

## Planning of the bar

There are certain essentials necessary in the planning of every bar. They are factors that should be given prime consideration when planning for a fixed bar or when setting up a temporary bar for a particular function, as described below.

### Siting

A major factor is the siting of the bar. The position should be chosen so that the bar achieves the greatest possible number of sales.

### Area

The bar staff must be given sufficient area or space in which to work and move about. There should be a minimum of 1 m (3 ft 3 in) from the back of the bar counter to the storage shelves and display cabinets at the rear of the bar.

### Layout

Very careful consideration must be given, in the initial planning, to the layout of the bar. Adequate storage must be provided in the form of shelves, cupboards and racks, for all the stock required and equipment listed. Everything should be easily to hand so that the bar staff do not have to move about more than necessary to provide a quick and efficient service.



Figure 3.5 Back bar fitting (image courtesy of Williams refrigeration)

### Plumbing and power

It is essential to have hot and cold running water for glass washing. Power is necessary for the cooling trays, refrigerators and ice-making machines.

### Safety and hygiene

Great care must be observed to ensure that the materials used in the make-up of the bar are hygienic and safe. Flooring must be non-slip. The bar top should be of a material

suitable to the general décor that is hard wearing, easily wiped down and has no sharp edges. The bar top should be of average working height – approximately 1 m (3 ft 3 in) and a depth (across the top from the bar to the service side) of about 0.6 m (20 in).

## 3.7 Furniture

Furniture must be chosen according to the needs of the establishment. Examples of various dining arrangements are shown in Table 3.2.

**Table 3.2** Dining arrangements (Based on a chart from Croner's Catering)

Type	Description of furniture
<i>Loose random</i>	Freestanding furniture positioned in no discernable pattern within a given service area.
<i>Loose module</i>	Freestanding furniture positioned within a given service area to a pre-determined pattern, with or without the use of dividers to create smaller areas within the main area.
<i>Booth</i>	Fixed seating (banquette), usually high backed, used to create secluded seating.
<i>High density</i>	Furniture with minimum dimensions and usually fixed, positioned within a given service area to create maximum seating capacity.
<i>Module</i>	Seating incorporates tables and chairs constructed as one and may be fixed to the floor.
<i>In situ</i>	Customers served in areas not designed for service, e.g. aircraft and hospital beds.
<i>Bar and lounge areas</i>	Customers served in areas not primarily designed for food and beverage service.

### Materials and finishes

By using different materials, designs and finishes of furniture and by their careful arrangement, often the atmosphere and appearance of the service area can be changed to suit different occasions.

Various types of wood and wood grain finishes are available, each suitable to blend with a particular décor. Wood is strong and rigid and resists wear and stains. It is a popular material used for chairs and tables in most food and beverage service areas but not ideal for canteens, some staff dining rooms and cafeterias.

Although wood predominates, more metals (mainly aluminium and aluminium-plated steel or brass) are gradually being introduced into dining furniture. Aluminium is lightweight, hardwearing, has a variety of finishes, is easily cleaned and the costs are reasonable. Nowadays a wooden-topped table with a metal base may be found together with chairs with lightweight metal frames and plastic finishes for the seat and back.

Formica or plastic-coated tabletops may be found in many cafeterias or staff dining rooms. These are easily cleaned, hardwearing and eliminate the use of linen. The tabletops come in a variety of colours and designs suitable for all situations. Place mats may take the place of linen.

## Chairs

Chairs come in an enormous range of designs, materials and colours to suit all situations and occasions. Because of the wide range of styles available, chairs vary in height and width, but as a guide, a chair seat is 46cm from the ground, the height from the ground to the top of the back is 1 m and the depth from the front edge of the seat to the back of the chair is 46 cm.

Plastics and fibreglass are now used extensively to produce dining room chairs. These materials are easily moulded into a single-piece seat and back to fit the body contours, the legs usually being made of metal. The advantages are that these are durable, easily cleaned, lightweight, may be stacked, are available in a large range of colours and designs and are relatively inexpensive. They are more frequently found in bars, lounges and staff dining rooms than in a first-class hotel or restaurant.

The main considerations when purchasing chairs should be size, height, shape and even the variety of seating required, for example, banquette (fixed bench seating as shown in Figure 3.5), armchairs, straight-backed and padded chairs, to give the customer a choice. Remember when purchasing chairs that the height of the chair must allow enough room for the diner to sit comfortably at the table. A leather or wool fabric is much better to sit on than PVC or man-made fibres which tend to become uncomfortable around the back and seat.



**Figure 3.6** Restaurant area with traditional seating and with banquette seating shown on right of picture (image courtesy of Dunk Ink UK)

## Tables

Tables come in three main shapes: round, square and rectangular. An establishment may have a mixture of shapes to give variety, or tables of all one shape depending on the shape of the room and the style of service being offered. Square or rectangular tables will seat two to four people and two tables may be pushed together to seat larger parties, or

extensions may be provided in order to cope with special parties, luncheons, dinners and weddings, etc. By using these extensions correctly a variety of shapes may be obtained, allowing full use of the room and enabling the maximum number of covers in the minimum space. The tabletop may have a plastic foam back or green baize covering which is heat resistant and non-slip so the tablecloth will not slide about as it would on a polished wooden top table. This type of covering also deadens the sound of crockery and tableware being laid. As a guide tables may be said to be approximately the following sizes:

#### Square

- ▶ 76 cm (2 ft 6 in) square to seat two people.
- ▶ 1 m (3 ft) square to seat four people.

#### Round

- ▶ 1 m (3 ft) in diameter to seat four people.
- ▶ 1.52 m (5 ft) in diameter to seat eight people.

#### Rectangular

- ▶ 137 cm × 76 cm (4 ft 6 in × 2 ft 6 in) to seat four people, extensions being added for larger parties.

### Sideboards

The style and design of a sideboard (or workstation) varies from establishment to establishment and is dependent upon:

- ▶ the style of service and the food and beverages on offer
- ▶ the number of service staff working from one sideboard
- ▶ the number of tables to be served from one sideboard
- ▶ the amount of equipment it is expected to hold.

It is essential that the sideboard is of minimum size and portable so that it may be easily moved if necessary. If the sideboard is too large for its purpose it is taking up space, which could be used to seat more customers. Some establishments use smaller fixed sideboards and also use tray jacks (movable folding tray stands, as illustrated in Figure 3.7) when serving and clearing.

The material used in the make-up of the sideboard should blend with the rest of the décor. The top of a sideboard should be of a heat resistant material that can be easily washed down. After service the sideboard is either completely emptied out or restocked for the next service. In some establishments the waiters are responsible for their own equipment on their station. If sideboards are restocked after service, the sideboard will also carry its own stock of linen. Thus, in this example a sideboard has everything necessary to equip a particular waiter's station or set of tables.

The actual lay-up of a sideboard depends firstly on its construction – the number of shelves and drawers for tableware, etc., and, secondly, on the type of menu and service offered. Therefore the lay-up in every establishment will vary, each being suited to its own needs and style of service and presentation. It is suggested, however, that in each particular establishment all sideboards should be laid up in the same way. If this is done the



Figure 3.7 Example of a tray jack