

Cocktails & Mixology — Workbook

This workbook guides you through hands-on exercises, structured worksheets, and checklists for each module of the Cocktails & Mixology course. Complete each section after watching the corresponding module, ideally with your bar kit and ingredients in front of you. The templates at the end of this workbook are designed to help you plan, track, and develop your personal bar programme.

Spirits, Families, and the Home Bar

Map your palate to each spirit family, audit your current bottles, and build a prioritised shopping list for a complete starter bar.

Exercise: Spirit Family Tasting Journal

If you have access to any bottles from two or more spirit families, taste each spirit neat (5 ml) and in the same glass with a single drop of water. Record your sensory observations below before consulting any tasting notes.

- What is the dominant aroma before you add water (e.g. vanilla, smoke, juniper, citrus)?

- How does the flavour change after adding one drop of water? Does it open up, close down, or stay the same?

- On a scale of 1–5, how do you rate the spirit for sipping neat vs using in a cocktail?

- Which cocktail template (Sour, Old Fashioned, Highball) do you think this spirit would excel in, based on what you tasted?

Worksheet: Home Bar Inventory and Gap Analysis

List every bottle currently in your bar. For each one, note the spirit family, approximate volume remaining, and whether it belongs in Tier 1, 2, or 3 of the priority pyramid from the lesson.

Bottle name and brand

Spirit family (whisky / gin / rum / tequila / brandy / vodka / modifier / liqueur)

ABV %

Volume remaining (Full / Three-quarter / Half / Quarter)

Priority tier (1 / 2 / 3)

Cocktails it currently enables

Gap it fills or does not fill

Checklist: Starter Bar Build Checklist

- Purchase Tier 1 spirits: bourbon, London Dry gin, white rum, Blanco tequila
- Purchase Tier 1 modifiers: dry vermouth, sweet vermouth, Cointreau
- Source a Japanese-style jigger with 30/45 ml markings
- Set up a Boston shaker (large tin + small tin)
- Buy a mixing glass (minimum 500 ml capacity)
- Obtain a Hawthorne strainer and a fine-mesh strainer
- Source a muddler with a flat (non-toothed) head
- Buy a Y-peeler or channel knife for citrus garnishes
- Acquire 5 cm ice cube trays for large rocks ice
- Stock fresh citrus: lemons, limes, one orange for garnishes
- Designate a mise en place area to the left of your shaker zone
- Pre-cut and refrigerate a batch of citrus garnishes before your first practice session

Classic Cocktail Families and Ratios

Practice applying the five foundational cocktail templates, record your ratio experiments, and build a personal recipe reference.

Exercise: Sour Ratio Calibration

Make three versions of a Daiquiri using the three ratios below. Use identical ice and the same white rum for all three. Taste each one and record your notes, then determine your personal preferred ratio.

- Daiquiri A (2:1:1 — 60/30/30 ml): How is the balance between sweet and sour? Does it feel complete or does one element dominate?

- Daiquiri B (2:0.75:0.75 — 60/22.5/22.5 ml): Is this drier and more spirit-forward? Would this suit a guest who prefers less sweetness?

- Daiquiri C (2:1.25:1.25 — 60/37.5/37.5 ml): Is this rounder and easier to drink? At what point does it feel too dilute or too sweet?

- Which ratio is your preferred house Daiquiri, and what adjustment would you make to improve it further?

Worksheet: Cocktail Family Recipe Map

For each of the five cocktail families from the module (Sour, Old Fashioned/Spirit-Forward, Highball, Cobbler, Punch), write in one canonical recipe with exact measurements, the spirit family it uses, and one riff variation you want to try.

Cocktail family

Canonical recipe name

Spirit (ml)

Sweetener (ml / type)

Acid or modifier (ml / type)

Other ingredients (ml / type)

Glass type

Garnish

Riff variation idea (change one ingredient)

Checklist: Technique Verification Checklist

- Made at least one Sour using fresh-squeezed citrus (not bottled)
- Practiced the 2:1:1 ratio in at least two different spirit bases
- Stirred a spirit-forward drink for a full 30 seconds and tasted for dilution
- Built a Highball using the Japanese technique (stir ice first, pour soda down the side)
- Tasted a drink at warm temperature and again after chilling to observe sweetness shift
- Expressed a citrus peel and observed the oil spray over a dark surface
- Made a batch punch and pre-diluted it with water before adding the ice block

Technique: Shaking, Stirring, Muddling, and Ice

Log your technique practice sessions, identify dilution patterns, and build a garnish prep routine.

Exercise: Dilution Measurement Drill

This exercise makes dilution visible so you can calibrate your shake. You will need a kitchen scale accurate to 1 g (1 ml = ~1 g for water-based drinks).

- Before shaking: weigh your empty tin, add 60 ml rum + 30 ml lime + 30 ml simple syrup, then weigh again. Record the pre-shake liquid weight.

- Shake for exactly 12 seconds with six 2 cm ice cubes. Strain into a pre-weighed glass. Record the post-strain liquid weight. The difference is your dilution volume — what was it in ml?

- Repeat with a 6-second shake and a 18-second shake. How much does dilution vary, and at what point does the drink taste watered-down?

- What is your ideal target dilution volume for a Daiquiri in ml, based on these experiments?

Worksheet: Technique Practice Log

Record each practice session with the drink made, technique used, observations, and one thing to improve next time.

Date

Drink made

Technique (shake / stir / muddle / build)

Shake duration or stir rotations

Ice type used

Estimated dilution (light / correct / excessive)

Texture result (silky / watery / sharp / aerated)

Garnish used and technique

One improvement for next session

Checklist: Ice and Garnish Prep Checklist

- Produced at least one batch of large 5 cm clear ice using the directional freezing method
- Compared a large-cube Old Fashioned with a standard-cube version and noted dilution speed difference
- Practiced expressing a citrus peel correctly (visible oil mist, no pith)
- Prepared a batch of dehydrated citrus wheels and stored in airtight container
- Slapped a mint sprig and inserted it correctly next to a straw in a Mojito glass
- Set up a garnish station with pre-cut peels, wheels, and herbs before a practice session
- Executed a dry-shake followed by a wet-shake for an egg white Sour

House Syrups, Bitters, and Mocktail Adaptations

Document your syrup and bitters batches, track flavour outcomes, and develop your mocktail adaptation framework.

Exercise: Syrup Flavour Pairing Experiment

Make one flavoured syrup from the list in the lesson (ginger, lavender, or cinnamon). Use it in three different cocktails or mocktails and evaluate how the syrup changes the drink in each context.

- Which syrup did you make and what was your sugar-to-water ratio? Did you use 1:1 or 2:1 rich?
- In which drink did the flavoured syrup work best, and why do you think the base spirit or citrus complemented it?
- Was the syrup too sweet, correctly balanced, or not sweet enough when used at the same volume as plain simple syrup? What adjustment would you make?
- Describe one original cocktail idea that uses this syrup as the primary sweetener — what spirit, citrus, and garnish would complete the drink?

Worksheet: Mocktail Adaptation Record

For each alcoholic cocktail you want to adapt, map each ingredient to a zero-proof substitute using the four-function framework from the lesson (body, bitterness, aroma, drying effect).

Original cocktail name

Spirit ingredient and ml

Zero-proof body substitute and ml

Original sweetener and ml

Mocktail sweetener and ml (adjusted down 20-30%?)

Original acid / modifier and ml

Mocktail acid substitute and ml

Bitterness substitute (tea / non-alc bitters / tonic)

Saline solution added (yes / no, ml)

Final mocktail name

Taste notes after making it

Changes needed for next batch

Checklist: Flavour Toolkit Completion Checklist

- Made 1:1 simple syrup and stored with date label
- Made 2:1 rich simple syrup and noted the difference in viscosity vs 1:1
- Made honey syrup (3:1) and used it in at least one drink
- Made one flavoured syrup (ginger, lavender, or cinnamon)
- Added vodka as a preservative to at least one syrup batch
- Purchased or assembled a three-bitters starter set (Angostura, Peychaud's, orange bitters)
- Begun a DIY aromatic bitters batch and recorded the start date
- Designed and made one from-scratch zero-proof drink using the four-function framework
- Made a side-by-side comparison of an alcoholic Sour and its mocktail adaptation

Your Action Plan

1. Complete the Home Bar Inventory worksheet and identify your three biggest gap bottles to purchase this week
2. Make a batch of 1:1 simple syrup and one flavoured variant (ginger or lavender) before your next practice session
3. Run the Sour Ratio Calibration exercise using three Daiquiri variants and record your preferred house ratio
4. Practice the Japanese Highball technique with any whisky and sparkling water — three attempts until the carbonation stays strong
5. Execute one dry-shake + wet-shake egg white Whiskey Sour and assess foam density vs a standard shake
6. Begin a DIY aromatic bitters batch: jar, gentian root, spices, rye — shake daily for seven days
7. Host a small tasting with two guests: serve one Sour, one stirred drink, and one mocktail — collect feedback on balance
8. Produce a batch punch for a group event using the 5-part strong/weak/sweet/sour/spice formula at scale
9. Build your garnish mise en place kit (pre-cut peels, dehydrated wheels, herb station) and practice a full hosting setup
10. Design one original signature cocktail using a house syrup, a spirit you enjoy, and a garnish that reflects the drink's character — name it and record the recipe

