

THE ESSENTIAL SUMMER BAR

Whether your idea of a great summer night is sipping a cocktail as you watch the fireflies or laughing it up with friends, here's what you'll need to make sure the bar's ready when you are. Don't worry if you're missing a few items—basics go a long way.



1 The Basics

Classic summer spirits:
Rum • Bourbon or whiskey • Gin • Vodka • Tequila

2 Build on the Base

Keeping a few secondary options around will help you customize your cocktails. Bitters and flavored liqueurs are usually used in small quantities, so a single bottle will log a lot of miles. Bitters—classic Angostura • Orange liqueur—Cointreau or Grand Marnier • Elderflower liqueur—St-Germain • Ginger liqueur—Domaine de Canton

3 From the Farmers Market

Fresh produce, especially celery and tomato • Citrus • Seasonal stone fruits and berries • Herbs

4 Mixers

Mixers are the nonalcoholic ingredients mixed into cocktails. Club soda • Tonic • Sodas and ginger ale • Juice • Simple syrups—see page 17 for recipes

5 The Toolkit

An initial investment in a few key items will pay you back for years to come. Cocktail shaker and strainer • Muddler (or the base of a wooden spoon) • Ice cube trays • Paring knife • Bottle/wine opener • Peeler • Handheld citrus press • Straws