

The definitive template for

Restaurant Operations Manual

A complete, ready-to-customize framework for running a consistent, profitable, and well-run venue — from opening line checks to closing counts.

VENUE

LOCATION

PREPARED BY

EFFECTIVE DATE

VERSION

What's inside

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WISK

How to use this template

Replace every **[bracketed prompt]** and blank line with your venue's specifics. Keep the section order so new hires can navigate it the same way every time, and re-issue the acknowledgment page whenever you publish a new version.

Welcome & Venue Overview

This section tells every new team member who we are and what we stand for. Set the tone here — it is the first thing a new hire reads.

About this venue

[Introduce your venue in two or three sentences: concept, cuisine or beverage focus, the neighborhood you serve, and what makes the guest experience distinct. Write it the way you would describe the place to a guest standing at the door for the first time.]

MISSION

[Why we exist — the promise we make to every guest, every shift.]

VISION

[Where we are headed — what success looks like in three years.]

Our core values

These are the non-negotiables that guide day-to-day decisions on the floor and in the kitchen.

Value	What it means in practice
[Value one]	[Describe the behavior you expect to see, in specific terms.]
[Value two]	[Describe the behavior you expect to see, in specific terms.]
[Value three]	[Describe the behavior you expect to see, in specific terms.]
[Value four]	[Describe the behavior you expect to see, in specific terms.]

WISK

Make it real

Values only matter if the team sees them enforced. Reference these by name in pre-shift meetings and recognition so they become the language of the floor rather than a poster on the wall.

02 SECTION TWO

Team Structure & Roles

A clear chain of command removes hesitation during a busy service. Map your venue's reporting lines and define what each role owns.

Reporting lines



Role responsibilities

Role	Reports to	Owns
General Manager	Ownership	P&L, scheduling, hiring, standards, final escalation
FOH Manager	GM	Service quality, floor flow, reservations, guest recovery
Head Chef	GM	Menu, food cost, kitchen safety, prep & line standards
Bar Manager	GM	Beverage program, pour cost, bar inventory, compliance
Shift Lead	Dept. Manager	Opening/closing, breaks, in-shift decisions
Team Member	Shift Lead	Station duties, side work, guest experience

OWNER / OPERATOR CONTACT

MANAGER ON DUTY LINE

EMERGENCY ESCALATION CONTACT

PAYROLL / HR CONTACT

03

✓ SECTION THREE

Opening & Closing Procedures

Consistency starts and ends the day. These checklists keep every open and close identical regardless of who is holding the keys.

Opening checklist

- ☐ Disarm alarm; unlock and walk the floor
- ☐ Check overnight temperature & equipment logs
- ☐ Power on POS, kitchen display and music
- ☐ Count and confirm opening cash float
- ☐ Review reservations, events and 86 list
- ☐ Complete line check & mise en place sign-off
- ☐ Set tables, polish glassware, stock stations
- ☐ Pre-shift briefing with the on-duty team

Closing checklist

- ☐ Complete final food & bar temperature log
- ☐ Break down, clean and sanitize all stations
- ☐ Reconcile POS; run end-of-day sales report
- ☐ Count drawers; drop and log the deposit
- ☐ Record waste and update the 86 list
- ☐ Secure walk-ins, dry store and liquor room
- ☐ Take out trash; set floor for morning open
- ☐ Arm alarm; confirm all doors are locked

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Sign every close

Require the closing lead to initial and time-stamp the completed checklist. A signed close is the single fastest way to trace a discrepancy back to a shift — and it makes the next open faster.

OPENING LEAD SIGNATURE

TIME

CLOSING LEAD SIGNATURE

TIME

04

✓ SECTION FOUR

Front of House Standards

The floor is where reputation is made. These are the standards every guest-facing team member is expected to deliver, every table, every time.

Steps of service

- 01 **Greet** the table within 60 seconds of being seated.
 - 02 **Introduce** yourself and offer water and beverages.
 - 03 **Guide** the order — know the menu, allergens and specials.
 - 04 **Fire** and **time** courses to the kitchen's pace.
 - 05 **Check back** within two bites; anticipate refills.
 - 06 **Pre-bus**, reset, and read the table's cues.
 - 07 **Close** warmly, present the check, and invite them back.
-

Grooming & dress code

- ☐ [Uniform standard for your venue]
- ☐ Clean, pressed, name tag visible
- ☐ Closed-toe, non-slip footwear
- ☐ Hair tied; minimal fragrance & jewelry
- ☐ Personal hygiene before every shift

Non-negotiables

- ☐ Phones stay off the floor
- ☐ No leaning, no eating in guest view
- ☐ Escalate complaints to a manager fast
- ☐ Verify ID for every alcohol sale
- ☐ Guest is acknowledged, never ignored

05

✓ SECTION FIVE

Back of House & Kitchen

A disciplined kitchen is a profitable kitchen. Set the standard for prep, the line, and the handoff between shifts.

Line check & mise en place

Before every service, the on-duty chef confirms each station is stocked, labeled, dated and at temperature. Nothing goes on the line until the check is signed.

Station	Checked for	Standard
Cold / garde manger	Stock, labels, dates, temp	Below 4°C / 40°F
Hot line	Par levels, holding temp	Above 60°C / 140°F
Fryer	Oil quality, temp	[Target °F / filter schedule]
Prep	Recipe adherence, yields	Follow spec sheets
Dish	Sanitizer, chemical levels	[ppm target]

Prep standards

- ☐ Follow standardized recipe cards
- ☐ Label & date everything (FIFO)
- ☐ Weigh yields; record waste
- ☐ Store raw below ready-to-eat

Shift handoff

- ☐ Communicate 86'd items
- ☐ Note low pars for ordering
- ☐ Confirm prep list for next shift
- ☐ Leave the station clean & stocked

WISK

Recipe cards win

Standardized recipe cards are the backbone of both food safety and cost control. When every cook plates to the same spec, your theoretical COGS in WISK actually matches what leaves the pass.

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✓ SECTION SIX

Food Safety & Hygiene

Non-negotiable and legally required. This section protects your guests, your team, and your license to operate.

Temperature control log

Unit / point	Target	AM	PM	Initials
Walk-in cooler	$\leq 4^{\circ}\text{C} / 40^{\circ}\text{F}$			
Freezer	$\leq -18^{\circ}\text{C} / 0^{\circ}\text{F}$			
Hot holding	$\geq 60^{\circ}\text{C} / 140^{\circ}\text{F}$			
Cooking (poultry)	$\geq 74^{\circ}\text{C} / 165^{\circ}\text{F}$			
Sanitizer solution	[ppm]			

Personal hygiene

- ☐ Wash hands on entry & between tasks
- ☐ No bare-hand contact with ready food
- ☐ Report illness — do not work sick
- ☐ Clean gloves, aprons, hair restraints

Cleaning cadence

- ☐ Sanitize surfaces every [X] hours
- ☐ Deep clean per posted rota
- ☐ Log chemical & sanitizer levels
- ☐ Pest-control checks on schedule

Allergen awareness

All staff must be able to identify the [number] major allergens on your menu, avoid cross-contact, and escalate any guest allergy to the kitchen before the order is fired.

WISK**HACCP is a habit**

Build your critical control points into the opening and closing checklists in Section 03 so food safety is done automatically, not remembered. Retain completed logs for [your local requirement].

Inventory & Ordering

What you don't measure, you lose. A disciplined count and par-based ordering are the foundation of every profit number in this manual.

The weekly rhythm

Cadence	Task	Owner
Daily	Spot-check high-value & high-theft items	Shift Lead
On delivery	Receive against invoice; check temp & quality	Receiver
Weekly	Full count; reconcile against POS depletion	Managers
Monthly	Full variance review & vendor price check	GM

Par levels & ordering

Set a par (target on-hand level) for every item. Order the difference between par and what the count shows — never by gut feel. Record your pars so any manager can place an accurate order.

Item	Par	On hand	Order qty	Vendor
[Item]				
[Item]				
[Item]				
[Item]				

Receiving standards

- ☐ Check quantity & weight vs invoice
- ☐ Verify delivery temperatures
- ☐ Reject damaged or out-of-spec goods
- ☐ Date & store immediately (FIFO)

Storage rules

- ☐ First in, first out — always
- ☐ Raw below ready-to-eat
- ☐ Sealed, labeled and dated
- ☐ Lock high-value spirits & wine

WISK**Let WISK do the counting**

WISK counts inventory up to 5x faster with 99.7% accuracy, scans invoices to update costs automatically, and syncs with 60+ POS systems — so your par-based orders and variance reports build themselves from the count above.

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✓ SECTION EIGHT

Cost Control & COGS

Every point of cost of goods sold is a point of profit. Define your targets, then hold the line with counts, portioning and waste discipline.

Know your number

$$\text{COGS \%} = \frac{\text{Beginning inventory} + \text{Purchases} - \text{Ending inventory}}{\text{Total sales for the period}} \times 100$$

COGS typically runs 30–35% of sales depending on venue type. Set a target for each category and review actual against theoretical every period — the gap is your variance.

Category	Target %	This period %	Variance
Food	[e.g. 28–32%]		
Beer	[e.g. 20–24 %]		
Wine	[e.g. 30–35%]		
Spirits / cocktails	[e.g. 18–22%]		

Waste log

- ☐ Record every waste & comp event
- ☐ Note reason — spoilage, error, spill
- ☐ Review weekly for patterns
- ☐ Tie recurring waste back to prep

Portion control

- ☐ Use scales, jiggers & scoops
- ☐ Plate to the recipe-card spec
- ☐ Audit portions during line checks
- ☐ Retrain on drift immediately

09

✓ SECTION NINE

Cash Handling & POS

Clear money rules protect the business and the team alike. Define exactly how cash moves from float to deposit, and who is accountable at each step.

Cash flow controls

Point	Standard	Verified by
Opening float	Count & sign for [\$ amount]	Shift Lead
Comps / voids	Manager approval required	Manager
Refunds	Logged with reason & receipt	Manager
Cash drops	At [\$ threshold] to the safe	Shift Lead
End of day	Reconcile drawer to POS report	Manager

POS discipline

- ☐ Every item rung before it leaves
- ☐ Individual logins — no sharing
- ☐ No open items or price overrides
- ☐ Discounts require a reason code

Reconciliation

- ☐ Count blind, then compare to POS
- ☐ Investigate any variance over [\$X]
- ☐ Two signatures on the deposit
- ☐ File the report with the close

WISK**Reconcile against reality**

When your POS syncs to WISK, sales depletion is matched to what actually left inventory — so a cash variance and a stock variance can be investigated together instead of in the dark.

MANAGER ON DUTY

DEPOSIT VERIFIED BY

Health, Safety & Emergencies

A calm, prepared team keeps everyone safe. Post the essentials, rehearse the plan, and make sure every shift knows exactly what to do.

Incident response

- ☐ Ensure immediate safety first
- ☐ Administer first aid if trained
- ☐ Notify manager on duty at once
- ☐ Complete an incident report
- ☐ Preserve the scene if required

Fire & evacuation

- ☐ Know every exit & extinguisher
- ☐ Assist guests to the muster point
- ☐ Never re-enter the building
- ☐ Account for all staff
- ☐ Call [local emergency number]

Emergency contacts & equipment

Item	Location / number
Emergency services	[number]
First-aid kit	[location]
Fire extinguishers	[locations]
Gas / electrical shut-off	[location]
Nearest hospital	[name & address]
Trained first-aiders on staff	[names]

Review this plan at [frequency] and after any incident. Every new hire must be walked through exits and equipment locations before their first solo shift.

Guest Experience

A recovered complaint creates a more loyal guest than one who never had a problem. Give the team a simple, repeatable way to make it right.

The recovery framework – L.A.S.T.

L**Listen**

Let the guest finish.
Give full attention and do not interrupt or defend.

A**Apologize**

Own it sincerely on behalf of the venue, without excuses.

S**Solve**

Fix it fast, within your empowerment limit, or escalate immediately.

T**Thank**

Thank them for the feedback — it is a gift that makes us better.

Empowerment guidelines

Every team member is trusted to resolve issues up to [\$ / comp limit]. Beyond that, bring a manager into the conversation at the table — speed matters more than perfection.

Situation	First response	When to escalate
Wrong / delayed order	Re-fire priority; acknowledge the wait	Repeated or long delay
Quality issue	Replace immediately, no debate	Guest remains unhappy
Billing dispute	Review calmly with the guest	Any refund required
Serious complaint	Move to a private conversation	Always involve a manager

WISK**Capture the feedback**

Log complaints and their resolution so patterns surface. A recurring issue is usually a process problem — fix the process, not just the plate.

12 SECTION TWELVE

Acknowledgment

By signing below, I confirm that I have received, read, and understood the Restaurant Operations Manual for **[Venue name]**. I agree to follow the standards, procedures, and policies it contains, and I understand this manual may be updated and re-issued from time to time.

EMPLOYEE NAME (PRINT)

ROLE / POSITION

EMPLOYEE SIGNATURE

DATE

MANAGER NAME (PRINT)

MANAGER SIGNATURE

DATE

MANUAL VERSION ACKNOWLEDGED

WISK

Keep a signed copy on file

Retain the completed acknowledgment in each employee's file. Re-issue and re-sign this page whenever a new version of the manual is published so your records always match current practice.

WISK

Built to run alongside WISK — inventory, invoicing, recipe costing and COGS in one platform.

wisk.ai

Book a demo It's free — see WISK on your own numbers

