

Essential Tools & Techniques

Must-Have Bar Tools

Cocktail Shaker	Boston shaker (two-piece) or Cobbler shaker (three-piece, with built-in strainer).
Jigger	For accurate measuring of liquid ingredients. Look for double jiggers with different measurements on each end (e.g., 1 oz/0.5 oz).
Bar Spoon	Long-handled spoon for stirring drinks. Can also be used for layering ingredients.
Strainer	Hawthorne strainer (with spring) for shaken drinks, Julep strainer (spoon-shaped) for stirred drinks.
Muddler	Used to gently crush herbs, fruits, and spices to release their flavors.
Peeler/Knife	For creating citrus twists and garnishes.

Basic Techniques

Shaking	Used for drinks containing citrus juice, dairy, or eggs. Shake vigorously with ice until chilled.
Stirring	Used for all-spirit cocktails. Stir gently with ice until chilled, then strain.
Layering	Pouring liquids carefully over the back of a spoon to create distinct layers based on density.
Muddling	Gently pressing ingredients to release flavors without over-extracting bitter compounds.
Rim Garnishing	Adding salt, sugar, or spices to the rim of a glass for added flavor and visual appeal.

Ice Matters

Different types of ice serve different purposes:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Large Cubes: Melt slower, ideal for stirred drinks.Small Cubes: Chill quickly, great for shaking.Crushed Ice: For drinks like Mint Juleps and Mai Tais.Clear Ice: Makes your drink look super fancy and melts very slowly.

Classic Cocktail Recipes

The Old Fashioned

Ingredients:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">2 oz Bourbon or Rye Whiskey1 Sugar Cube (or 1 tsp sugar)2-3 Dashes Angostura BittersOrange Peel
Instructions:
<ol style="list-style-type: none">Muddle sugar cube with bitters and a splash of water.Add whiskey and ice.Stir until well-chilled.Garnish with orange peel.

The Margarita

Ingredients:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">2 oz Tequila (Blanco/Silver)1 oz Cointreau (or Triple Sec)1 oz Fresh Lime JuiceSalt (for rimming)
Instructions:
<ol style="list-style-type: none">Salt the rim of a margarita glass.Shake tequila, Cointreau, and lime juice with ice.Strain into the glass.Garnish with a lime wedge.

The Daiquiri

Ingredients:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">2 oz White Rum1 oz Fresh Lime Juice3/4 oz Simple Syrup
Instructions:
<ol style="list-style-type: none">Shake all ingredients with ice.Strain into a chilled coupe glass.Garnish with a lime wedge.

The Manhattan

Ingredients:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">2 oz Rye Whiskey1 oz Sweet Vermouth2 Dashes Angostura BittersCherry
Instructions:
<ol style="list-style-type: none">Stir all ingredients with ice.Strain into a chilled coupe glass.Garnish with a cherry.

The Martini

Ingredients:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">2 oz Gin or Vodka1 oz Dry VermouthOlive or Lemon Twist
Instructions:
<ol style="list-style-type: none">Stir gin (or vodka) and vermouth with ice until well-chilled.Strain into a chilled martini glass.Garnish with an olive or lemon twist.

Ingredients and Flavor Profiles

Base Spirits

Gin	Botanical-forward, juniper-dominant. Styles vary from London Dry to New Western.
Vodka	Neutral spirit, versatile base for flavored cocktails.
Rum	Made from sugarcane. White rum is light and crisp, dark rum is richer with molasses notes.
Tequila	Made from blue agave. Blanco is unaged, Reposado is aged in oak, Añejo is aged longer.
Whiskey/Bourbon/Rye	Grain-based spirits, aged in oak. Bourbon is sweet, Rye is spicy, Scotch can be peaty.

Liqueurs & Modifiers

Vermouth	Fortified wine, adds complexity and balance. Dry vermouth is used in Martinis, sweet vermouth in Manhattans.
Cointreau/Triple Sec	Orange-flavored liqueurs, add sweetness and citrus notes.
Maraschino Liqueur	Cherry-flavored liqueur, adds a unique sweetness and aroma.
Bitters	Concentrated flavoring agents that add depth and complexity to cocktails. Angostura, Peychaud's are common types.
Simple Syrup	Equal parts sugar and water, heated until sugar dissolves. Used to sweeten cocktails.

Fresh Ingredients

Always use fresh juice for the best flavor. Citrus (lime, lemon, orange) is essential. Fresh herbs (mint, basil, rosemary) can add unique aromas. Quality matters - the better the ingredients, the better the cocktail.
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Garnishes & Presentation

Citrus Garnishes

Twists	Express the oils over the drink and rub the rim for added aroma.
Wedges/Wheels	Classic and simple. Can be squeezed into the drink or used for decoration.
Zest	Use a zester to create delicate citrus strands.

Other Garnishes

Cherries	Luxardo cherries are a premium choice.
Olives	For Martinis, use good quality olives stuffed with pimentos or blue cheese.
Herbs	Mint sprigs, basil leaves, or rosemary sprigs can add aroma and visual appeal.

Glassware Guide

Choosing the right glass enhances the drinking experience: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Coupe: Elegant, for shaken cocktails without ice.• Martini Glass: Iconic, for stirred cocktails.• Highball: Tall, for mixed drinks with ice and soda.• Rocks Glass: Short, for stirred drinks with large ice cubes.• Margarita Glass: Distinctive, for frozen or on-the-rocks margaritas.
