

THE HOME ARTISAN BAR

Chapter 1: Stocking Your Home Bar

The first and most important step to building your home bar is stocking it with spirits, liqueurs and bitters. This is a very subjective process, but we've compiled a list of the basics to ensure you will be able to make a great drink no matter what kind of drinker saddles up to your home bar.

The second step is buying the basic tools and understanding what they're used for. There's a wide range to choose from with regard to quality and price, but top tier items are not necessary. Budget tools will work just fine in a home bar.

You can purchase your spirits, liqueurs, and bitters from [BevMo!](#) and [Total Wine](#), and you can find tools on [Amazon](#) or [Cocktail Kingdom](#). Of course, if you have a local spirits specialty store, it's always nice to see unique options and support a local business. These shops will often sell the tools as well.

Another detail that will enhance your bar is fresh herbs. You should consider keeping a small garden with mint, sage, cilantro and rosemary. Herbs will be useful when you get more creative with drinks, however, this isn't absolutely necessary. At the end of this chapter you can download a shopping list.

SPIRITS

These are the basic brands we recommend, that are good quality for the price. If there's one area you don't want to penny pinch in, it's spirits. You can always find something cheap, but it will compromise the taste of your drinks.

Bourbon: Buffalo Trace, Old Granddad

Rye: Rittenhouse, Dickel or Bullet

Rum: Banks 5 for black, Barbancourt for aged

Tequila: Siembra Azul, Don Julio for blanco

Gin: Broker's or Hayman's Old Tom

Vodka: Tito's

Cachaça: Leblon, Avuá

Absinthe: Vieux Pontarlier (Unfortunately, real absinthe is never cheap)

LIQUEURS + BITTERS:

Campari

Cointreau

Sweet Italian Vermouth

Angostura Bitters

Peychaud's Bitters

Orange Bitters



Many cocktails will also call for simple syrup and you ought to make your own. Just mix equal parts water and sugar, and either heat in a saucepan or shake together to mix. [Demerara](#) is a more expensive, unprocessed sugar and needs to reach a boiling point to fully dissolve. Don't ever use store-bought simple syrup unless you thoroughly read the label because they often use high fructose corn syrup – blech!



TOOLS

There are so many bartending tools on the market, and things can get pretty specific. This list will introduce the basics that you'll need to make most drinks, and we've noted where some can be skipped over.

Boston Shaker (Weighted): The [Boston shaker](#) is the oldest and most necessary tool to mix citrus and herbs effectively into a cocktail. A 16-ounce tin and a 28-ounce tin will create a bond that seals in the liquid and ice as they shake together. A hard slap to the bulge of the tin will separate them. (This technique will be demonstrated in videos in this workshop.) Weighted tins are preferred because they add to the force of mixing the drink. You've probably seen the three-piece, cobbler shaker in most home bars, but the Boston shaker is much easier to use. The cobbler shaker looks cool, but often the ice freezes the parts together and does not create a bond that you can manipulate when it gets stuck, and it WILL get stuck.

Hawthorne Strainer: The [Hawthorne strainer](#) is used to strain ice, pulp and herbs when pouring a cocktail out of a shaker tin.

Bar Spoon: A [bar spoon](#) is used for stirring cocktails in the mixing glass. Longer spoons are convenient, but not absolutely necessary.

Fine Mesh Strainer: A [fine mesh strainer](#) keeps muddled herbs and pulp out of a cocktail. Purchasing a strainer with a cone shape is preferred as it strains the drink more quickly, but it's not necessary.

Jigger: A [jigger](#) is a measuring tool for spirits, citrus, and liqueurs. Not every jigger is accurate, so it's best to buy reputable brands; free pours are great for getting drunk, but not so great for taste.

Mixing Glass: A [mixing glass like this one](#) is a perfect thick glass vessel with a lip for easy pouring. It's much more comfortable to stir in than a 16-ounce pint glass, but not absolutely necessary.

Julep Strainer: A [julep strainer](#) strains ice out of cocktails and fits right into the mixing glass.

Bar Mats: Unless you have a wet bar, you'll want [a bar mat](#), and even if you do have a wet bar, you may still want one. They prevent alcohol from staining and destroying your counter tops.

Muddler: We like [this uncoated wood pestle](#) with a flat, ridged bottom. Plastic muddlers with lacquer will often rub off into drinks.

Beehive Juicer: A [beehive juicer](#) is the quickest and easiest way to squeeze fresh citrus, however it only catches seeds and not pulp so you will want to squeeze through a mesh strainer.

Peeler: A [peeler](#) is used for peeling citrus twists, invest in a good one or risk making a skin twist instead – ouch!

Atomizer: An [atomizer](#) is a small spray bottle that can be filled with a variety of liquids. Use it to rinse a cocktail glass, which will introduce a flavor without it overpowering the cocktail (like absinthe or vermouth). Rinsing can be done a variety of ways, but the atomizer is the quickest and cleanest.

GLASSWARE

As with tools, there are so many different types of glassware you can purchase. However, you really only need two types of glasses to make most drinks. We've listed a third because it's a nice, elegant addition.

Rocks Glass: Short, squat [glass](#) for cocktails with ice.

Cocktail Glass: Most people know [this](#) as a martini glass, but it should be used for most shaken cocktails and for some cocktails without ice.

Coupe: Normally used for champagne, [this glass](#) can also be used in place of the cocktail glass for most drinks if you prefer the feminine shape.

ADDITIONS

Square Ice Cube Tray: Big ice cubes melt slower and look classy. Use [these](#) for stirred drinks that call for ice. You can also purchase a [tray](#) to make large orbs.

Cocktail Picks: For garnishing cherries, citrus wedges, and much more. We like [these](#) bamboo ones.

Straws: For cocktails with crushed ice. Purchase decorative or [black straws](#) only. The old classic white straw with a red line down the middle will ruin the appearance of the beautiful cocktail you just made.

That's it for the basic cocktail making supplies. Since we'll also be working on food preservation in this workshop, let's get into some basics you'll need.



BASIC PRESERVATION SUPPLIES

Food preservation as a whole can use a limitless arsenal of supplies. I don't want to overwhelm you, especially if this is your first venture into preserving and food crafting! To start your cocktail preserving, you'll need the following:

Glass Jars: Clear, non-fractured/non-cracked glass jars are essential to any preservation method involving liquid. You will be able to see the color of the product and if the recipes involve any heat, you will need a mason jar. The mason jar sizes that I suggest are [quart](#), [pint](#), [4 ounce](#) and [½ gallon](#). This will give you a good selection to choose from for small projects and storing large amounts of something.

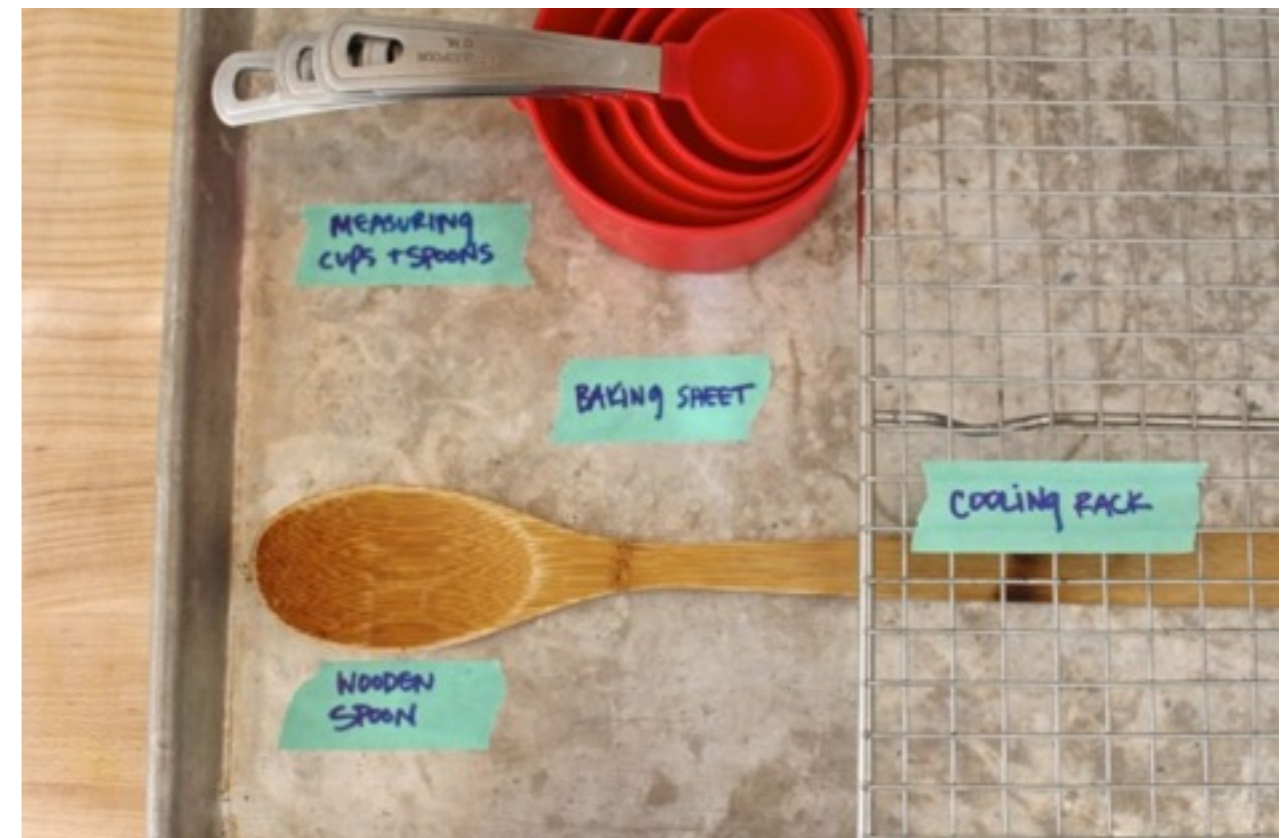
Decorative Jars + Tags: If I plan on gifting what I'm preserving I'll add [decorative tags](#) or even put the item in a special jar.

Muddler: The one we linked to in the cocktail supply section above will work perfectly for preserving as well.

Wooden Spoons: Something simple like [this](#) is great.

Measuring Cups and Spoons: [This](#) is a great set.

Lid for Jars: Most mason jars have a [two-piece lid](#). For this class I suggest using a [one-piece lid](#). There are metal and plastic lids for mason jars. Remember that jars (especially larger ones) have “wide mouth” sizes and you'll need to make sure the lid fits on your jar.





Funnel: You will have to pour or transfer items, and a [funnel](#) makes less of a mess. They are cheap, and you'll thank me later. Funnels also help strain larger items. [Canning funnels](#) will also help with pickling projects.

Strainers/Filtering Items: This really depends on the project. Smaller items will require finer filtering devices. Items include: coffee filters, coarse sieve, colander, tea strainer or cheesecloth.

Peeler: This doesn't have to be fancy, just a basic peeler for citrus like the ones we mentioned in the cocktail supply section above.

Knife + Cutting Board: A sharp [knife](#) for cutting fruit is essential. We suggest a wood or bamboo cutting board like [this](#).

Hand Juicer: Great for smaller juicing projects.

Baking Sheet + Cooling Rack: Make sure the cooling rack fits into the baking sheet. This is necessary for dehydration projects if you do not have a dehydrator.

Spice Grinder: This is mostly used in Chapter Three. If you drink coffee, I would suggest investing in [one](#) as you can grind your own beans and grind peppercorns (which is far superior to using pre-ground peppercorns).

Notebook, Pen + Masking Tape: It is important to label all of your creations. Masking tape, as you will learn, is invaluable for labeling items. I also highly suggest a notebook to record your recipes and write down what worked and what didn't so you can recreate your favorites!