

# Food & Beverage

## Provide a Carvery / Buffet Service



## Learner Guide

## Provide a carvery/buffet service

### Learner Information

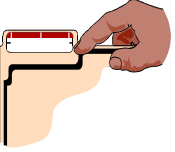

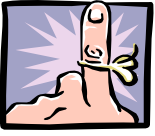


<b>Details</b>	<b>Please Complete details</b>
Name of learner	
Name of manager	
Work Unit	
Facilitator	
Date started	
Date of Completion	
Date of Assessment	

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## Keys to Icons

The following icons are used throughout the study guide to indicate specific functions:

	<p><b>FOLDER ENCLOSURES</b></p> <p>This includes all examples, handouts, checklists, etc.</p>
	<p><b>Activity Tip</b></p> <p>Denotes a physical activity which you should master</p>
	<p><b>DON'T FORGET/NOTE</b></p> <p>This icon indicates information of particular importance.</p>
	<p><b>EXERCISES</b></p> <p>Practical activities to do, either individual or in syndicate groups during the training process</p>
	<p><b>SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS.</b></p> <p>Self evaluation for learners to test understanding of the learning material</p>
<p><b>Tips</b></p>	<p>These help you to be prepared for the learning to follow</p>

## Provide a carvery/buffet service

### Introduction

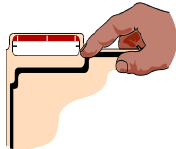
<b>Specific Outcomes</b>	Specific outcomes describe what the learner has to be able to do successfully at the end of this learning experience.
<b>Assessment Criteria</b>	<p>The only way to establish whether a learner is competent and has accomplished the specific outcomes, is through the assessment process. Assessment involves collecting and interpreting evidence about the learners' ability to perform a task.</p> <p>This module includes assessments in the form of self-assessments, group exercises, quizzes, projects and a practical training program whereby you are required to perform tasks on the job and collect as portfolio of evidence; proof signed by your supervisor that you have successfully performed these tasks.</p>
<b>To qualify</b>	To qualify and receive credits towards your qualification, a registered Assessor will conduct an evaluation and assessment of your portfolio of evidence and competency.
<b>Range of Learning</b>	This describes the situation and circumstance in which competence must be demonstrated and the parameters in which the learner operates.

## Specific Outcomes and Range of Learning

Demonstrated knowledge and understanding:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Explain the relationship between completing appropriate tasks within time limits and customer satisfaction.</li> <li>2. Stress the importance of correctly laying up the carvery or buffet area.</li> <li>3. Explain the importance of displaying food according to organisational procedures.</li> <li>4. Stress the importance of maintaining food at the correct temperature, and explain how this can be done.</li> <li>5. Identify and explain uses of food service items,</li> <li>6. Explain the consequences of not replenishing food and food service items during service according to operational procedures.</li> <li>7. Explain the importance of keeping dining and service areas tidy and free from rubbish and food debris.</li> <li>8. Stress the importance of handling and disposing of waste in a hygienic way.</li> <li>9. Explain the consequences of not turning off heating/cooling equipment after service</li> </ol>
Demonstrated ability to make decisions about practice and to act accordingly:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10. Clean carvery or buffet table, ensure it is clean, free from damage and correctly positioned for food service.</li> <li>11. Lay up carvery or buffet areas according to organisational requirements.</li> <li>12. Display and store food items correctly. (<b>Range of food items:</b> hot and cold foods, condiments and accompaniments)</li> <li>13. Locate and use only clean, food service items and equipment. (<b>Range of service items and equipment:</b> cutlery, crockery, linen or disposable table coverings, linen or disposable serviettes, table decorations, service utensils, food containers, carving units, chaffing dishes, hot plates)</li> <li>14. Replenish food and food service items.</li> <li>15. Deal with spillages, breakages, and soiled linen and table items.</li> <li>16. Deal with customers in a polite and friendly manner at all times.</li> <li>17. Develop ways of improving service to customers and explain the importance of doing this.</li> <li>18. Store and/or dispose of leftover food items and accompaniments.</li> <li>19. Describe decisions made and give reasons for action taken in response</li> </ol>

	to unexpected situations. ( <b>Range of unexpected situations:</b> shortages of food or food service items, damaged equipment, faulty or badly set up table decorations, complaints about the temperature of food)
Demonstrated ability to learn from our actions and to adapt:	20. Discuss alternative ways of cooling or heating if equipment is not working correctly. 21. Develop more attractive options for displaying food and decorating a buffet

### Learner Support

Resources	<p><i>Folder Enclosures</i></p> 	<p>List the resources available in your organisation here.</p> <p><b>Book-</b> Larousse Gastronomique</p>
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### Purpose of Module

Overall Outcome	Each learner must be able to prepare a Carvery or Buffet in an effective, attractive, hygienic and organised manner. The learner must understand the importance of prioritising work and preparing the service area within the specified time frames. The learner must be able to deal with situations within their responsibility
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## Provide a Carvery or Buffet Service

### Introduction

Carveries and buffets are based on a style of service where the customers come to the table with food presented on it and help themselves or are served by a chef or waiter. The food is not brought to the table for them. They must get up from their seat in order to choose their own food. Buffets and carveries appeal to customers for a variety of reasons:

- It is an interactive type of service where customers can help themselves and can also be served by waiting staff.
- Customers have the opportunity to mingle with other people and possibly meet them.
- Customers can choose exactly what and how much they want to eat.
- On unlimited buffets and carveries, customers can return and eat as much as they like.
- Carveries and buffets are generally less expensive than an a la carte restaurant or bistro, and people think they get better value for money.
- Customers enjoy the 'showmanship' of the buffet, especially the presentation of it including the centrepieces and the way the food has been arranged on the table.
- Customers also enjoy watching the waiter or the chef carve their meat for them or cook the food, such as omelettes for breakfast.
- Buffets and carveries can be a fairly efficient form of service, as people can move through quickly, or if they prefer, at a leisurely pace.
- Customers can approach the buffet when and how they want to, as there is no restriction on time, except the start and the finish of the buffet.

It is extremely important to follow all relevant health and safety principles and food hygiene principles. You must also be comfortable with silver service techniques in order to provide service that meets customers expectation.

### Develop efficient and organised work habits

Like all other types of service, providing a buffet or carvery service, calls for all staff to be very organised and efficient in all work practices. You must have a work plan in order to work efficiently and ensure customer satisfaction at all times. All staff members must know all procedures and organisational requirements. You must be aware and have a good knowledge of all service procedures, and be comfortable carrying them out. As there is always the chance of running out of food items, it is extremely important to be aware of when to replenish the dishes on the buffet/carvery table.

- Always work within specified areas to avoid disturbing the workflow of others.
- Plan your work to avoid unnecessary movement, e.g. if you are going to the bar or kitchen, never go empty handed - there is always something that needs to be removed from the restaurant or carvery/buffet area.

- Organise your work area to establish an efficient workflow. Always have all service items and equipment ready for use to avoid unnecessary trips.
- Always clean as you go and go as you clean, as this will avoid unnecessary cleaning and time wasting at the end of your shift.
- All preparation areas should be kept clean at all times.
- Smooth workflow and following of organisational requirements will ensure that customers are satisfied at all times. Customers expect efficient and organised work practices and good service at all times. This ensures that they will return, and hopefully advertise the establishment through positive word of mouth advertising.
- Remember that on buffets and carveries there are sharp implements such as knives and hot and heavy service equipment which must all be treated with the utmost care at all times.
- Be aware of customers, as you will be working amongst them at all times. You will be replenishing the buffet/carvery and clearing tables continually during service.
- Buffets and carveries attract families, so you must be very aware of children amongst the guests. Be careful not to fall over the children, or fall over them whilst you are carrying hot items around the restaurant.


### Customer relations

Good customer relations are the backbone to an excellent establishment. Customers visit establishments for a number of different reasons:

- location of the establishment
- price
- entertainment offered
- standard and type of service - silver service, table service, buffet, self-service
- occasion - special or everyday
- children's menu available
- style of food and drinks - international, steak, seafood and vegetarian
- theme.
- When customers visit an establishment, they expect a certain level of service, no matter what the style or type of place:
- When dealing with customers, you must always be polite and friendly.
- Staff must be well trained and extremely knowledgeable in the type of service the establishment is offering.
- The venue must be clean and hygienic.
- Staff must be friendly at all times, even if they are having a 'bad day' - personal problems should not be taken to work! A friendly smile goes a long way!
- Always speak to customers in a clear voice and a calm manner - not too loudly or softly, but with a certain amount of energy and enthusiasm.
- All customers should be treated equally, but at the same time like each one of them is special.
- As you may have a lot of children attending a buffet/carvery, you must treat them correctly as well, especially as some establishments promote buffets and carveries for

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families. Take a little time and give the children some attention. You may think the child is enjoying the attention, but the parents are enjoying it more! They love it if someone is being especially nice to their "little darlings". This is a great form of good customer relations: if the children like a place, then the parents will return to keep them happy or will tell their other friends about it because of the attention you paid to their children.

- Even small things should be dealt with. You may not think it important, but to the customer it may be a very important matter.
  - In order to deal correctly with customers, staff must also be honest, loyal to their establishment, trustworthy - if you say you will do something follow it through - capable of their job and hygienic in their appearance.
  - Remember to help all customers at the buffet:
  - children may be too short to see the buffet/carvery
  - a person in a wheelchair may have difficulty seeing and also reaching some of the dishes
  - there may be someone who cannot go to the buffet, such as an elderly person.
  - All customer complaints must be reported immediately to your supervisor and dealt with.
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## Preparing the carvery or buffet table for service

Before serving food to customers from a buffet or carvery, you must be prepared. All your service items and equipment must be clean, undamaged, and positioned ready for service.

### Service items and equipment

- **Dishes or flats** - these include any type of dish that food will be served in such as bowls for soup or semiflat dishes for vegetables. Flats are generally large oval dishes of stainless steel that food is presented on, on the buffet or carvery. They can present cold or hot food.
- **Service cutlery** - this is the cutlery that you will find on a buffet or carvery with which the customers will serve themselves, or the waiting staff will serve the customers. They can be forks, spoons different types of tongs or a mixture of all of them. Knives are usually only used by the waiting staff or the chefs.
- **Crockery** - this includes plates, bowls and other items that customers use to serve themselves food onto.
- **Glassware** - glasses, that are used for different types of beverages that customers consume at their table. This will also include glassware that is used for savoury cocktails and desserts
- **Cutlery and silverware** - cutlery can be either already on the guests' table, or sometimes the customers need to collect their cutlery at the beginning or end of the buffet/carvery. There will be a collection of knives, forks, spoons, cocktail cutlery and dessert cutlery.
- **Service cloths and other linen** - this must all be clean and without holes or tears. The buffet or carvery table will be draped in a cloth and there will be cloths to stop people burning themselves when they touch hot items. There will also be cloths on the tables and probably napkins for the customers.
- All service items and equipment must be inspected before use to check that:
  - they are clean
  - they are free from chips, cracks and other damage
  - they are polished, especially silver which must not be tarnished. (Silver must be cleaned properly on a regular basis in order to keep it shining).
  - linen is not be torn, stained, frayed, or have holes in it
  - linen is neatly pressed.

### Customer's tables

Before setting the buffet or carvery you must also set the tables for the customers:

- The procedure will be similar to the restaurant set up - you must follow organisational requirements.
- Tables must be positioned with chairs, clean cloths or place mats, and napkins that are all clean and undamaged.

- You will need to check the booking sheet as to the exact requirements for large tables and other bookings.
- Cutlery will be set according to the type of buffet and your organisational requirements. Generally you will have a knife on the right, a fork on the left, a side knife on the side plate on the left, a napkin and a wineglass at the tip of the knife.
- Salt and pepper cruets will be in the centre of the table.
- You may also have flowers, candles or another types of table decorations that must be clean, neat and positioned according to organisational requirements.
- Any promotional material and table numbers must be correctly placed, clean, not torn or stained.

### **Buffet or carvery table**

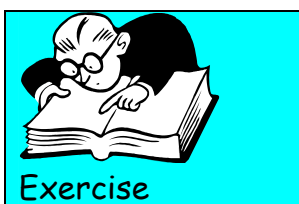
The buffet or carvery table will be arranged on the size and configuration of the room. It will also depend on the number of people to be served the amount and type of food and how many courses are to be served at a time. There are many other factors that must be considered:

- The table is usually clothed in large (white) cloths. Some establishments may have special buffet cloths, which have decorative frills and are very easy to put on the table. The traditional cloth wraps around the table, falling to the floor in the front, and being made into a 'box' around the sides. Sometimes throwaway paper cloths are used, that come on a large roll. Slip cloths, or small squares, often-colourful cloths are placed over the main cloth to provide a contrast. If a number of cloths need to be used, the overlaps must all face the same way. This makes it more visually acceptable for customers.
- Customers must have easy access to the buffet/carvery.
- Customers must be able to move freely around the buffet/carvery.
- Staff must be able to serve the customers comfortably.
- The food must be easy to access.
- Customers should not have to fight their way through other customers.
- The buffet/carvery should not be too wide, as customers will not be able to reach.
- Plates must be the first things that customers pick up, and there must always be enough for all the customers. Sometimes the plates are on a separate table at the beginning of the buffet/carvery. The hot plates must be near the hot food, the soup plates near the soup, dessert plates near the dessert. The one thing worse than running out of food, is running out of plates or cutlery.
- Cutlery may be wrapped up in a napkin, or will already be on the customers' table.

- Each dish of food must have its own set of service cutlery. Customers do not want to use the same service cutlery for all the dishes. If there is not enough service cutlery, this will also slow down the service, as customers will have to wait to use the cutlery. It is also a good idea to have a small plate next to all the dishes to rest the used cutlery on until the next person uses it. This will stop the cutlery falling out of the dishes and soiling the clean cloths.
- If customers have the choice of hot or cold food, you should also have hot plates available.

### Carvery table

- This must always look attractive and inviting.
- The chef must have an idea of bookings and expected customers.
- A chef must be allocated to the carving of the different meats.
- Staff must be advised of the meat to be served and the accompaniments.
- All carving knives must be sharp and clean.
- The meat should not be brought out until just before the arrival of customers, no more than 15 minutes.
- The carving table, if the establishment uses one, should be turned on one hour before service. This will keep the meat warm while being carved.
- If a large bain marie (hot water bath) is used, this must also be turned on. You must make sure that any glass is clean and there are no grease or splash marks from food.
- Remember serving spoons forks and tongs.
- The overall look of the buffet/carvery table must be appealing at all times. When customers arrive, it will be the first thing that they look at because that is what they have come for. They want to be able to admire the presentation before launching into eating it!



Exercise

**Briefly explain the cutlery set-up at the table when customers are eating from a buffet.**


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## Displaying food items

All food must be displayed in accordance to organisational requirements:

### **Centrepiece**

- This usually reflects the theme of the buffet/carvery if there is one. This should be impressive, so that the customers look at this first and then look at the surrounding food items. This is often a floral arrangement, ice carving, candelabra, fruit or vegetable display or even a large ham, whole large fish or similar food item.

### **Food order -**

The courses should be put in the order that they are eaten - soup, entrées, mains, cheese and then dessert. The courses should be kept together.

### **Simplicity -**

- Access to the different food items should be easy. Customers should not have to reach or stretch. The set up should not be complicated, so customers do not get confused.

### **Colour -**

It is as important on a buffet as it is in a *la Carte* that the colour of the food is varied, not all the same and not too fussy.

### **Shape -**

Having different sizes and shapes of dishes helps to give variety to the buffet/carvery and this makes it interesting for the customers.

### **Height -**

Different heights also give variety to the buffet/carvery. A totally flat arrangement is very boring.

### **Ease of service -**

Some dishes are more difficult for customers to handle, so these should be at the front of the buffet and the easier to pick up items at the back. This will help in keeping the buffet/carvery clean.



### **Maintaining the carvery or buffet during service**

The maintenance of the carvery or buffet during service is just as important as maintaining the customers' table in a à la Carte restaurant:

- Dishes must be replenished before they are completely used up. There must be one person who can liaise with the kitchen and advise the chef so that no food will run out during the course of service. The customers, who arrive later, must be able to serve themselves to the same food as the people who were there first. The customers who come later must not be disadvantaged.
- Do not wait until one dish is completely empty before you clear it. It is best to come with the same dish and replace the old one immediately.
- Dishes that are prepared first should be eaten first. There should be a control system in place to monitor this. Often the kitchen will be in charge of this.
- The display on the table must always look neat and tidy. In order to do this, food scraps must be cleaned up if people drop food whilst serving themselves.
- Keep an eye on the amount of plates that are left and replenish them before they run out.
- If all the service spoons have been used, or dropped in the food, make sure that you replace them immediately, to avoid delays in customers serving themselves or having to wait to use servers from another dish.
- Do not move food from one dish to another on the buffet. This looks clumsy and unprofessional.
- If the buffet is not maintained properly, it is possible that there may be food scraps that fall on the floor. These scraps may cause a customer injury if they were to slip and fall due to inefficient cleaning of the buffet table.

### **Providing information to customers**

When customers arrive at a venue, they will usually sit at their table and start with a drink. Sometimes you may have to explain the buffet or carvery to the customers. Your establishment may have a set way of buffet service, such as a particular group of tables at a time. You may have a special drink included in the price of the buffet, or there may even be the choice of the buffet/carvery or the à la Carte menu. You will have to inform the guests of these things and establish their requirements.

When the customers are serving themselves, or being served at the buffet/carvery, they will often ask a lot of questions. They will want to know what the particular dishes are and what the accompaniments are. Sometimes the customers are not sure what they should serve themselves, so you will need to advise them correctly. You need to have a very good knowledge of how the food is prepared and the ingredients used. Asking questions in the kitchen will help to improve your knowledge.

There may be times when a very long queue forms at the buffet/carvery table. In these cases you may have to help with crowd control and reassure customers that there will be plenty of food for all and they do not need to force their way to the front. Sometimes customers may become impatient, so you will have to calm them down.

There will also be times when you need to help:

- Small children - lift them up to the buffet and they can tell you or point to what they want to eat.
- Elderly people who cannot stand for a long period - you will have to tell them what the choices are on the buffet and they can tell you what they want. You will have to go and get it for them. Make sure that you arrange the food on the plate so that it is appealing. Do not put on too much, it is better if you need to go and get the person a second helping.
- A customer with a broken arm - you may need to help serve the food or carry the plate back to the table for them.

Remember that at all times you must be polite, courteous and helpful at all times. This will ensure customer satisfaction, which will lead to return customers and these people telling other people about your establishment.

### TIP

If a customer asks you a question regarding the food that you do not know the answer to, you should go and ask the chef. It is always better to say that you are not sure of the answer than to give customers the wrong answer, especially if it is related to a food item that the customer may be allergic to.



### Exercise

2. Design your own buffet set-up, showing where you would place all the different types of foods.

## Serving customers

Buffets and carveries are designed so customers can come up to the food display area and either choose the food and serve themselves, or choose the food and have someone serve them. If you are serving the customers, you must:

- Decide with the other waiting staff who is serving which dishes so that you do not get in each other's way and so that everyone knows what the others are doing.
- Have all the right utensils to serve the food with. Do not change from one dish to another with the same serving cutlery.
- You should use the silver service technique,
- Ask the customer what they would like. Do not put food on their plate that they do not want, as this may cause wastage and therefore affect the cost of the food.
- Do not over fill the plates, as this will make the plate look unattractive.
- Do not assume that the customer wants sauce or cream, even if it does compliment the dish. Always ask the customer if they would like the sauce or cream, and whether they would like it on the food or next to the food.
- Do not hand hot plates to customers; warn them that they may be hot.
- If you spill any on the rim of the plate, wipe it off with a clean service cloth.
- If any hot dishes have lids, put the lids back when you are not serving customers, and take care when removing the lids to avoid dripping condensation on the food.
- Serve dishes in portions according to organisational requirements. Many of the dishes may already be portioned which makes service easier.
- Place food on plates carefully so as not to splash it on the customers, or possibly drop the food.
- Food must look attractive on the plate. Do not pile different food items on top of each other.
- Remember that customers eat with their eyes and so you will often find that people ask for a lot more than they can actually eat. You should not tell them this, but be careful when serving food, not to give too much of one particular item, without looking stingy.

### TIPS

If you are serving a customer and the particular dish is a portioned one, always give the whole portion. If the customer wants more, do not argue with him/her. In a situation like this it is best to give the customer whatever he wants to ensure customer satisfaction. You should still have enough of this particular dish, as the kitchen usually prepares more than they actually need to avoid running out of any of the dishes.

If you are serving a customer and you accidentally spill food over the plate, you must clean it up immediately. If you have spilt it on the rim of the plate, wipe it off immediately with a clean cloth and apologise to the guest. If you have only spilt it on the table, wipe off the excess and if possible cover it with a clean service cloth, or if you really want to cheat you may want to put a dish over the top of the spill.

When you have finished silver serving food, you may often have a surplus of food. This may be because more was on the platter than was actually required, or a guest did not wish to have the full portion allocated to them.

In the case of surplus food, you should return the food to the kitchen as soon as you have finished serving the table. Then you must follow organisational requirements regarding the disposal of the surplus food.

After the service of food, you will also have used service equipment. This equipment must be dealt with immediately by returning it to the kitchen or wash up area. You should not leave any dirty or other used dishes in the restaurant and in view of customers. Your sideboard or waiter's station should always be clear of all used equipment. This will make the whole restaurant look neat and tidy. Remember that the overall appearance of a place is very important.

### Clearing and maintaining customers' tables

#### Clearing tables

Clearing the table for buffet style service is very similar to clearing tables in a à la Carte setting. In this case though, it is not always necessary to wait until the whole table has finished eating. Often people on the same table may have finished a course and while the others are still eating, they will return to the buffet for more food. You must clear the table of dirty plates at all times, not just when the whole table has finished, otherwise you may find that there is a whole collection of dirty plates on the table. You will know when a person has finished, as they will put their cutlery together.

- Stand to the guest's right, lean forward and pick up the plate with your right hand.
- Move away from the guest and transfer the plate to your left hand.
- Grip the plate with your thumb on the rim, and your first and second fingers underneath.
- Point your third and fourth finger upward to form a platform.
- Prevent the cutlery sliding around by placing your thumb on the end of the fork handle.
- Place the knife under the fork pointing in the opposite direction.
- Move onto the next guest and pick up his plate with your right hand.
- Transfer the plate to your left hand onto the platform created by your third and fourth fingers and forearm.
- The fork is placed next to the fork.
- Use the knife to scrape the food scraps onto the first plate. Then place the knife under the forks next to the other knife.
- Clear the rest of the table the same way.
- When you have finished, take the dirty dishes to the kitchen or wash-up.

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## Clearing side plates

### At the same time as the main plates

- Continue around the table a second time.
- Pick up the side plates and knives with your right hand.
- Place all the side plates on the pile of plates that are supported by your arm.
- Use the knives to move leftovers onto the first dinner plate.
- Place the knives on the first plate with all the other knives.
- Continue until you have finished clearing the table.

### Separately from the dinner plates

- After you have cleared and taken all the dinner plates to the wash-up, return to the table with one clean dinner plate. Use this plate like the first clearing plate.
- You will put leftovers and knives onto this plate.
- Collect all side plates in the same manner as dinner plates.
- If you are clearing odd shaped plates, only clear what you can carry in two hands. Do not try to stack plates as they may fall.

### Clearing soup bowls and underplates

Soup bowls can be quite awkward to clear, due to their sometimes-unusual shape. If there is also an underplate, you must follow this procedure:

- The first bowl and underplate are held like the dinner plate.
- The next bowl and underplate are placed on the platform created by your fingers and forearm.
- Place the spoon from the first bowl into the second bowl.
- Place the second bowl with the spoons into the first bowl.
- The underplate from the second bowl stays on your forearm.
- Continue around the table until you have finished.
- Take all the dirty dishes to the kitchen or wash-up area.

After clearing each course, you must clear all the crockery and cutlery that the customer no longer needs.

- Remove the cruets and other condiments.
- Remove all other crockery that may have been used such as finger bowls, extra plates and butter plates.
- Remove breadbaskets if they have been used.
- Once the dessert plates have been cleared you should remove everything from the table except for glasses that are being used, decorative items.
- At this point you should 'crumb down'. By using a folded napkin you must brush all the crumbs from the table onto a plate. At this time you should also remove any other food debris and waste such as cigarette packets and wrappings from the table. Some establishments have special equipment that brushes across the cloth and picks up all the crumbs. It is like a mini manual carpet sweeper.

- All table clearing and removal of crockery, cutlery and service items should always be removed, replaced and checked according to organisational requirements.

### **Maintaining customer dining areas**

It is important to keep an eye on all your tables, and what stage in the meal your customers are up to. When they have finished their main course and are starting on sweets, you may ask if they would like coffee, if the waiters serve it. If the customers help themselves, you may have to ensure that they have sugar and milk available to them.

If you notice that at any time the customers have dropped a lot of food on the floor or table, you should attempt to clean it up with the minimum disturbance to your customers. A restaurant that has a lot of food debris and other rubbish on the floor and on all the tables looks messy and very unprofessional, so this must always be kept in check. You will often have more of a mess if there are children present at a table, as they often drop food and other items.

When customers have finished and have left, you must clear the table completely, change the linen and reset the table. For this you must always have enough service equipment in your waiters station. You should have a clean supply of tablecloths, napkins, condiments, cutlery, glassware.

## Dealing with spillage and breakage

### Activity Tip



. With your supervisor, practice changing tablecloths. Write down any key points that you need to remember


Sometimes a breakage or spillage may occur at a customer's table. If a spillage occurs, it must be wiped up immediately. If there is a tablecloth, you will need to get another napkin and place it over the spill or you will have to change the cloth, which is difficult, when there are customers sitting at the table. If a breakage has occurred, you must carefully pick up the large pieces first. It is best to put them on a plate and take them straight to the waste disposal. The small pieces can be 'crumbed down' the same way that you would crumb down the table at the end of the meal. In the case of a glass breaking and shattering, it may be advisable to apologise to the customers and change the entire cloth in order to avoid any injury. You should just roll up the cloth and dispose of it according to organisational requirements. You may also wish to ask the customers if they would like to move to another table if there is one available. Your supervisor must be advised of such occurrences and they must be recorded correctly.

It is a good idea, in order to avoid spillage and breakage, to remove all empty and no longer needed items so that they will not clutter up the table and therefore lead to something being knocked over because there is not enough room.

At the end of the meal, you may have to clear the tables as there may be entertainment or speeches if the buffet or carvery as part of a function. Always do this quietly with minimum disturbance to all customers.


All leftover food items must be dealt with correctly. Anything from the buffet must be returned to the kitchen where the kitchen staff will deal with the food according to organisational requirements. All food debris from the customers' tables must be disposed of according to organisational requirements in the correct rubbish disposal bins. These must be emptied regularly to avoid overflowing and the possibility of an injury or accident.

Sometimes you may need to change a tablecloth during service because a spill may be too bad to leave while the customers are still there. You will need to clear all the items from the table. It is suggested that you ask a colleague to assist in this process to speed it up.

To change the cloth:

- take the new cloth and stand between the two legs of the table
- lean across the table and release the woven edge of the cloth over the dirty cloth
- take the dirty cloth with both hands, holding it with your third and fourth fingers and pull it towards you
- release the clean cloth, pulling the dirty cloth out from under the clean one.

All dirty linen must be rolled up and put in the dirty linen bin as per organisational requirements - this includes napkins.

 <p><b>Exercise</b></p>	<p><b>3. When do you change a cloth during service?</b></p> <p><b>4. Where does the dirty linen go?</b></p>



## Self Assessment

### Instructions

- In the following test you will be required to answer all questions.
- You are required to obtain 100% to pass.
- If you do not obtain the pass mark, revise all the learning material and redo the test.

### Question 1

Why is the overall appearance of the buffet so important?

### Question 2

Where should the different types of plates be situated?

### Question 3

What equipment should be at the customer's table?

### Question 4

What is the "danger zone" for bacteria?

### Question 5

Why should the buffet be kept replenished at all times?

### Question 6

What do you need to know about the menu items at a buffet, and why is this important?

**Question 7**

What accompaniments should be available for fresh oysters?

**Question 8**

What traditional accompaniments would you find with smoked salmon?

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## Practical Exercises

Practical Exercise	Task Type	Date Completed	Comments by Supervisor
Task No. 1	Set up a buffet as per your organisational requirements.		
Task No. 2	Go to the chef/s and find out about all buffet items, remember to find out what ingredients are in the dishes and how they are cooked		
Task No. 3	Go through all the dishes on the buffet and check to see that you have stock of all the possible condiments.		
Task No. 4	Ask your supervisor to show you alternative ways of heating and cooling food on a buffet		
Task No. 5	Shadow your supervisor during a live buffet and point out possible problem areas, with food stock levels and general tidiness of the counter		
Task No. 6	Strip down and store the food stock from the buffet in the correct manner		

**Signatures required on successful completion of this module**

<b>Comments &amp; Review by coach</b>	

<b>General comments from learner</b>	

I ..... have (Supervisor / Coach) hereby certified that I have examined the learners' workbook and that the learner has successfully completed this section of the practical training programme.

\_\_\_\_\_  
SIGNATURE SUPERVISOR

\_\_\_\_\_  
SIGNATURE LEARNER

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

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