

## IN THIS CHAPTER

- » Assembling the tools of the bartending trade
- » Finding the right glasses to stock your shelves

# Chapter **1**

## For Openers: Gathering the Tools and Glasses You Need

**T**o bartend, you need a few essentials: good people skills, knowledge about the products you're pouring, a collection of cocktail recipes, and the proper equipment. This chapter covers the equipment part of the equation. (Part 2 can help you with product knowledge, and Part 3 gives you the recipes. As for people skills, you're on your own.)

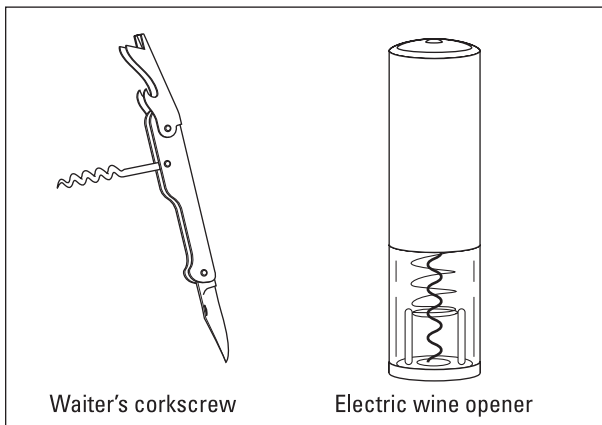
### Covering the Basics: Bar Tools to Have at the Ready

The most important assets for any profession are the right tools. You need basic bar tools to open, mix, serve, and store your drinks. Whether you're stocking a home bar or working as a professional, your basic tools are a wine opener, cocktail shaker, and strainer.

## Wine opener

The most common wine opener used in bars and restaurants is a *waiter's corkscrew* sometimes called a *wine key* (shown in Figure 1-1). It has a sharp blade for cutting foils around corks and a corkscrew (also known as a *worm*) for extracting the cork. This tool also includes a bottle opener for removing caps from beer bottles and the like. You can find this opener online or in most liquor stores and bar supply houses.

Another nifty option is an electric wine opener (refer to Figure 1-1). It's electric *and* ergonomic so it makes your life easier. It also automatically lets go of the cork so there's even less work for you. While more expensive than a waiter's corkscrew, electric wine openers like the Rabbit are easier to use making it great for your home bar or for using in a busy restaurant behind the bar. (When it comes to tableside openings, only the traditional waiter's corkscrew should be used.)



*Illustration by John Wiley & Sons*

**FIGURE 1-1:** A waiter's corkscrew and an electric wine opener.

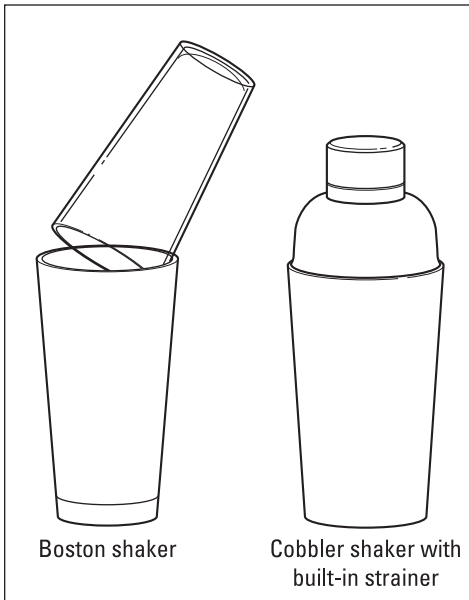
## Cocktail shaker

The cocktail shaker is the most common bar tool used. Get to know it, as you will use it often! Figure 1-2 shows two types of shakers.

- » The *Boston shaker*, also known as a *two-piece shaker*, is the shaker that most professional bartenders use because of its

versatility. It most commonly consists of a mixing/pint glass on top (which can be used to serve the cocktail you're about to make) and a stainless-steel core that overlaps the glass to contain the liquid. This type of shaker requires a separate Hawthorne strainer be used, as described in the following section.

- » The *cobbler shaker*, also known as a *three-piece shaker*, consists of at least two stainless-steel parts and a built-in strainer, making it a good option for your home bar given its ease of use.



*Illustration by John Wiley & Sons*

**FIGURE 1-2:** A Boston shaker and a cobbler shaker.

## Strainer

A *strainer* is used to strain the liquid out of a shaker or mixing glass catching and keeping any ice or muddled ingredients from getting into the final product.

There are a couple different types of strainers available, but the most popular is the *Hawthorne strainer*, shown in Figure 1-3. The Hawthorne is a flat, spoon-shaped utensil with a spring coil

around its head. Place it on top of the stainless-steel half of a Boston shaker or directly into a bar or mixing glass to strain cocktails.

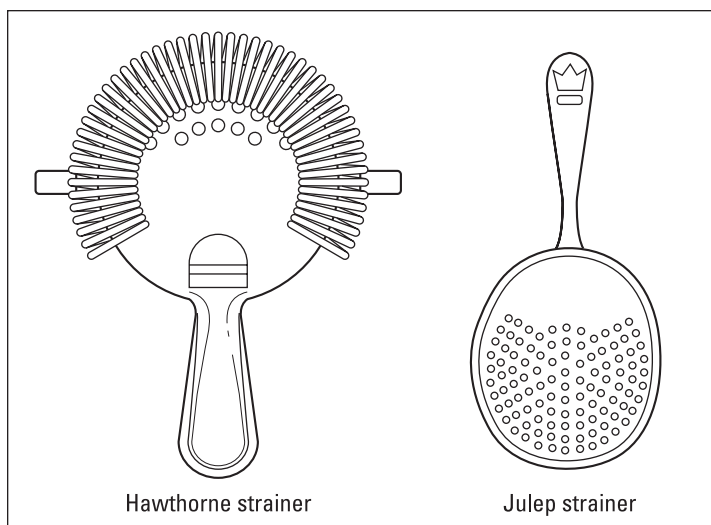


Illustration by John Wiley & Sons

**FIGURE 1-3:** A Hawthorne strainer and a Julep strainer.

The second most popular strainer is called a *Julep strainer*. The Julep strainer was originally designed to help bar patrons drink a cocktail by holding back ice so they could easily sip. It's now more commonly used to strain cocktails out of a mixing glass.

While professional bartenders should have both types of strainers behind their bars, the at-home bartender can get by with just a Hawthorne.

## Adding Other Helpful Tools

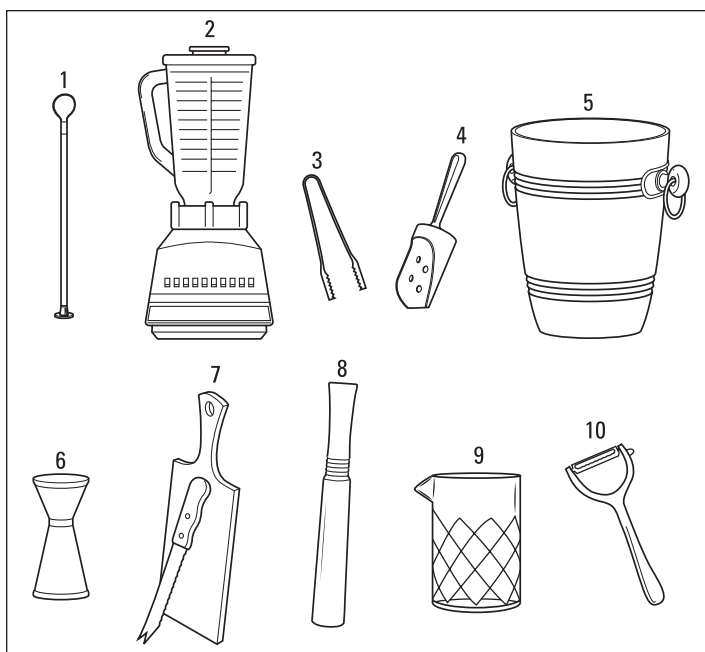


**TIP**

Most if not all of the tools in this section should be found at a restaurant or bar. For at-home bartenders, a cocktail shaker, jigger, bar spoon, and mixing glass are most key.

Many of the following tools are shown in Figure 1-4:

- » **Bar towels:** Keeping bar towels behind the bar is always smart to wipe up spills, overpours, or sweat from glasses.



*Illustration by John Wiley & Sons*

**FIGURE 1-4:** A collection of bar tools: (1) bar spoon, (2) blender, (3) tongs, (4) ice scoop, (5) ice bucket, (6) jigger or measuring glass, (7) knife and cutting board, (8) muddler, (9) mixing glass, and (10) peeler.



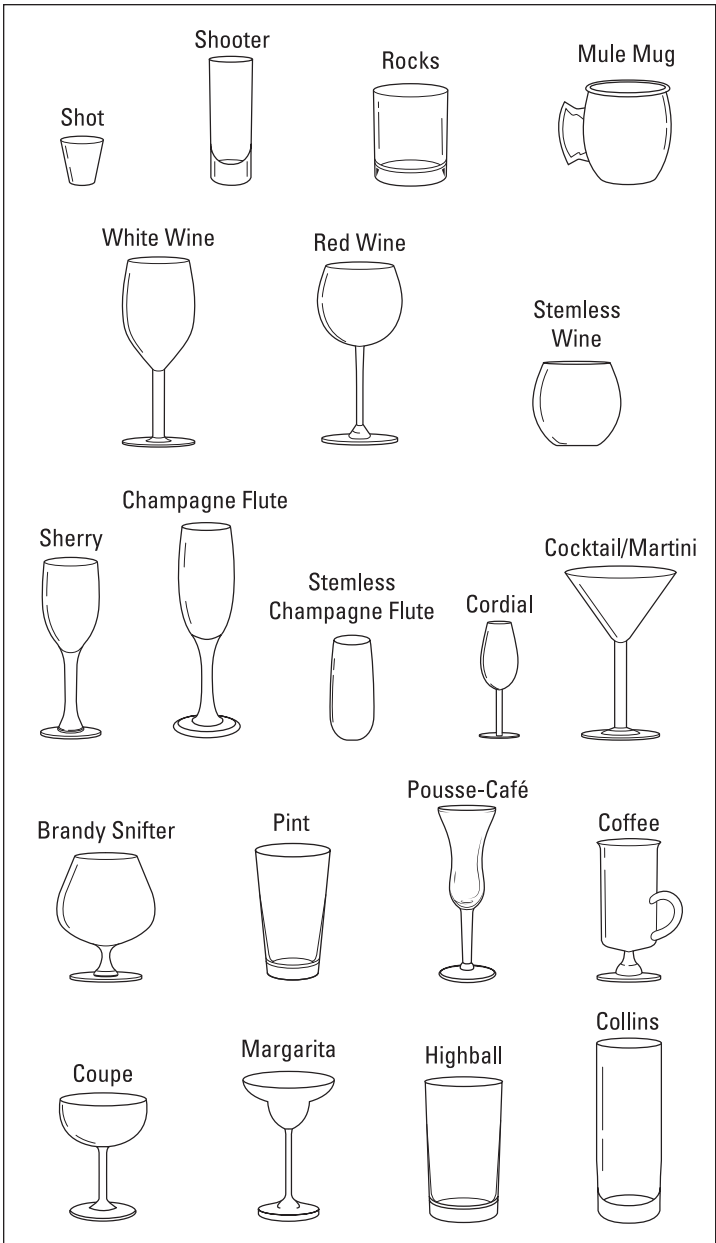
**TIP**

- » **Bar spoon:** A long spoon for stirring cocktails.
- » **Blender:** Used to do just that — mix or blend ingredients.  
When making a drink, always add liquid into the blender jar before switching on the unit; doing so will save your blade and avoid spills. Also, don't assume your blender can be used to make crushed ice. Check with the manufacturer or owner's guide first or buy an ice crusher to be safe.
- » **Bottle opener or church key:** A tool used to open bottles or cans.
- » **Coasters or bar napkins:** Coasters prevent rings from developing on your bar and tables. Napkins help do the same and also help your guests hold their drinks.
- » **Grater:** Use a grater for garnishing drinks with a dusting of grated nutmeg, chocolate, and so forth.
- » **Ice bucket:** Pick one that's large enough to hold at least three trays of ice.

- » **Ice scoop or tongs:** A must for every bar. Never use your hands or glassware to scoop ice.
- » **Jigger or measuring glass:** A *jigger* is a small glass or metal container used to measure liquid.
- » **Juicer:** Used to extract juice from various fresh fruits for cocktails.
- » **Knife and cutting board:** You need a small, sharp paring knife to cut fruit and other garnishes (see Chapter 2).
- » **Large cups or bowls:** You need something to hold garnishes like lemons, limes, oranges, and cherries. These cups often come in a set called a *condiment caddy*.
- » **Canvas ice bag (or Lewis Ice Bag):** It's made of heavy grade natural canvas so you can use it with your muddler to manually crush ice.
- » **Mixing glass:** A separate glass container used to mix drinks that contain only alcohol.
- » **Muddler:** A small wooden bat or pestle used to crush fruit or herbs.
- » **Peeler:** A tool used to peel fruits and vegetables for drink garnishes.
- » **Pour spout:** This device gives greater control to your pouring. Many different types are available, including some with a lidded spout that prevents insects and other undesirables from entering the pourer.
- » **Stirrers and straws:** Used for stirring and sipping drinks.

## Pour It Out: Giving Some Thought to Glassware

People generally expect certain drinks to be served in certain kinds of glasses. The problem is that there are more standard bar glasses than most people (and many bars) care to purchase. In any event, Figure 1-5 shows most of the glasses that you're ever likely to use to serve drinks.



*Illustration by John Wiley & Sons*

**FIGURE 1-5:** Glasses, glasses, glasses.

We have a few things to say about some of the glasses shown in Figure 1–5:

- » **Brandy or cognac snifter:** These are available in a wide range of sizes; the large, short-stemmed bowl should be cupped in the hand to warm the brandy or cognac.
- » **Champagne flute:** The bowl is tapered to prevent bubbles from escaping.
- » **Cocktail or martini glass:** Perfect for Martinis, Manhattans, and many other classic drinks, this glass is available in 3 to 10 oz. sizes.
- » **Cordial glass:** In addition to cordials, you can use this glass to serve straight-up or “neat” drinks.
- » **Coupe:** A stemmed glass that typically serves “up” drinks or cocktails that are either shaken or stirred and then strained into a glass without ice.
- » **Highball and Collins glasses:** These glasses are the most versatile. Sizes range from 8 to 12 oz.
- » **Mule mug:** A mug made of copper that’s used to serve Moscow mules (see Chapter 20). The copper helps keep the drink cold.
- » **Pint glass:** A glass used typically to serve beer, usually 12 to 16 oz.
- » **Red wine glass:** These glasses usually range from 8 to 22 oz. Note that the bowl is wider than the bowl of a white wine glass, allowing the wine to breathe.
- » **Rocks glass:** Also known as an *old fashioned glass*, sizes of this glass vary from 5 to 10 oz. Use the 5 or 6 oz. variety and add plenty of ice.
- » **Shot glass:** Originally used as a measuring tool, a shot glass also can be used to serve shot recipes (see Chapter 21) or shots of straight liquor. Traditionally, these are 1 to 1.5 oz. and are a must for every bar.
- » **Shooter glass:** These glasses are taller and skinner than a shot glass, usually measuring 1.5 to 3 oz. These glasses are also used to serve shot and shooters recipes along with straight liquor.
- » **Stemless glasses:** Becoming popular in recent years, stemless glasses usually hold red or white wine but also can be used to serve a variety of cocktails.

» **White wine glass:** These glasses are typically smaller than red wine glasses, usually holding 8 to 12 oz. The U-shape not only helps with temperature but also helps preserve aromas.



TIP

Overall, the most standard glasses are pint, highball, red and white wine, rocks, champagne, and shot. However, if you're planning on creating a bar at home or serving cocktails at a party, keep your glass selection smaller to save space. You can simplify by using two types of glasses: a white wine glass and a red wine glass. Both are shown in Figure 1-5. You can use these two glasses for every type of cocktail (including shots, even though a shot glass is essential for every bar), plus beer and wine. Also, if you use these two glass shapes, cleaning and storing your glasses is less complicated.

