

## How Big, How Much?

Are you wondering how much coffee or wine to order, what size linen will fit your tables, or how much space you'll need for musicians? Here is a tried and true quick reference for the facts that facilitate great events.

## Beverages

### How much coffee do you need?

#### At breakfast:

People typically drink two cups of coffee or tea for breakfasts or morning breaks.

An estimate for quantity needed is:

- 1 gallon per 30 attendees
- 1 gallon decaf per 75 attendees
- 1 gallon hot water per 75 attendees

#### At breaks:

People typically drink one cup of coffee or tea or one soda during **breaks**. An estimate for quantity needed is:

- 1 gallon per 50 attendees
- 1 gallon decaf per 50 attendees
- 1 gallon hot water per 75 attendees
- Provide soft drinks and water for 70 percent of attendees.

1 U.S. gallon is 128 oz. It will fill:

- 32, 3 oz. punch cups
- 21, 6 oz. cups
- 16, 8 oz. cups
- 12, 10 oz. cups
- 10, 12 oz. cups

## Alcoholic Beverages

#### Wine:

A 750 ML bottle yields 5, 5 oz. drinks or 6, 4 oz. drinks

There are 12 bottles in a case of wine.

For a stand-up reception, figure two glasses per person, per hour.  
For dinner, a good rule of thumb is one bottle for every two guests.  
The minimum number of 750 ML bottles needed for dinner is:

- 4 people, 2 bottles
- 6 people, 3 bottles
- 8 people, 4 bottles
- 10 people, 5 bottles
- 12 people, 6 bottles
- It is a good idea to have a few extra bottles handy.

## **Champagne:**

Number of servings if pouring 5 oz. per glass:

- 750 ML bottle: 5
- Liter bottle: 6
- 1.75 Liter bottle: 10
- 3 Liter bottle: 20
- 4 Liter bottle: 27

## **Beer:**

There are 24, 12 oz. bottles or cans in a case of beer.

Number of 12 packs needed for:

- 12 guests: 2
- 25 guests: 4
- 50 guests: 9
- 100 guests: 16
- 150 guests: 25

A U.S. barrel of beer has 31 gallons, or 3968 ounces or 330, 12 oz. cups.

A keg is a  $\frac{1}{2}$  barrel and has 15  $\frac{1}{2}$  gallons, or 1,984 ounces or 165, 12oz. cups

A pony keg, or  $\frac{1}{4}$  barrel, has 7.5 gallons or 960 ounces or 80, 12 oz. cups

A  $\frac{1}{6}$  keg has 5.16 gallons or 661 ounces or 55, 12 oz. cups

## **Spirits:**

Based on a 1.5 oz. pour of liquor, the number of servings per bottle is:

- 750 ML, 16
- Liter, 22
- 1.75 Liter, 39

What proportion of wine, beer, and spirits will you need?

- 30 percent wine
- 50 percent beer
- 20 percent spirits

## **How many clean glasses will you need?**

3 per person

## **How many bartenders do you need?**

- 1 for every 75 to 100 guests
- 1 for every 40 to 60 guests for upscale events
- 1 cocktail server for every 50 guests

## **Food**

### **Continental breakfast or morning break:**

Order one baked item such as a pastry, muffin, or bagel for 75 percent of the guests. Order more muffins and bagels than pastries.

### **Hors d'oeuvres:**

#### **At cocktail reception, buffet service:**

12 pieces per person for the first hour

6 pieces per person for every hour thereafter

When served before dinner:

6-8 pieces per person per hour

### **Shrimp:**

3-4 shrimp per person for first hour;

1 piece per person thereafter

### **Formula for figuring amount of hors d'oeuvres to order:**

Number of people x 12 hors d'oeuvres for the first hour plus number of people x 6 hors d'oeuvres for every additional hour

### **How many waiters do you need?**

- 1 for two tables to serve a three or four-course meal, each serving no more than 16 guests
- 1 for every 10 guests for faster service
- 1 per table for more formal meals and/or to serve VIP tables
- 2 per table for formal occasions, serving no more than 10 guests

Set up 1 double-sided buffet for every 75-100 people, use 1-2 runners to keep it replenished per 100 people.

## Space and Staging

### How much space is needed per person?

- 100 square feet per 50 guests for buffet lines
- 50 square feet for each bar
- 25-30 square feet per person, conference room
- 15 square feet per person, classroom or theatre style
- 15 square feet per person sit-down buffet
- 12 square feet per person sit-down dinner at 60-inch round tables
- 10 square feet per person sit-down dinner at 8-foot banquet tables
- 8 square feet per person, stand-up reception with some seating
- 6 square feet per person, stand-up reception, no seating
- 5 square feet per person for dance area

### How large a stage is needed for musicians?

- 3 musicians: 8 x 12 feet
- 5 musicians: 12 x 20 feet
- 7 musicians: 12 x 24 feet
- 12 musicians: 16 x 28 feet

**Tip:** Take into consideration everything that will be on the stage before ordering. You might need a larger size.

## Tables and Linen

### Tables

The number of people who can sit comfortably at a table depends on how much china, flatware, and stemware is needed as well as the width of the chairs. For formal occasions, use the minimum number of seats per table. Banquet (rectangle) tables make more efficient use of space than round tables.

### How many people can sit at a

- 36-inch round (3 ft.)= 4
- 48-inch round (4 ft.)=4, comfortably, 6, crowded
- 54-inch round (4.5 ft.) = 6 comfortably, 8, crowded
- 60-inch round (5 ft.) = 8, comfortably, 10, crowded
- 72-inch round (6 ft.) =10, comfortably, 12, crowded
- 6-foot banquet (rectangle) = 6-8
- 8-foot banquet (rectangle) 8-10

**Tip:** Seating estimates are based on the 16-18-inch seat widths of standard banquet and stacking chairs. When using other types of chairs, measure the width before deciding on number of guests per table. Wider chairs will reduce the number of people who can sit comfortably at a table. To dine comfortably, each person needs 24 inches of table top space.

How much **seating is needed at a reception**? Provide tables and chairs for about half to two-thirds of the guests. Determine the proportion after considering guests' ages, the menu, and whether or not there will be a program.

## Linen

- To cover a 48-inch round table so the cloth drops to the floor use a 108-inch round cloth; for a 15-inch drop use a 90-inch round cloth.
- To cover a 60-inch round table so the cloth drops to the floor use a 120-inch round cloth; for a 15-inch drop use a 90-inch round cloth.
- To cover a 72-inch round table so the cloth drops to the floor use a 132-inch round cloth; for a 15-inch drop use a 108-inch round cloth.
- To cover a 6-foot banquet (rectangle) table, use a 60 x 120-inch cloth.
- To cover an 8-foot banquet (rectangle) table, use a 60 x 120-inch cloth.
- Banquet tables are often skirted. To wrap a 6-foot banquet table on three sides, use a 13-foot skirt. To wrap it on four sides, use a 17-foot skirt.
- To wrap an 8-foot banquet table on three sides, use a 13-foot skirt. To wrap it on four sides, use a 21-foot skirt.