (1 ounce of 80-proof rum divided by 1.5)} \\ + .4 \text{ SDU (1 ounce of 40-proof triple sec divided by 2.5*)} \\ \hline \mathbf{2.5 \text{ SDUs (Total)}} \end{array}$$

*\*The number of ounces of 40 proof in a SDU*

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It is important that the amount of alcohol you put into a drink is consistent and appropriate each and every time you serve that mixed drink so that you, other bartenders and servers, and even the patron can accurately calculate the number of SDUs consumed. One way to ensure consistency is to always use a jigger or a liquor gun.

### **Drink Counting:** *Weight*

Determining a patron's weight can be a challenge and takes practice. Use your fellow bartenders and alcohol servers as guides. Chances are both genders and a variety of weights are represented among your staff. If any of your staff members are self-conscious about revealing their weight for you to use as a point of reference, you may need to ask friends or regulars to stand in their place. At the very least, you can use your own weight as a guide.

### **Drink Counting:** *Keeping Track of Drinks Served*

Keeping a mental note is not an effective way to track drinks in a busy establishment. Guest checks can be used to keep track of drinks served. Straws, bar napkins, glasses, and coasters can also be used. Training servers to note the time and the person ordering the drink each time an order is placed may be effective. If your establishment does not use guest checks, you may want to keep a chart at the bar for servers to record the number of drinks ordered by each guest and the time of each order.

## **BAC Charts**

### *BAC Table for Women*

Read the chart carefully and be sure to use the SDUs (approximately 1.5 ounces of 80-proof liquor, 12 ounces of beer, or 5 ounces of table wine). Also, subtract .01 from your BAC estimate for each 40 minutes of drinking.

*(See chart on following page)*

## Bartender and Server Workbook: Path of Alcohol Through The Body

Women - Approximate BAC %											
Number of Drinks	Body Weight In Pounds										
	90	100	120	140	160	180	200	220	240		
0	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	Only Safe Driving Limit
1	.05	.05	.04	.03	.03	.03	.02	.02	.02	.02	Impaired
2	.10	.09	.08	.07	.06	.05	.05	.04	.04	.04	Driving skills Affected  Possible Criminal Penalties
3	.15	.14	.11	.10	.09	.08	.07	.06	.06		
4	.20	.18	.15	.13	.11	.10	.09	.08	.08		
5	.25	.23	.19	.16	.14	.13	.11	.10	.09		
6	.30	.27	.23	.19	.17	.15	.14	.12	.11	Legally Intoxicated  Criminal Penalties	
7	.35	.32	.27	.23	.20	.18	.16	.14	.13		
8	.40	.36	.30	.26	.23	.20	.18	.17	.15		
9	.45	.41	.34	.29	.26	.23	.20	.19	.17		
10	.51	.45	.38	.32	.28	.25	.23	.21	.19		

Your body can get rid of 2/3 of a drink per hour. Remember, 2/3 of a drink is 1 ounce of 80-proof liquor, 8 ounces of beer, or 3 ounces of table wine. BAC chart provided by the Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board.

*BAC Table for Men*

Men - Approximate BAC %										
Number of Drinks	Body Weight In Pounds									
	100	120	140	160	180	200	220	240		
0	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	Only Safe Driving Limit
1	.04	.03	.03	.02	.02	.02	.02	.02	.02	Impaired
2	.08	.06	.05	.05	.04	.04	.03	.03	.03	Driving skills Affected  Possible Criminal Penalties
3	.11	.09	.08	.07	.06	.06	.05	.05		
4	.15	.12	.11	.09	.08	.08	.07	.06		
5	.19	.16	.13	.12	.11	.09	.09	.08	.08	
6	.23	.19	.16	.14	.13	.11	.10	.09	.09	Legally Intoxicated  Criminal Penalties
7	.26	.22	.19	.16	.15	.13	.12	.11		
8	.30	.25	.21	.19	.17	.15	.14	.13		
9	.34	.28	.24	.21	.19	.17	.15	.14	.14	
10	.38	.31	.27	.23	.21	.19	.17	.16	.16	

Your body can get rid of 2/3 of a drink per hour. Remember, 2/3 of a drink is 1 ounce of 80-proof liquor, 8 ounces of beer, or 3 ounces of table wine. BAC chart provided by the Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board.

Read the chart carefully and be sure to use the SDUs (approximately 1.5 ounces of 80-proof liquor, 12 ounces of beer, or 5 ounces of table wine). Also, subtract .01 from your BAC estimate for each 40 minutes of drinking.

*BAC: Know Your Personal Limits*

Number of Drinks Per Hours*	100 lbs.	120 lbs.	140 lbs.	160 lbs.	180 lbs.	200 lbs.	220 lbs.	240 lbs.
	M / F	M / F	M / F	M / F	M / F	M / F	M / F	M / F
1 drink in 1 hour	.02/.03	.02/.02	.01/.02	.01/.01	.00/.01	.00/.01	.00/.00	.00/.00
1 drink in 2 hours	.01/.02	.00/.01	.00/.00	.00/.00	.00/.00	.00/.00	.00/.00	.00/.00
1 drink in 3 hours	.00/.01	.00/.00	.00/.00	.00/.00	.00/.00	.00/.00	.00/.00	.00/.00
2 drinks in 2 hours	.03/.04	.03/.04	.02/.03	.01/.02	.01/.02	.00/.01	.00/.00	.00/.00
2 drinks in 3 hours	.02/.03	.01/.03	.00/.01	.00/.01	.00/.00	.00/.00	.00/.00	.00/.00
2 drinks in 1 hour	.06/.07	.05/.06	.04/.05	.03/.04	.03/.03	.02/.03	.02/.02	.02/.02
3 drinks in 3 hours	.06/.09	.05/.06	.03/.05	.02/.03	.01/.03	.01/.02	.00/.01	.00/.01
3 drinks in 2 hours	.08/.10	.07/.09	.05/.06	.04/.05	.03/.04	.02/.03	.02/.03	.01/.02
4 drinks in 4 hours	.09/.11	.06/.08	.04/.06	.03/.05	.02/.03	.01/.02	.00/.02	.00/.01
4 drinks in 3 hours	.10/.13	.08/.10	.06/.08	.05/.06	.03/.05	.03/.04	.02/.03	.01/.03
5 drinks in 5 hours	.11/.14	.08/.11	.05/.08	.04/.06	.02/.04	.01/.03	.00/.02	.00/.00
3 drinks in 1 hours	.10/.12	.08/.10	.07/.08	.06/.07	.05/.06	.04/.05	.04/.05	.03/.04
5 drinks in 4 hours	.13/.16	.09/.12	.09/.10	.05/.07	.04/.06	.03/.05	.02/.04	.01/.03
4 drinks in 2 hours	.12/.15	.09/.12	.08/.10	.06/.08	.05/.07	.04/.06	.04/.05	.03/.04
5 drinks in 3 hours	.14/.18	.11/.14	.09/.11	.07/.09	.06/.08	.05/.06	.04/.05	.03/.04
5 drink in 2 hours	.16/.19	.13/.16	.10/.13	.09/.11	.07/.09	.06/.08	.05/.07	.05/.06

\*One Drink = one bottle of beer (12 oz), one glass of wine (6 oz), one "single" drink (1 oz of liquor)

BAC Chart Downloaded from NHTSA 2 26 2015,  
[www.nhtsa.gov/people/injury/alcohol/impaired\\_driving/appendix.html](http://www.nhtsa.gov/people/injury/alcohol/impaired_driving/appendix.html)

## Let's See What You Have Learned

Why do you believe your patrons drink alcoholic beverages?

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Can bartenders and servers intercede in patron drinking so to prevent patron intoxication and prevent alcohol-related harms? Or is the amount of alcohol consumed by a patron up to the patron?

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Do bartenders and servers have a professional and ethical responsibility to help patrons avoid alcohol related harms?

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At which point should hosts and hostess, bartenders, managers, and other front of the house staff be evaluated for intoxication?

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What actions should you take to engage patrons when they first arrive at the premises?

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What are some serving practices that can be used to prevent patron intoxication?

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What are some common methods to bartenders and servers can use to prevent patron intoxication?

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Is it a good practice to notify a manager when the guest has ordered their 3rd or subsequent alcoholic beverage at the premises? Why?

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What is the benefit of providing a water-back with each alcoholic beverage served?

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Is food an important factor in preventing patron intoxication? Why?

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## **Bartender and Server Workbook:** Path of Alcohol Through The Body

Check the best types of food a patron can consume to slow the absorption of alcohol and thus reduce intoxication?

- |                                        |                                         |
|----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bread         | <input type="checkbox"/> Onion rings    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pizza         | <input type="checkbox"/> Pretzels       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potato Chips  | <input type="checkbox"/> Peanuts        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cheese Sticks | <input type="checkbox"/> Fried Calamari |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chili         | <input type="checkbox"/> Chicken wings  |

Why is it important to follow standard drink recipes and not over-pour?

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What is the most effective pouring method to prevent over-pouring?

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Does the size and shape of glassware influence the patron's perception of receiving a proper amount? How can this influence drink pours?

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What are some effective practices to slow alcohol service for patrons asking for frequent replenishment?

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Is drink counting a valuable tool in preventing patron intoxication?

Circle your answer: **Yes** **No**

Why?

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What is a standard drink unit (SDU)?

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For Beer? \_\_\_\_\_

For Wine? \_\_\_\_\_

For Spirits? \_\_\_\_\_

How many standard drink units are in:

\_\_\_\_\_ **3 ounces of 100-proof rum?**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Three 8-ounce imported beers?**

\_\_\_\_\_ **3 ounces of 80-proof whiskey?**

\_\_\_\_\_ **60-ounce pitcher of beer?**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Hurricane with 1.5 ounces of 80-proof light rum,  
1.5 ounces of 80-proof dark rum, and mixers?**