

Yes, chef.

The Restaurant Money Checklist

41 things every well-run restaurant keeps on top of. If you're not doing these, you're leaving money on the table.

Tick what you do

Go through it honestly. Every blank box is a leak.

Start with daily

The copper ones. Small habits, every shift.

Then the rest

Weekly, monthly, yearly. Put them in the diary.

1 Labour

Usually your biggest cost after food. Most of it leaks in the gaps between the rota and the clock.

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|--------------------------|--|---------|
| ☐ | Set a labour % target for each day of the week
Not one number for the month. A Tuesday and a Saturday are different restaurants. | Weekly |
| ☐ | Build the rota against forecast sales
Start from what you expect to take, not a copy of last week. | Weekly |
| ☐ | Know what the rota costs before you publish it
Hours × rates, including the managers. | Weekly |
| ☐ | Publish the rota at least a week ahead
Fewer swaps, fewer no-shows, fewer last-minute agency calls. | Weekly |
| ☐ | Decide each shift's cut time, and send people home when it's quiet | Daily |
| ☐ | Check every timesheet against its rostered shift before payroll
Early clock-ins and late clock-outs nobody approved add up fast. | Weekly |
| ☐ | Agree overtime before it's worked, not after | Weekly |
| ☐ | Check every pay rate against the minimum wage for that person's age
The rates go up every April. | Yearly |
| ☐ | Track holiday as it builds up
So it never lands as a surprise bill when someone leaves. | Monthly |
| ☐ | Give proper rest breaks
20 minutes for adults working more than six hours. | Daily |

2 Food & drink costs

Every point of GP you lose comes straight off the bottom line.

☐	Cost every dish and drink from current supplier prices	Monthly
☐	Set a GP target, and know which dishes miss it	Monthly
☐	Check every delivery against the invoice Count, weight, temperature, price. Sign for what came, not what was ordered.	Daily
☐	Watch for price creep Compare this week's invoice prices to last month's.	Weekly
☐	Re-price when costs move Not once a year when it's already cost you.	Monthly
☐	Stocktake on the same day, at the same time High-value lines (meat, fish, spirits) weekly.	Weekly
☐	Compare actual food cost with what it should have been The gap is waste, theft or portions. Find out which.	Monthly
☐	Log every bit of waste, with a reason Waste you don't write down is money you never see leave.	Daily
☐	A spec and a photo for every plate So portions don't drift from one chef to the next.	Once
☐	Label, date and rotate: first in, first out	Daily
☐	Cut the dishes that sell little and earn little	Quarterly

3 Sales

You can't tell if a day was good without knowing what it was meant to be.

- | | |
|--|--------|
| ☐ Set a sales target for every day
Then check the takings against it, every day. | Daily |
| ☐ Track covers and spend per head | Daily |
| ☐ Know your busiest and quietest hours, and staff to them | Weekly |
| ☐ Pick two or three upsells and check they're landing
Sides, a second drink, dessert. Train it, then measure it. | Weekly |
| ☐ Take card details or a deposit for big bookings
One empty table of ten pays for a lot of awkward conversations. | Once |
| ☐ Reconcile the till, the card machine and the bank | Daily |
| ☐ Check voids, refunds and discounts, by person | Weekly |
| ☐ Reply to reviews, good and bad | Weekly |

Your numbers

Write them in. If you can't, that's the first box to tick.

Sales last week

Labour % last week

Labour % target

Food GP

Average spend per head

Waste last week (£)

4 Compliance

The fines, closures and bad scores nobody puts in the budget.

☐	A written food safety system, followed and up to date Safer Food, Better Business or your own HACCP plan.	Once
☐	Fridge and freezer temperatures written down every day Opening and closing is the usual habit.	Daily
☐	Cooking, cooling and reheating temperatures probed and recorded	Daily
☐	Opening, closing and cleaning checks signed off	Daily
☐	Allergen information for all 14 allergens, updated with every recipe change	Every change
☐	Right to work checked, and a copy kept, before someone's first shift The fine is up to £60,000 per worker.	Every hire
☐	A written tipping policy, every tip passed on, records kept Required by law since October 2024. Keep the records three years.	Monthly
☐	A written statement of terms for every new starter on day one	Every hire
☐	Workplace pension for everyone eligible	Monthly
☐	Premises licence, personal licences and age-check training current	Yearly
☐	Fire risk assessment reviewed, extinguishers serviced, extraction cleaned	Yearly
☐	Broken kit logged, booked in and chased A dead fryer on a Friday costs more than the repair.	Weekly

What one box is worth

Small percentages, big numbers. Try it with your own figures.

1 point of labour

£10,400

a year, on £20,000 of sales a week. Labour at 31% instead of 30% is £200 every week.

2 points of food GP

£12,480

a year, on £12,000 of food sales a week. That's £240 a week gone in price creep, portions and the bin.

Or let the app do the **checking.**

Yes Chef runs the whole house, so half this list ticks itself.

- The rota costed as you build it, with labour % against your target
- Holiday that builds up as people work
- Records ready to hand the inspector
- Every day's sales against its target
- One timesheet per shift, set against the rota, approved in a tap
- Every check on the phone, flagged on the day it's late
- Waste logged in a tap
- Repairs booked, chased and reminded