

Unit 3: Guest Checks

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Guest checks are important documents. They communicate customers' selections and requests. Computer systems can be used to generate guest checks, or they can be completed by servers. Busy servers need reminders to reduce errors and fill detailed requests. This can improve table service, resulting in better tips. Customers will return if they are happy with their dining experience and know that they are being charged correctly for what they ordered.

Food service managers can monitor several areas of the business through guest checks. They reflect what the cooks prepare and what the customer is charged for service. If checks are properly filled out, trends can be seen that help with seasonal forecasting. Managers can project how much product to buy and how many staff to schedule at different times of the year.

All guest checks are numbered. Record the sequence of guest checks issued to each server. The sections for date, server name, table, and number of guests provide valuable information. Some have prompts so that servers can suggest menu items to increase check averages. Lines are provided for each item ordered and its cost. Removable numbered customer receipts provide a record for customers with expense accounts.

Servers need the ability to add, subtract, multiply, and divide to provide accurate totals. They should know how to make change. Registers provide this information, but basic math is important at the point of sale. Guest checks are good records of who was on the shift, who sold the most product, and how much cash is in the register.

At the end of a shift, arrange all checks in numerical order. Tally the total amount of food and beverage sales. Any inaccurate totals should be resolved with the cashier and server immediately. A missing check could indicate that a customer was not charged for the food. This dishonest practice harms the business. Find the server with that sequence of checks and resolve the discrepancy.

Guest checks provide the sales information for the income statement or profit and loss statement, which should be generated monthly. The total sales minus the cost of goods sold equals the gross profit. The gross profit minus the expenses equals the net profit.

These numbers tell managers if the business is making a profit. If not, new policies or strategies can be tried. It all starts with the guest check.