

Special Events 101

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How to know how many drinks you'll need.

For an average cocktail party of three hours' duration, allocate an average of three drinks per person. Allow three to four drinks for a buffet or dinner of about four hours in length. For an all-evening party of about five or six hours, figure on four drinks per guest.

To calculate the number of bottles you'll need, first give your best guess as to what your guests will prefer. For instance, will most likely prefer wine or most drink hard liquor? Or do you predict an equal mix of wine drinkers, hard liquor drinkers and beer drinkers along with a few non-drinkers?

Then start counting:

- The average bottle of wine 26 oz. yields 5 servings.
- The average bottle of champagne will yield 6 flute glasses.
- A case of champagne will yield 72 servings.
- A 26 oz. bottle of spirits yields 17 servings of 1 1/2 oz. each.
- A 40 oz. bottle of spirits yields 25 servings.
- Have on hand three bottles of mix for every bottle of spirits.

Before writing up your shopping list, fine tune your guesses. For instance, you might know that more of your guests prefer red wine over white, or that the majority of your older guests will predictably choose either scotch or vodka.

Note: always order liquor with a generous hand. Unopened bottles can

What you'll need to set up a bar for a cocktail party.

- Allow at least 11 lbs. of ice cubes per 10 adults.
- For mix and as a simple refreshment, have on hand bottles of soda water, cola, ginger ale, lemon-lime soft drinks, tonic water, bitter lemon, tomato juice, orange juice, grapefruit juice, pineapple juice and a variety of diet soft drinks and still and bubbly waters.
- For mixing cocktails, you'll need to have on hand at least Worcestershire sauce, Tabasco sauce, salt, pepper, sugar, celery sticks and maraschino cherries. If you want to serve fancy cocktails, refer to a cocktail recipe book for a complete list of ingredients.
- For garnishes, you'll need olives, cocktail onions and sliced oranges and lemons.
- For tools, be sure to have something in which to store ice cubes close at hand (such as an ice bucket), a corkscrew, a bottle opener, a can opener, ice tongs, shot glasses for measuring servings, a small sharp knife and cutting board, a long-handled spoon for mixing drinks, cocktail napkins, toothpicks or cocktail picks and straws.
- For fancy cocktails, you'll need other tools, including a cocktail shaker. Refer to a cocktail recipe book for the correct tools needed for the desired drinks.