

20. F & B Services — Preparation

Imparting an out of the world meal experience requires a lot of preparation beforehand. Food and beverage businesses work to bring out the best possible experience for their guests and customers to achieve maximum customer satisfaction. All operations regarding food and beverage service need preparations by anticipating guest arrival at any time during working hours.

Let us see what all basic preparations are required to be done.

Mise-en-scène

It is the activity of **preparing the environment** in the F&B Services establishment so that the guests and the service staff find it hygienic and pleasant.

To prepare the environment, the staff carries out the following activities:

- Opening all windows and doors before working hours to let fresh air and sunlight enter the venue.
- Ensuring menu cards and promotional material are presentable.
- Removing the furniture that needs servicing and handing it over to the maintenance department or any outsourced agency.
- Vacuuming carpets if any.
- Switching on all lamps to check the fused ones.

Mise en place

It is the activity of **putting things in place** to make the subsequent F&B Services smooth. The serving staff carries out the following duties:

- Removing all soiled linen and replacing them with the fresh ones.
- Ensuring that the side board is well-equipped.
- Replenishing condiment containers, shakers, and water jugs.
- Polishing cutlery and glassware.
- Replacing pale flowers with the fresh ones.

Food and Beverage Services

Preparing Side Boards (Dumb Waiters)

It is a piece of furniture with numerous compartments and shelves to keep condiments, water jug or bottles, cutlery, food platters, and linens. Side boards are allocated for every station.

To prepare the side boards, the serving staff must place:

- The replenished containers of water, butter, and condiments.
- The dinner plates, side plates, glasses, mugs, and fingerbowls in the lower shelves.
- The linen, napkins, and dolly papers neatly and stalked.
- The cutlery in the appropriate sections separately according to the type.
- The condiments containers and shakers, water jug, butter dish, toothpick holders, straw holders, on the upper shelf or board.

Preparing Ice and Water

Ice and water are the preliminary requirements of any food and beverage service establishment. Clean drinkable water is obtained from the water purifiers installed in the service establishment. The purifiers are selected such that they can cater to large number of people per hour.

Crystal clear ice in the shape of large cubes can be prepared in-house if the size of F&B establishment is large enough to install the required equipment. The ice can also be purchased from an outsourced ice-making business and stored in the freezers.

When the guests are seated, they are first served water at adequate temperature according to the season.

21. F&B Services – Preparing the Table

Table setup plays an important role in contributing to the appearance of the table.

Principles of Preparing Covers

- Each table cover needs space of 24 to 30 inches wide.
- Crockery and cutlery must be placed 2 inches away from the edge of the table.
- Knives are placed on the right of the dinner plate whereas forks are placed on the left.
- Butter knife is placed on the side plate.
- The cutting edge of the knives must be towards the plate.
- Table napkin must be neatly folded and placed on the side plate.

Setting Table for Formal Dining

This type of table setup is required for formal events like corporate lunch or dinner, or a wedding party. The formal dining contains multiple courses and second helpings are not offered.

Setting Table for Casual Dining

This table setup is required for informal events like holiday parties and family gatherings. Casual dining can contain multiple courses and service staff offers or serves second rounds of helping when a guest requests for it.

Setting a Buffet Table

This set up is required for catering to large groups of people. Buffet table setting can be done in numerous ways depending upon the size and shape of the place, the menu, and the number of guests.

- The food items are placed in a sequence from lightest to heaviest, starters to desserts, or coolest to warmest.
- Cutlery is placed on the guest tables.
- Glasses, cups, and saucers are placed on a separate table to avoid congestion.

- Table decoration pieces are placed such that they do not interfere with the food items.
- Plates are stacked not more than 15 plates per stack.
- Paper napkins are placed between the plates.

Preparing Condiments

The condiments are kept according to the theme of the F&B service. For example, if the establishment is serving Italian food, the staff needs to prepare shakers of dried herbs, salt, and pepper flakes. In European restaurants, they typically keep salt, sugar, and pepper as basic condiments.

When the guests leave the tables, the serving staff needs to check the condiment containers and replenish them if required.

Napkin Folding

Today, there are large varieties of napkins available in different colors and materials. Paper napkins are used majorly for informal dining whereas for formal dining, linen napkins are preferred.

Napkin can be folded in a number of attractive ways. They can be shaped as a flower, a character, or some object. A well-folded and well-placed napkin on the plate grabs the attention of the guests.



Food Presentation

Presentation of a food or beverage is equally important as its recipe as the other senses are stimulated through sight and aroma. A well-prepared dish is complete only when it is presented with beautiful garnish in an appropriate food container or platter. The serving staff must follow the basic guidelines for food presentation:

- It must be presented at the required temperature.
- It must be presented according to the serving size.
- It must be presented in appropriate hollowware of suitable size.
- It is also recommended to serve food with the right garnish that adds to the catchiness of the dish. The garnish in contrast color is quite appealing.
- The garnish or accompaniment should not overshadow the main food.

The cook needs to be creative at presenting the dish so well that the final result comes out as a treat for not only the taste buds but also for the eyes.

Beverage Presentation

Beverage presentation gains a lot of importance in today's world. Beverages taste good if they are presented at the temperature at which they are meant to have. Right from selecting the appropriate service glassware, creating various pleasant color schemes of the ingredients, and serving the beverage with creative ideas pays.



For example, the coconut water from a tender coconut can be served in the neatly cut and clean tender coconut itself from which it is taken out. Also, mocktails or cocktails can be presented with straws and slices of fruits in different shapes and colors.