

BASIC BAR TOOLS

To do any job well, you need the right tools. Mixing drinks is no different. Anyone can pop open a can of beer, but bar tools such as shakers, strainers and barspoons are essential for putting together a proper cocktail. Many of these basic bartending tools can be purchased as part of a starter's kit and most are readily available in houseware stores.

Standard
Shaker



Boston
Shaker

Shakers

Cocktail shakers generally come in one of two forms—the standard shaker and the Boston shaker.

Standard shakers are comprised of three stainless-steel pieces: a can between 8 and 24 ounces, a lid that contains a strainer and a tight-fitting cap.

Boston shakers are composed of two pieces: a tapered stainless steel can between 26 and 30 ounces and a smaller tapered glass that is generally 16 ounces in size. Boston shakers are preferred by professional bartenders because they are generally bigger and allow more drinks to be mixed at once.

Julep
Strainer



Hawthorn
Strainer

Strainers

There are two main types of strainers used by bartenders who use Boston shakers, the julep strainer and the Hawthorn strainer.

The julep strainer looks like an over-sized metal spoon studded with holes. It fits well inside a mixing glass to strain ice and citrus seeds out of a stirred drink.

The Hawthorn strainer is a slotted metal disc with a metal coil on its underside and is attached to a handle. The Hawthorn strainer fits on top of a Boston shaker's metal can with the spring inside the can to filter ice and citrus seeds out of a cocktail that has been shaken.



Blender

Blenders are used to blend fresh or frozen fruits and to create drinks that contain ice. Ice cubes should be broken up in a bag with a rolling pin before being added to a blender to avoid unnecessary strain on the blender's motor. Some blenders also have a setting that allows you to grind ice cubes into crushed ice.

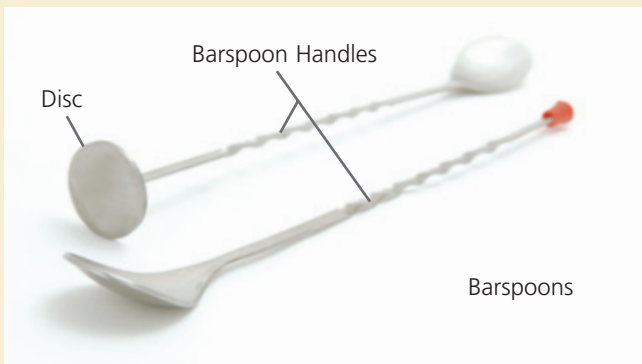


Shot Glass

Jigger

Measured Shot Glasses & Jiggers

Measured shot glasses and jiggers are used to measure cocktail ingredients. These essential tools come in a wide variety of styles and typically range in size from 1 to 6 oz. Measured shot glasses are typically marked with graduated measurements. Jiggers feature two different-sized cups stacked end-to-end like an hourglass—one cup is normally double the size of the other cup.



Barspoons

Barspoons

Barspoons are spoons used to stir cocktails that are not shaken. Barspoon handles are frequently twisted and are long enough to reach the bottom of a pitcher or large cocktail shaker. Some barspoons also have a flat disc on the end that can be used to muddle cocktail ingredients. For information on how to muddle, see page 44. In cocktails where the ingredients are layered, the liquors are often poured over the back of a barspoon. For information on how to layer drinks, see page 45.



Waiter's Corkscrew

Wine Opener

Wine openers are used for removing the corks from wine bottles. Wine openers come in a wide variety of styles, most featuring a screw that winds down into and pulls out a bottle's cork. Professional bartenders often use a "waiter's corkscrew" to open bottles. A waiter's corkscrew is a folding multipurpose tool that features a foil cutter, a bottle-cap remover and a simple corkscrew mechanism.



Knives

Knives are essential for preparing garnishes. An eight-inch chef's knife is handy for slicing larger fruits such as pineapples and grapefruits.



Channel Knife

A channel knife is a small tool featuring a square or rounded head with a hole and small blade for cutting long slices of peel from citrus fruits.



Citrus Zester

A citrus zester is a hand-held tool with five or six small, sharp, stainless steel holes used to remove threadlike strips of peel from the rind of a citrus fruit. Combination tools featuring both a channel knife and zester are common.



Muddler

A muddler is a wooden bat that is used to crush ingredients such as herbs, fruit and sugar in the bottom of a glass or cocktail shaker. Most muddlers are six or more inches long and flattened on one end.

Here are some other tools that are valuable for the home bar.



Bottle Opener

A bottle opener is a handy device to quickly remove the caps on beer bottles.



Nutmeg Grater

A nutmeg grater is useful for grating nutmeg, cinnamon and other spices over drinks.



Cocktail Pitcher

A tall cocktail pitcher with a rim designed to hold back ice is useful for mixing punches and drinks for large crowds.



Pourer

A pourer is a spout that is plugged into a bottle to regulate the flow of liquor. Bartenders use pourers to measure out ingredients by the number of seconds they pour.



Cutting Board

A cutting board is necessary for preparing fruit to be used for juicing as well as garnishes.



Reamer

A citrus reamer is a pointed tool that is designed to extract juice when pressed into citrus fruits that have been cut in half.



Ice Bucket, Tongs and Scoop

An ice bucket is essential for storing fresh ice when serving cocktails. Ice tongs and scoops are used to add ice to glasses when preparing drinks.



Mixing Glass

A mixing glass can be used instead of a shaker for making drinks that need to be stirred rather than shaken.



Straws, Stir Sticks and Cocktail Sticks

Straws and stir sticks are used to sip and stir drinks. Cocktail sticks can be used to skewer a garnish in a drink.



Tea Strainer

A fine-mesh tea strainer is useful for removing small seeds and ice chips from cocktails. For information on how to fine strain, see the top of page 77.