FREE RESTAURANT OPERATIONS TEMPLATE

Restaurant SOP Checklist

Use this 60-point checklist to verify controlled SOPs, opening, receiving, storage, preparation, cooking, service, cleaning, delivery, cash, safety, closing, deviation management, corrective actions, and sign-off.

Restaurant / location	Review date	Reviewer	Restaurant manager

1. SOP governance, document control, roles, and shift accountability

1 Confirm the restaurant, operating format, shift, checklist date, reviewer, restaurant manager, and departments included in the SOP review. SOP VERIFICATION

NAME | Enter — DATE / TIME | Enter — APPROVAL | Sign

Execution tip: Start with the approved SOP register and verify that the version employees use during the shift matches the controlled version.

2 Verify the current approved SOP register lists each procedure, version, owner, effective date, review date, training requirement, and controlled storage location. SOP VERIFICATION

Record	Current	Owner	Evidence	Action

Execution tip: Start with the approved SOP register and verify that the version employees use during the shift matches the controlled version.

3 Confirm obsolete SOPs, printed copies, recipe cards, job aids, and digital instructions have been removed or clearly marked to prevent accidental use. SOP VERIFICATION

Record	Current	Owner	Evidence	Action

Execution tip: Start with the approved SOP register and verify that the version employees use during the shift matches the controlled version.

4 Verify employees can access the SOPs required for their roles in a language and format they can understand during live operations. SOP VERIFICATION

Record	Current	Owner	Evidence	Action

Execution tip: Start with the approved SOP register and verify that the version employees use during the shift matches the controlled version.

5 Confirm shift leaders know which SOP failures require immediate containment, manager notification, service stoppage, product isolation, or escalation. CRITICAL SOP VERIFICATION

READING | Enter — LIMIT | Enter — DEVICE ID | Enter

Execution tip: Start with the approved SOP register and verify that the version employees use during the shift matches the controlled version.

6 Review previous SOP audit findings, repeat deviations, complaints, incidents, waste trends, equipment failures, and overdue corrective actions before starting. SOP VERIFICATION

Compliant | Partial | Non-compliant | N/A

Execution tip: Start with the approved SOP register and verify that the version employees use during the shift matches the controlled version.

2. Opening SOPs, readiness checks, and pre-shift controls

7 Verify opening employees complete the approved sequence for access, security disarming, utilities, lighting, ventilation, equipment startup, and initial safety checks.

SOP VERIFICATION

Safe | Needs action | Critical | LIVE PHOTO | Add

Execution tip: Observe the opening sequence in real time and compare timestamps with the approved order of work, not only the completed checklist.

8 Confirm opening temperature readings are recorded for refrigerators, freezers, cold rooms, hot-holding equipment, and other temperature-controlled units before use.

SOP VERIFICATION

Compliant | Partial | Non-compliant | N/A

Execution tip: Observe the opening sequence in real time and compare timestamps with the approved order of work, not only the completed checklist.

9 Check the dining area, counter, host station, washrooms, delivery pickup area, and customer routes are inspected and released before opening.

SOP VERIFICATION

Safe | Needs action | Critical | LIVE PHOTO | Add

Execution tip: Observe the opening sequence in real time and compare timestamps with the approved order of work, not only the completed checklist.

10 Verify food preparation, ingredient thawing, batch production, display setup, beverage stations, utensils, and service supplies follow the approved opening plan.

SOP VERIFICATION

Safe | Needs action | Critical | LIVE PHOTO | Add

Execution tip: Observe the opening sequence in real time and compare timestamps with the approved order of work, not only the completed checklist.

11 Confirm POS terminals, printers, payment devices, cash floats, online ordering, delivery platforms, reservations, and communication tools are tested before trading.

SOP VERIFICATION

Compliant | Partial | Non-compliant | N/A

Execution tip: Observe the opening sequence in real time and compare timestamps with the approved order of work, not only the completed checklist.

12 Verify the pre-shift briefing covers staffing, bookings, forecast demand, menu changes, unavailable items, allergens, targets, safety risks, promotions, and assigned responsibilities.

SOP VERIFICATION

READING | Enter | LIMIT | Enter | DEVICE ID | Enter

Execution tip: Observe the opening sequence in real time and compare timestamps with the approved order of work, not only the completed checklist.

3. Receiving, supplier, storage, labeling, and stock-rotation SOPs

13 Confirm only approved suppliers and scheduled deliveries are accepted, and that receiving employees follow identity, quantity, quality, packaging, date, and specification checks.

SOP VERIFICATION

Compliant | Partial | Non-compliant | N/A

Execution tip: Trace sampled products from receiving record to storage location and system stock so temperature, label, quantity, and batch data remain connected.

14 Verify delivery temperatures are measured with an approved device, recorded against limits, and supported by immediate rejection or containment when outside specification.

CRITICAL | SOP VERIFICATION

Compliant | Partial | Non-compliant | N/A

Execution tip: Trace sampled products from receiving record to storage location and system stock so temperature, label, quantity, and batch data remain connected.

15 Confirm shortages, substitutions, damage, contamination, broken seals, missing traceability, and rejected products are documented and communicated through the approved process.

SOP VERIFICATION

Safe | Needs action | Critical | LIVE PHOTO | Add

Execution tip: Trace sampled products from receiving record to storage location and system stock so temperature, label, quantity, and batch data remain connected.

16 Verify accepted products are moved promptly to the correct storage area and segregated by raw, ready-to-eat, allergen, chemical, packaging, return, and quarantine status.

CRITICAL | SOP VERIFICATION

Compliant | Partial | Non-compliant | N/A

Execution tip: Trace sampled products from receiving record to storage location and system stock so temperature, label, quantity, and batch data remain connected.

17 Check labels include the required product name, receipt or preparation date, use-by date, batch or lot detail, employee identification, and storage instruction.

SOP VERIFICATION

Compliant | Partial | Non-compliant | N/A

Execution tip: Trace sampled products from receiving record to storage location and system stock so temperature, label, quantity, and batch data remain connected.

18 Confirm FIFO and FEFO rotation, stock counts, par levels, transfer records, waste records, and expiry checks follow the approved stock-control SOP.

SOP VERIFICATION

Record	Current	Owner	Evidence	Action

Execution tip: Trace sampled products from receiving record to storage location and system stock so temperature, label, quantity, and batch data remain connected.

4. Food preparation, recipe, portion, allergen, and contamination SOPs

19 Verify employees follow approved handwashing, glove, utensil, cutting-board, work-area, and sequencing controls before and between preparation tasks. SOP VERIFICATION

Record	Current	Owner	Evidence	Action

Execution tip: Select a live menu item and compare the full preparation sequence with the approved recipe and food-safety SOP, including all handoffs.

20 Confirm raw and ready-to-eat foods are separated by space, time, equipment, storage, and employee practice according to the approved contamination-control SOP. CRITICAL SOP VERIFICATION

READING | Enter LIMIT | Enter DEVICE ID | Enter

Execution tip: Select a live menu item and compare the full preparation sequence with the approved recipe and food-safety SOP, including all handoffs.

21 Check ingredients, weights, measures, yields, preparation steps, batch sizes, seasoning, garnishes, and portion sizes against the current approved recipe card. SOP VERIFICATION

Compliant Partial Non-compliant N/A

Execution tip: Select a live menu item and compare the full preparation sequence with the approved recipe and food-safety SOP, including all handoffs.

22 Verify substitutions, unavailable ingredients, recipe changes, dietary requests, and allergen orders are authorized, recorded, and communicated before preparation begins. CRITICAL SOP VERIFICATION

READING | Enter LIMIT | Enter DEVICE ID | Enter

Execution tip: Select a live menu item and compare the full preparation sequence with the approved recipe and food-safety SOP, including all handoffs.

23 Confirm thawing, washing, marinating, batching, date coding, temporary holding, and prepared-food storage follow approved time and temperature limits. SOP VERIFICATION

Compliant Partial Non-compliant N/A

Execution tip: Select a live menu item and compare the full preparation sequence with the approved recipe and food-safety SOP, including all handoffs.

24 Observe one allergen-sensitive order from capture through ingredient verification, segregation, cleaning, preparation, identification, final check, and handoff. SOP VERIFICATION

Compliant Partial Non-compliant N/A

Execution tip: Select a live menu item and compare the full preparation sequence with the approved recipe and food-safety SOP, including all handoffs.

5. Cooking, cooling, reheating, holding, and product-release SOPs

25 Verify cooking temperatures and times are measured at the approved product location with a clean, calibrated probe and recorded before release.
SOP VERIFICATION

Safe | Needs action | Critical | LIVE PHOTO | Add

Execution tip: Record actual product, reading, time, device ID, employee, limit, and corrective action for every sampled critical control.

26 Confirm employees follow the approved corrective action when a product does not meet its cooking limit, including continued cooking, recheck, discard, or escalation.
CRITICAL | SOP VERIFICATION

Compliant | Partial | Non-compliant | N/A

Execution tip: Record actual product, reading, time, device ID, employee, limit, and corrective action for every sampled critical control.

27 Check cooling methods, batch depth, container use, airflow, time checkpoints, temperature records, labels, and storage follow the approved cooling SOP.
SOP VERIFICATION

Compliant | Partial | Non-compliant | N/A

Execution tip: Record actual product, reading, time, device ID, employee, limit, and corrective action for every sampled critical control.

28 Verify reheating is completed within the approved time, reaches the required temperature, and is not repeated beyond the permitted cycle.
CRITICAL | SOP VERIFICATION

READING | Enter | LIMIT | Enter | DEVICE ID | Enter

Execution tip: Record actual product, reading, time, device ID, employee, limit, and corrective action for every sampled critical control.

29 Confirm hot holding, cold holding, buffet display, service-line exposure, transport, and temporary storage remain within approved limits and monitoring frequency.
CRITICAL | SOP VERIFICATION

READING | Enter | LIMIT | Enter | DEVICE ID | Enter

Execution tip: Record actual product, reading, time, device ID, employee, limit, and corrective action for every sampled critical control.

30 Verify final product-release checks cover appearance, portion, temperature, allergen status, packaging, label, order details, and authorized approval where required.
CRITICAL | SOP VERIFICATION

Compliant | Partial | Non-compliant | N/A

Execution tip: Record actual product, reading, time, device ID, employee, limit, and corrective action for every sampled critical control.

6. Customer service, order flow, table service, and complaint SOPs

31 Confirm employees follow the approved greeting, acknowledgement, queue, seating, reservation, and expected-wait communication standards for each service channel.

SOP VERIFICATION

Record	Current	Owner	Evidence	Action

Execution tip: Audit complete customer journeys and record actual wait, order, preparation, handoff, and recovery times where the SOP defines service targets.

32 Verify employees use the approved order-confirmation process for item, size, quantity, modifiers, cooking preference, dietary request, allergen, takeaway, and delivery details.

CRITICAL · SOP VERIFICATION

Record	Current	Owner	Evidence	Action

Execution tip: Audit complete customer journeys and record actual wait, order, preparation, handoff, and recovery times where the SOP defines service targets.

33 Check orders move through the approved routing, preparation, assembly, verification, staging, table delivery, counter handoff, drive-thru, or pickup sequence.

SOP VERIFICATION

Compliant · Partial · Non-compliant · N/A

Execution tip: Audit complete customer journeys and record actual wait, order, preparation, handoff, and recovery times where the SOP defines service targets.

34 Observe table-service standards for menu introduction, recommendations, coursing, check-backs, clearing, beverage refills, bill presentation, and farewell.

SOP VERIFICATION

Safe · Needs action · Critical · LIVE PHOTO | Add

Execution tip: Audit complete customer journeys and record actual wait, order, preparation, handoff, and recovery times where the SOP defines service targets.

35 Confirm delays, unavailable products, order errors, remakes, refunds, and service recovery are handled within the approved authority and escalation limits.

CRITICAL · SOP VERIFICATION

Safe · Needs action · Critical · LIVE PHOTO | Add

Execution tip: Audit complete customer journeys and record actual wait, order, preparation, handoff, and recovery times where the SOP defines service targets.

36 Verify complaints are recorded with customer details, issue category, product or order reference, immediate response, manager review, follow-up, and closure evidence.

SOP VERIFICATION

Compliant · Partial · Non-compliant · N/A

Execution tip: Audit complete customer journeys and record actual wait, order, preparation, handoff, and recovery times where the SOP defines service targets.

7. Cleaning, sanitation, dishwashing, waste, and pest-control SOPs

37 Verify the master cleaning schedule defines each area, item, method, frequency, chemical, concentration, contact time, responsible role, and verification step.

SOP VERIFICATION

Compliant | Partial | Non-compliant | N/A

Execution tip: Inspect hidden and difficult areas, then verify the employee can explain the exact chemical, method, contact time, and verification step used.

38 Confirm employees follow the approved clean-as-you-go process and use separate tools for food-contact, floor, restroom, allergen, and high-risk cleaning tasks.

CRITICAL | SOP VERIFICATION

Compliant | Partial | Non-compliant | N/A

Execution tip: Inspect hidden and difficult areas, then verify the employee can explain the exact chemical, method, contact time, and verification step used.

39 Check food-contact surfaces, utensils, probes, boards, slicers, beverage equipment, ice machines, and high-touch points are cleaned and sanitized at required intervals.

SOP VERIFICATION

Compliant | Partial | Non-compliant | N/A

Execution tip: Inspect hidden and difficult areas, then verify the employee can explain the exact chemical, method, contact time, and verification step used.

40 Verify dishwashing and glasswashing follow approved scraping, loading, wash, rinse, sanitizing, temperature or chemical, air-drying, and storage procedures.

SOP VERIFICATION

READING | Enter
LIMIT | Enter
DEVICE ID | Enter

Execution tip: Inspect hidden and difficult areas, then verify the employee can explain the exact chemical, method, contact time, and verification step used.

41 Confirm waste segregation, bin use, used oil, food waste, cardboard, hazardous materials, removal frequency, external storage, and disposal records follow the approved SOP.

SOP VERIFICATION

ACTUAL | Enter
TARGET | Enter
VARIANCE | Enter

Execution tip: Inspect hidden and difficult areas, then verify the employee can explain the exact chemical, method, contact time, and verification step used.

42 Verify pest sightings, monitoring-device checks, entry gaps, contractor visits, product protection, cleaning response, and escalation follow the approved pest-control procedure.

SOP VERIFICATION

Compliant | Partial | Non-compliant | N/A

Execution tip: Inspect hidden and difficult areas, then verify the employee can explain the exact chemical, method, contact time, and verification step used.

8. Delivery, takeaway, POS, cash, refund, and digital-order SOPs

43 **Confirm takeaway and delivery orders use the approved packaging, sealing, labeling, temperature protection, allergen identification, staging, and handoff process.** CRITICAL | SOP VERIFICATION

Safe | Needs action | Critical | LIVE PHOTO | Add

Execution tip: Sample transactions across counter, delivery, cash, card, refund, and discount processes and trace each one from order record to reconciliation.

44 **Verify online menus, availability, modifiers, prices, taxes, promotions, allergens, preparation times, opening hours, and delivery zones match approved source data.** CRITICAL | SOP VERIFICATION

Compliant | Partial | Non-compliant | N/A

Execution tip: Sample transactions across counter, delivery, cash, card, refund, and discount processes and trace each one from order record to reconciliation.

45 **Check POS order entry, discounts, voids, refunds, complimentary items, cancellations, manager overrides, split payments, and receipt controls follow assigned authority levels.** SOP VERIFICATION

READING | Enter
LIMIT | Enter
DEVICE ID | Enter

Execution tip: Sample transactions across counter, delivery, cash, card, refund, and discount processes and trace each one from order record to reconciliation.

46 **Confirm cash floats, till access, safe drops, cash counts, discrepancy recording, handovers, deposits, and closing reconciliation follow the approved cash SOP.** SOP VERIFICATION

Compliant | Partial | Non-compliant | N/A

Execution tip: Sample transactions across counter, delivery, cash, card, refund, and discount processes and trace each one from order record to reconciliation.

47 **Verify card, contactless, QR, gift card, loyalty, voucher, aggregator, and other digital transactions are processed, reconciled, and protected according to procedure.** CRITICAL | SOP VERIFICATION

Compliant | Partial | Non-compliant | N/A

Execution tip: Sample transactions across counter, delivery, cash, card, refund, and discount processes and trace each one from order record to reconciliation.

48 **Confirm failed systems, duplicate orders, unavailable items, delayed drivers, customer no-shows, payment disputes, and platform outages follow the approved contingency SOP.** SOP VERIFICATION

Compliant | Partial | Non-compliant | N/A

Execution tip: Sample transactions across counter, delivery, cash, card, refund, and discount processes and trace each one from order record to reconciliation.

9. Employee conduct, equipment, safety, security, and emergency SOPs

49 Verify employees follow approved attendance, handover, uniform, hygiene, mobile-phone, personal-item, break, visitor, contractor, and restricted-area procedures. SOP VERIFICATION

Safe | Needs action | Critical | LIVE PHOTO | Add

Execution tip: Ask employees to explain what they would do during a real fault or emergency, then verify the answer against the approved procedure and available resources.

50 Confirm equipment startup, safe use, cleaning, isolation, shutdown, preventive maintenance, fault reporting, and return-to-service steps follow manufacturer and company SOPs. CRITICAL SOP VERIFICATION

READING | Enter | LIMIT | Enter | DEVICE ID | Enter

Execution tip: Ask employees to explain what they would do during a real fault or emergency, then verify the answer against the approved procedure and available resources.

51 Check knife, hot surface, fryer, gas, electrical, manual handling, chemical, ladder, slip, and burn controls are applied during live work. SOP VERIFICATION

Record	Current	Owner	Evidence	Action

Execution tip: Ask employees to explain what they would do during a real fault or emergency, then verify the answer against the approved procedure and available resources.

52 Verify opening and closing key control, access codes, CCTV, alarm, safe, stockroom, office, cash movement, suspicious behaviour, and incident-reporting procedures. CRITICAL SOP VERIFICATION

Safe | Needs action | Critical | LIVE PHOTO | Add

Execution tip: Ask employees to explain what they would do during a real fault or emergency, then verify the answer against the approved procedure and available resources.

53 Confirm emergency contacts, evacuation, fire response, gas leak, power failure, water outage, refrigeration failure, injury, illness, and product-recall procedures are accessible and understood. CRITICAL SOP VERIFICATION

Safe | Needs action | Critical | LIVE PHOTO | Add

Execution tip: Ask employees to explain what they would do during a real fault or emergency, then verify the answer against the approved procedure and available resources.

54 Observe whether managers stop unsafe work, protect employees and customers, isolate affected equipment or areas, document the event, and authorize restart correctly. CRITICAL SOP VERIFICATION

Safe | Needs action | Critical | LIVE PHOTO | Add

Execution tip: Ask employees to explain what they would do during a real fault or emergency, then verify the answer against the approved procedure and available resources.

10. Closing SOPs, handover, deviation management, and sign-off

55 Verify closing employees follow the approved sequence for final orders, customer departure, food disposition, stock protection, cleaning, cash, utilities, equipment, and security.
SOP VERIFICATION

Finding	Priority	Owner	Due	Proof

Execution tip: Do not close a deviation only because the checklist is complete. Require objective proof that the immediate risk and the cause have been addressed.

56 Confirm remaining food is cooled, labelled, stored, transferred, donated, returned, or discarded according to approved shelf-life, temperature, traceability, and waste procedures.
CRITICAL SOP VERIFICATION

Finding	Priority	Owner	Due	Proof

Execution tip: Do not close a deviation only because the checklist is complete. Require objective proof that the immediate risk and the cause have been addressed.

57 Check all cleaning tasks, waste removal, pest checks, dishwashing, floor care, washrooms, drains, and difficult areas are completed and independently verified.
CRITICAL SOP VERIFICATION

Finding	Priority	Owner	Due	Proof

Execution tip: Do not close a deviation only because the checklist is complete. Require objective proof that the immediate risk and the cause have been addressed.

58 Verify equipment is cleaned, switched off or left running as required, isolated when faulty, and recorded for maintenance or next-shift follow-up.
CRITICAL SOP VERIFICATION

READING | Enter
LIMIT | Enter
DEVICE ID | Enter

Execution tip: Do not close a deviation only because the checklist is complete. Require objective proof that the immediate risk and the cause have been addressed.

59 Confirm cash reconciliation, safe storage, system closure, delivery reconciliation, key control, alarm setting, door and window checks, and final walk-through are completed.
SOP VERIFICATION

Compliant | Partial | Non-compliant | N/A

Execution tip: Do not close a deviation only because the checklist is complete. Require objective proof that the immediate risk and the cause have been addressed.

60 Record SOP deviations, immediate containment, root cause, assigned owner, due date, evidence, escalation, next-shift handover, reviewer approval, and final sign-off.
CRITICAL SOP VERIFICATION

NAME | Enter
DATE / TIME | Enter
APPROVAL | Sign

Execution tip: Do not close a deviation only because the checklist is complete. Require objective proof that the immediate risk and the cause have been addressed.