

Occupations and Workplaces

Server - General

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What are the general duties of someone who works in a restaurant, cafe or in a similar job that involves serving food to the public?

Some of the main duties of servers in restaurants, bars, cafes/coffee shop, fast food restaurant, cafeterias, food trucks, or other locations that serve food to customers include:

- Greet customers.
- Provide information to customers about the meals, including ingredients in the meal to assist with dietary needs/restrictions, etc.
- Provide necessary information to those preparing the food.
- Maintain food and kitchen hygiene.
- Carry and serve drinks and meals.
- Prepare bills and process the method of payment.
- Work with computers, and other electronic devices.
- Be aware of customer actions while on the premises (e.g., be alert to potential issues or acts of theft).

Please also see the occupational profile about [cooks](#), as other health and safety hazards may be present if the server spends time in the kitchen or cooking area.

What are some health and safety issues for servers?

- [Food and kitchen hygiene](#).
- [Standing](#) or walking for long hours.
- [Lifting](#) or carrying heavy trays.
- Risk of burns from dishes, meals, or drinks that are hot.
- [Repetitive manual tasks](#) or working in [awkward positions](#).
- Risk of back injury from [pushing](#), [pulling](#) or [lifting](#) objects.
- Injuries from [sharp objects](#), [knives](#), [scissors](#), [blades](#), [box cutters](#), etc.
- Exposure to various [chemicals](#), which may include paints, solvents, [pesticides](#), [perfumes](#), or [cleaning products](#).
- [Indoor air quality](#).
- [Slips, trips and falls](#).
- Risk of [violent attack](#).
- [Working alone](#).
- [Handling money](#).
- [Bullying](#).
- [Stress](#).
- Fire or other emergencies.
- Fatigue or other health effects of [shift work](#) or [extended work days](#).
- Exposure to common viruses such as [colds](#) and [seasonal influenza](#).

What are some preventive measures for servers?

- [Wash hands](#) frequently.
- Learn safe [lifting](#) procedures.
- Learn [fire safety](#) and emergency evacuation procedures, including how to assist customers when evacuating.
- Learn how to use equipment and tools safely.
- Avoid awkward body positions and take frequent breaks.
- Wear appropriate [footwear](#) and other personal protective equipment when needed.
- Keep all work areas clear of clutter.

- Establish [good housekeeping](#) practices.
 - Learn safe handling and storage procedures before working with [hazardous products](#).
 - Know how to react in a [negative or violent situation](#).
 - Do not exceed the capacity of the shelves when storing food or supplies.
 - Do not block fire exits and fire extinguishers.
 - Know where the [first-aid](#) kit is located and how to contact first aid responders.
 - Know how to [report hazards](#).
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What are some good general safe work practices?

- Practice safe [lifting](#).
 - Find ways to minimize [musculoskeletal disorders](#) on the job.
 - Inspect the work area before each shift.
 - Exercise caution when working with knives and other sharp equipment.
 - Follow company safety rules.
 - Participate in Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System ([WHMIS](#)) education and training. Follow [labels](#) and read the safety data sheet ([SDS](#)) for any hazardous product that you use and follow recommended safety precautions.
 - Know how to [report a hazard and near miss](#).
 - Follow [good housekeeping](#) procedures.
 - Use [hand washing](#) to reduce the risk of common infections.
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