



Hot Beverage Equipment Maintenance Checklist

A Shift-by-Shift and Interval Guide for Keeping Coffee, Tea, and Espresso Equipment Running in High-Traffic Operations

How to Use This Checklist

This checklist is designed for location managers and multi-site operators responsible for hot beverage equipment in high-traffic, extended-hour environments - convenience stores, quick-service restaurants, hotels, cafes, and similar operations. It organizes maintenance tasks by interval so that every shift knows exactly what needs to be done, when, and by whom. The goal is not to add work to already busy shifts - it is to distribute maintenance tasks across the operational rhythm so that nothing accumulates to the point where it affects equipment performance, product quality, or customer experience. Assign each task to a specific role or shift position. A task without an owner does not get done consistently.

How to Schedule Maintenance Without Disrupting Service

Before using the checklist, apply these scheduling principles to your operation:

- ☐ **Match tasks to traffic patterns.** Identify your lowest-traffic windows - typically late night, early morning before open, or mid-morning between breakfast and lunch rushes - and assign deeper cleaning tasks to those windows. Never schedule descaling or extended cleaning during a peak period.
- ☐ **Assign tasks to roles, not shifts.** "Opening crew" cleans grinders. "Closing crew" runs cleaning cycles. Named responsibilities reduce gaps between shifts.
- ☐ **Stagger equipment downtime.** In operations with multiple brewers or espresso machines, never take all units offline simultaneously. Clean one while the other remains in service.
- ☐ **Build in a buffer before peak.** Any task that requires a rinse cycle or warm-up period after completion should finish at least 20–30 minutes before the next anticipated peak.
- ☐ **Post instructions at the equipment.** Step-by-step cleaning procedures posted at or near each piece of equipment eliminate training gaps and reduce the likelihood of steps being skipped or performed incorrectly.
- ☐ **Document completion.** Whether through a paper log, a digital checklist, or a shift handoff note, completed maintenance should be recorded so the next shift knows what was done and what is pending.

DAILY MAINTENANCE CHECKLIST

Complete once per day - assign to a specific shift (opening, mid, or closing based on your traffic pattern)

All Hot Beverage Equipment - General

- ☐ Wipe down all exterior surfaces, drip trays, and warming plates
- ☐ Empty and rinse drip trays - do not allow overflow buildup
- ☐ Check water reservoir levels or confirm water line connections are unobstructed
- ☐ Verify all equipment is reaching and maintaining correct operating temperature before service begins
- ☐ Inspect power cords and connections for visible damage
- ☐ Confirm product supplies (coffee, tea, filters, cups) are stocked and positioned correctly

Coffee Brewers

- ☐ Remove and rinse brew baskets and filter holders - remove all spent grounds and residue
- ☐ Wipe spray heads with a damp cloth - remove visible coffee residue
- ☐ Clean carafes and serving vessels - remove coffee oil buildup with approved coffee cleaning solution, rinse thoroughly
- ☐ Inspect warming plates for residue or staining - clean with appropriate cleaner
- ☐ Check that brewed coffee is not being held beyond the recommended holding time - discard and brew fresh as needed



Espresso Machines

- ☐ Backflush the group heads with water only (no detergent) at the end of each high-volume period or at minimum once per day
- ☐ Purge steam wands immediately after each use - wipe with a damp cloth while still warm
- ☐ Remove and rinse portafilters and baskets - clear all spent grounds
- ☐ Wipe down group head gaskets and visible seals
- ☐ Check drip tray and drain - empty and rinse
- ☐ Confirm machine is reaching target brew temperature before first shot of the day

Hot Water Dispensers and Tea Equipment

- ☐ Wipe down exterior and dispensing area
- ☐ Clean nozzles and dispensing valves - remove mineral deposits or residue buildup
- ☐ Check that holding temperature is within the correct range for the product being served
- ☐ Rinse tea brewing components - remove used tea bags, filters, or leaves and rinse vessels
- ☐ Inspect water lines and connections for drips or moisture

WEEKLY MAINTENANCE CHECKLIST

Complete once per week - assign to a specific shift during a low-traffic window

All Hot Beverage Equipment

- ☐ Deep clean all removable components - soak brew baskets, filter holders, portafilters, and steam wand tips in approved coffee or equipment cleaning solution, rinse thoroughly
- ☐ Inspect all gaskets and seals for wear, cracking, or hardening - flag for replacement if deteriorating
- ☐ Check water filter status - note date of last replacement and compare against manufacturer recommended interval for your volume
- ☐ Wipe down all internal surfaces accessible without tools - remove residue, coffee oils, and mineral deposits from visible surfaces
- ☐ Inspect drip trays, drain lines, and overflow areas for buildup or blockage - clear as needed

Coffee Brewers

- ☐ Remove spray head and soak in cleaning solution - clear any mineral deposits or coffee oil residue from the spray holes
- ☐ Inspect brew basket holder and seating area for residue that daily rinsing may not have fully removed
- ☐ Check water flow rate at the spray head - confirm even distribution across the brew basket

Espresso Machines

- ☐ Backflush group heads with approved espresso machine detergent - follow manufacturer procedure and complete full rinse cycle
- ☐ Remove and deep clean portafilter baskets - soak in approved solution, use brush to clear extraction holes
- ☐ Remove steam wand tip and soak in solution - clear all milk residue and mineral deposits from steam holes
- ☐ Inspect group head gaskets - remove, clean, and check condition; replace if gasket shows wear or has begun to harden
- ☐ Check boiler pressure gauge reading against normal operating range - flag any deviation for vendor follow-up

Grinders (Where Applicable)

- ☐ Purge any stale grounds from the grinder chamber
- ☐ Remove hopper and clean with dry brush - do not use water on grinder internals
- ☐ Brush out the burr chamber to remove accumulated coffee fines
- ☐ Check grind output consistency against your defined standard - adjust burr spacing if needed
- ☐ Note any unusual noise, resistance, or inconsistency in grind output - flag for vendor evaluation if pattern continues



Hot Water and Tea Equipment

- ☐ Deep clean all dispensing nozzles and valves - remove scale and residue buildup
- ☐ Inspect heating elements or tank for visible scale accumulation - flag for descaling if buildup is present

MONTHLY MAINTENANCE CHECKLIST

Complete once per month - schedule during your lowest-traffic window and allow adequate time for full completion and rinse cycles

All Hot Beverage Equipment

- ☐ Full descaling cycle on all equipment with internal water heating components - use manufacturer-approved descaling agent, follow complete procedure including all rinse cycles
- ☐ Replace water filter cartridge if at or approaching the manufacturer recommended interval for your volume and water hardness - do not rely on calendar alone if volume is high
- ☐ Inspect all water line connections, fittings, and flexible hoses for signs of wear, mineral buildup around fittings, or dripping
- ☐ Check all power connections, cords, and control panels for visible wear, discoloration, or damage - flag anything abnormal for vendor review
- ☐ Review the past month's daily and weekly logs - identify any tasks that were consistently missed or skipped and address the scheduling or training gap

Coffee Brewers

- ☐ Full internal descaling cycle - follow manufacturer procedure exactly, including full rinse cycle before returning to service
- ☐ Inspect and clean internal brew chamber components if accessible without specialized tools
- ☐ Verify brew temperature is within the correct range using an independent thermometer if available - compare against equipment specifications
- ☐ Check spray head flow and distribution after descaling - confirm no residual blockage

Espresso Machines

- ☐ Full descaling or boiler flush according to manufacturer procedure - this may require a qualified technician depending on machine type and access requirements
- ☐ Replace group head gaskets if monthly inspection has indicated wear - do not defer gasket replacement
- ☐ Inspect and clean internal water path components accessible during routine service
- ☐ Verify brew pressure and boiler pressure are within specification - flag any deviation for vendor
- ☐ Confirm BAS or machine programming settings are correct if equipment communicates with a broader control system

Grinders

- ☐ Assess burr wear against your volume-based replacement schedule - high-volume operations running 24 hours should track burr hours, not calendar months
- ☐ Full internal cleaning of burr chamber - remove and clean burrs if accessible, following manufacturer procedure
- ☐ Recalibrate grind setting after cleaning to confirm consistency against your defined standard

Hot Water and Tea Equipment

- ☐ Full descaling of heating tank and internal water path
- ☐ Inspect and clean all dispensing components - nozzles, valves, temperature sensors
- ☐ Confirm holding temperature is accurate - verify with independent thermometer



PROFESSIONAL SERVICE INTERVALS

These tasks require a qualified service technician - not in-house staff

Task	Recommended Interval	Notes
Full boiler descaling or flush (espresso machines)	Every 3–6 months depending on water hardness and volume	May be more frequent in hard-water markets or very high-volume operations
Internal component inspection and tune-up	Annually at minimum	More frequently for continuous-use operations
Burr replacement (grinders)	Based on volume - consult manufacturer	High-volume 24/7 operations wear burrs significantly faster than calendar suggests
Water filtration system service	Every 6–12 months	Includes cartridge replacement, O-ring and gasket check, system sanitization
Heating element inspection	Annually or when performance issues arise	Failing elements often present as inconsistent temperature before full failure
Full equipment audit across all locations	Annually	For multi-site operators - confirms all locations are operating to the same standard

ESCALATION GUIDE: When to Call Your Vendor

Do not attempt to troubleshoot the following in-house - call your service vendor:

- ☐ Equipment not reaching or maintaining correct operating temperature after descaling
- ☐ Unusual noise from grinders - grinding, squealing, or inconsistent motor sound
- ☐ Espresso machine displaying error codes that do not clear after standard reset
- ☐ Water leaking around fittings, heating elements, or seals
- ☐ Steam wand not producing adequate pressure or temperature after cleaning
- ☐ Brew pressure or boiler pressure reading outside normal range
- ☐ Any equipment that was recently descaled correctly but is still showing scale-related symptoms - may indicate a water treatment issue upstream