

How to build your home bar

Many people enjoy opening their homes to friends or family. In fact, according to the National Eating Trends survey and custom research by the NPD group, in 2016 the average person ate 38 meals at other people's homes.

Knowing how to cook, set the mood and entertain is increasingly important for many homeowners. Installing and outfitting a home bar can provide guests with the features of a night out, only without the crowds or bar tabs that come at the end of the night. A home bar is a place where hosts and their guests can gather and enjoy great conversation. Such a spot also can serve as a neighborhood hangout — a smart choice for those who want to indulge safely and not have to drive home afterward.

Creating a home bar need not be a difficult project. By investing in basic equipment, stocking up on preferred liquors and gaining some mixology expertise, hosts can impress and entertain their guests.

Establish a bar setup

Home bars can range from rolling carts to built-in wet bars to a single tray of items. Space in a home will dictate the kind of bar homeowners can have. Rolling bar carts are popular and versatile, and they can be kept stationary or rolled in and out of a room as needed. If a bar cart is open, organization is key, as you don't want it to look unkempt.

A full-blown wet bar will require more construction, including plumbing and electricity if you need outlets for plugging in appliances. Wet bars are ideal in dens, renovated garages and finished basements.

Stock up on equipment

A new home bar requires barware and glassware. Various drinks are best served in requisite glassware and prepared with the right equipment. A home bar will benefit from a muddler, jigger, cocktail shaker, strainer, ice cube trays, and bar spoon. Glassware can include short glasses, tall glasses and wine glasses with stems. Martini glasses provide a chic

look and are practical for those who prefer cosmopolitans and martinis.

Fill it with spirits

No bar is complete without alcohol and mixers. Homeowners can buy the types of spirits they love and complete their bars with the basics for mixing. When stocking a bar, keep in mind that everything does not have to be top-shelf. Vodka, gin, tequila, rum and whiskey are some of the more popular spirits. Simple syrup, fresh fruit, club soda, cola, and bitters are examples of versatile mixers.

Entertaining guru Martha Stewart says to have enough supplies on hand for guests.



Expect each person to have three drinks (requiring three glasses), use a pound of ice, and three cocktail napkins per two-hour party. Don't forget to also have nonalcoholic items on hand for those who don't imbibe.

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