



## Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)

**Title:** FOH – Table Maintenance  
**Version:** 1  
**Effective Date:** 12 February 2024  
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### 1. Objective

The objective of this SOP is to ensure that all tables at Tamborine Mountain Glades are kept clean, well-organized, and free of clutter during service, enhancing the overall dining experience for guests. This includes procedures for clearing plates, refilling drinks, and maintaining a tidy table setting throughout the meal.

### 2. Scope

This SOP applies to all front of house food and beverage staff, including servers, waitstaff, and bussers, involved in the service and maintenance of tables in the dining area.

### 3. Responsibilities

- **Servers/Waitstaff:** Responsible for maintaining the cleanliness and organization of tables during service, including clearing plates, refilling drinks, and addressing any guest needs.
- **Bussers:** Assist in clearing tables, resetting table settings, and ensuring that the dining area remains tidy and presentable.
- **Food and Beverage Manager:** Oversees the table maintenance process, ensuring adherence to SOPs and assisting with any service-related issues.

### 4. Procedure

#### 4.1 Table Setup and Initial Presentation

##### 1. Pre-Service Setup:

- Ensure that all tables are set with the appropriate tableware, including clean and polished silverware, glassware, plates, and napkins.
- Arrange table settings symmetrically, with utensils, glasses, and plates positioned according to the restaurant's standards.
- Verify that the tablecloths, placemats, and napkins are clean, wrinkle-free, and properly placed.

##### 2. Centerpieces and Condiments:

- Place centerpieces, such as flowers or candles, in the center of the table, ensuring they do not obstruct the guests' view or conversation.
- Ensure that condiments, such as salt, pepper, and sauces, are clean, full, and neatly arranged. Replace any items that are low or appear unclean.

#### 4.2 Maintaining Clean and Organized Tables During Service

##### 1. Clearing Plates and Utensils:



- Clear empty or finished plates promptly after guests have finished eating. Wait until all guests at the table have completed their course before clearing unless the guest indicates they are done.
- Approach from the guest's right side to clear plates, utensils, and glasses. Remove items quietly and efficiently, stacking plates carefully to avoid noise.
- Clear any utensils or glasses that are no longer needed, such as those used for a previous course or empty drink glasses. Ensure the table remains uncluttered.

## 2. Refilling Drinks:

- Monitor guests' drink levels throughout the meal, offering refills before glasses are empty. Refill water, coffee, tea, and other non-alcoholic beverages as needed.
- For alcoholic beverages, offer to refill or suggest another drink when the glass is nearly empty. Always ask for permission before refilling.
- When refilling, pour drinks from the guest's right side, holding the glass by the base or stem to avoid touching the rim.

## 3. Wiping and Tidying:

- If any spills occur, discreetly and promptly clean them using a clean cloth or napkin. Ensure the table remains dry and tidy throughout the meal.
- Regularly check the table for crumbs, debris, or used napkins, and clean as needed. Use a small crumb sweeper or napkin to remove crumbs without disturbing the guests.

## 4. Maintaining Condiments and Utensils:

- Replenish condiments, such as salt, pepper, and sauces, if they are low or have been used by the guests. Ensure all condiment containers are clean and neatly arranged.
- Replace any used or soiled utensils and napkins promptly, ensuring that guests have everything they need for each course.

### 4.3 Clearing Between Courses and After the Meal

#### 1. Clearing Between Courses:

- After each course, clear all used plates, utensils, and glassware before serving the next course. Ensure that the table is clean and organized for the next dish.
- Ask guests if they would like fresh utensils for the next course, and provide them as needed.

#### 2. Final Clearing:

- After the main course, clear all remaining plates, utensils, and glassware, except for those needed for dessert or after-dinner drinks.
- Offer to bring additional items such as coffee, tea, or dessert menus, and ensure the table is ready for the final course.

#### 3. Post-Meal Clearing:

- Once the guests have finished their meal, clear all remaining items from the table, including dessert plates, coffee cups, and any remaining condiments or utensils.
- Wipe the table clean, ensuring no crumbs or spills are left behind. If the guests are staying for additional drinks, ensure the table remains tidy and organized.

### 4.4 Guest Interaction and Follow-Up

#### 1. Engaging with Guests:



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- Communicate with guests throughout the meal, asking if they are finished before clearing plates and if they need anything else.
- Use polite phrases such as “May I clear this for you?” or “Would you like a refill on your drink?” to engage with guests and ensure their needs are met.

## 2. **Discreet and Efficient Service:**

- Perform all clearing and refilling tasks discreetly and efficiently, minimizing disruption to the guests’ dining experience.
- Avoid interrupting conversations or creating unnecessary noise while clearing or serving.

## 3. **Continuous Monitoring:**

- Continuously monitor the table throughout the meal, ensuring that it remains clean and organized. Address any issues immediately, such as spills or missing items.
- Be attentive to guests’ needs without hovering, and respond promptly to any requests.

## 5. **General Policies**

### 1. **Professionalism:**

- Maintain a professional and courteous demeanor throughout the service process, adhering to the venue’s dress code and grooming standards.
- Ensure that all interactions with guests are respectful, attentive, and focused on providing an exceptional experience.

### 2. **Consistency and Quality:**

- Ensure that table maintenance is consistent across all tables, following established procedures and standards.
- Regularly review and practice service techniques to maintain consistency and high-quality service.

### 3. **Guest Comfort:**

- Prioritize guest comfort by ensuring that the table remains clean, organized, and free of clutter throughout the meal.
- Avoid overcrowding the table with unnecessary items, and ensure that guests have ample space to enjoy their meal.

## 6. **Training and Review**

### 1. **Ongoing Training:**

- Participate in regular training sessions on table maintenance, clearing techniques, and guest interaction.
- Ensure that all staff are knowledgeable about the importance of maintaining clean and well-organized tables and can execute these tasks to the highest standards.

### 2. **Review and Improvement:**

- Regularly review the table maintenance process to identify areas for improvement, based on guest feedback and operational efficiency.
- Implement changes as needed to enhance the quality of service and guest satisfaction.