

COCKTAIL RATIOS

Build and balance any drink. Four families, the right pours, and the one habit that matters: taste.

1 · BALANCE

A cocktail is four forces playing off each other: the spirit carries the character, sugar rounds it, acid wakes it up, dilution water ties it together.

spirit · sugar · acid · **water (dilution)**

2 · THE SOUR (SHAKEN)

The template behind ~80% of classics: Daiquiri, Margarita, Sour, Sidecar. Base + acid + sugar, shaken.

2 : 1 : 1 spirit · acid · sugar (or 6:3:2 with rich syrup)

3 · SPIRIT-FORWARD (STIRRED)

All spirit, no acid. Stir for chill and clarity. Negroni, Manhattan, Martini.

Negroni **1:1:1** · Manhattan **2:1** · Martini **6:1**

4 · THE HIGHBALL (LENGTHENED)

One spirit, one mixer, built over ice. Gin & tonic, Mule, highball.

1 : 2 to 3 spirit · mixer (soda, tonic, ginger)

THE STARTING RULE

The old benchmark (Embury): 1 sour, 2 sweet, 3 strong, 4 dilution. In practice you start from the sour **2:1:1** and adjust. The written ratio is only a starting point, balance happens by **tasting**.

STANDARD POURS

Base spirit	5 to 6 cl
Modifier / liqueur	1.5 to 3 cl
Fresh citrus	2 to 3 cl
Rich syrup 2:1 (or simple 1:1)	2 cl (or 3 cl)
Bitters	2 dashes
Mixer (highball)	10 to 15 cl

BALANCING REFLEXES

1. Taste before serving, always. Half a dash of syrup or 2 ml of citrus rebalances everything.
2. Sugar follows the **real** acidity of the day's fruit, not the written ratio.
3. Switch to rich 2:1 syrup: same sugar, less volume, so less stray dilution.
4. Dilution is an ingredient: a 12-15 s shake adds ~20-25% water, stirring far less.
5. Strong spirit (overproof, 50%+): a touch more sugar and water so it doesn't burn.

Dial in your pours in 10 seconds.

Super juice, batch, dilution, syrups: the tools are here:

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