20 Cheat Codes Every Bartender Wishes They Knew

1. Perfect the Basics: Master classic cocktails and basic techniques.  
Example: Learn how to make a perfect Martini, Manhattan, and Margarita.

2. Know Your Liquor: Understand the different types of spirits and their flavors.  
Example: Be able to explain the difference between bourbon and scotch to a customer.

3. Speed and Efficiency: Develop quick and efficient methods for mixing drinks.  
Example: Practice making multiple drinks simultaneously to serve faster.

4. Customer Interaction: Build rapport with customers for better tips.  
Example: Remember regulars' favorite drinks and ask about their day.

5. Bar Cleanliness: Keep the bar area clean and organized.  
Example: Wipe down the bar regularly and keep tools in designated spots.

6. Glassware Knowledge: Use the right glass for each drink to enhance presentation and flavor.  
Example: Serve a whiskey neat in a rocks glass and a gin and tonic in a highball.

7. Inventory Management: Keep track of stock to avoid running out of popular items.  
Example: Regularly check inventory levels and reorder before running low.

8. Upselling Techniques: Suggest premium spirits and cocktails to increase sales.  
Example: Recommend a top-shelf vodka for a martini instead of the house brand.

9. Handling Intoxicated Customers: Know how to deal with and cut off intoxicated patrons.  
Example: Politely refuse service and offer water or a taxi if needed.

10. Multi-Tasking: Balance serving drinks, taking orders, and engaging with customers.  
Example: Take a drink order while mixing another, and engage in light conversation.

11. Garnish Skills: Use garnishes to enhance the visual appeal of drinks.  
Example: Add a twist of lemon to a cocktail or a sprig of mint to a mojito.

12. Know the Laws: Be aware of local alcohol laws and regulations.  
Example: Understand the legal drinking age and closing time regulations.

13. Recipe Adaptation: Adjust drink recipes based on customer preferences.  
Example: Make a cocktail sweeter or more bitter based on feedback.

14. Emergency Preparedness: Be ready for emergencies like spills or fights.  
Example: Have a first-aid kit and know the protocol for handling disruptions.

15. Cash Handling: Manage cash and credit transactions efficiently.  
Example: Use a POS system accurately and handle tips discreetly.

16. Continuous Learning: Stay updated on new trends and techniques in bartending.  
Example: Attend mixology workshops or follow bartending blogs and forums.

17. Personal Presentation: Maintain a clean and professional appearance.  
Example: Wear a clean uniform, keep nails trimmed, and hair neatly styled.

18. Music and Atmosphere: Understand how to set the right mood with music and lighting.  
Example: Play upbeat music during peak hours and softer tunes when it’s quieter.

19. Self-Care: Take care of your physical and mental health to perform well.  
Example: Stay hydrated, take breaks, and practice stress-relief techniques.

20. Networking: Build relationships with suppliers and other bartenders.  
Example: Attend industry events and stay connected with professionals for opportunities and insights.