PETPOOJA

CHECKLIST

Dine-in Revenue Leak Audit Checklist for Indian Restaurants

Your restaurant was full and the day-end number still looked thin. This walks the six places food leaves the kitchen and money does not come back: unbilled KOTs, cancellations after firing, merges and splits, voids, comps, and held tables. Every check runs off reports you already have.

Updated September 2026 10 Pages FY 2026-27

What's Inside

01 The 20-Minute Night Audit

02 Leak 01: KOTs That Never Became a Bill

03 Leak 02: Cancellations and Modifications After the Food Was Fired

04 Leak 03: Merges, Splits and Table Transfers

05 Leak 04: Voided and Reprinted Bills

06 Leak 05: Complimentary, Staff and Tasting Meals

07 Leak 06: Held Tables and No-shows

08 Making It Routine

6
Leak Points
Walked in service order

67
Checks
Across 8 sections

20 min
First Audit
Tonight, on one day's data

0
Benchmarks Used
Your numbers, not an average

3
Controls To Set
Once, then it holds

01 The 20-Minute Night Audit

Do this once, tonight, on yesterday's data. It tells you which of the six sections you actually need.

Run these six numbers for one day

- ✓ **Total KOTs printed, and total items on those KOTs** — Start Here
  Item count is the number that matters. A table can have four KOTs and one bill, so KOT count against bill count tells you nothing on its own.
- ✓ **Total items on settled bills for the same day**
  Same date range, same outlet, same shift boundary. If your day rolls over at 4am, make sure both reports use that boundary and not midnight.
- ✓ **The gap between the two, in items and in menu value**
  Value it at menu price, not cost. On its own the number tells you nothing, because there is no honest industry figure to hold it against. Read it two ways instead. Run the same weekday again next week and see whether the gap repeats, and look at whether it sits in a handful of items or is spread thinly across the whole menu. A gap that repeats, or that concentrates, is worth the rest of this checklist. One that moves around and stays scattered is usually noise.
- ✓ **Count of cancelled or modified KOTs, and who did them**
  Split by user and by hour. You are looking for a cluster, not a total.
- ✓ **Count of voided bills, and their value**
  With the biller name and the time against each one.
- ✓ **Count of complimentary and zero-value bills**
  Including anything settled to a house account, staff account or 'others' payment mode.

Start with one busy day, not a month

Pick your busiest day in the last fortnight. A leak that is worth finding shows up on a full day and hides in a monthly average, because a month blends your quiet Tuesday into your full Saturday. Once you know the shape of the problem you can widen the range. Running the first audit across ninety days is the most common way this exercise gets abandoned halfway.

If your POS will not give you one of these numbers

Ask your POS vendor before you conclude it cannot. These reports are often there under a name you would not have guessed, or switched off by default. Where a number genuinely does not exist, do not skip that leak: run the check live on the floor for a week instead, on paper, at the till. A week of tally marks answers the same question a report would, and it also tells you whether the report is worth asking for.

Looking at this by user is not the same as watching your staff

Several of these numbers are read by biller and by user, which is the point: a leak concentrates or it does not. Section 7(i) of the Digital Personal Data Protection Act 2023 lists processing "for the purposes of employment or those related to safeguarding the employer from loss or liability" as a legitimate use, which is what a void report read by name is. What that limb does not cover is your guests, because they are not your employees. Leak 06 comes back to that.

02 Leak 01: KOTs That Never Became a Bill

The item was cooked, carried, eaten and cleared, and nothing was ever raised against it.

Find the gap

- ✓ **Pull the KOT report and the settled-bill report over identical date and shift ranges** — Critical
  The most common false alarm in this whole checklist is two reports run over two slightly different windows. Fix the window first.
- ✓ **Compare item counts, not bill counts**
  Group by menu item. An item-level comparison tells you what walked out; a bill-level one only tells you something is wrong.
- ✓ **Sort the difference by item and look at the top five**
  Leaks concentrate. What surfaces first is usually whatever is quick to serve, needs no plating and travels out of the room easily: soft drinks, bottled water, extra portions of bread and papad, side salads.
- ✓ **Isolate the last ninety minutes of service**
  Late-service KOTs are the ones most likely to be closed off in a hurry. If your gap sits mostly here, the cause is process, not people.
- ✓ **Check tables closed with no settlement**
  Any table that opened, took KOTs and then closed without a bill needs a name and a reason against it.
- ✓ **Check KOTs raised on tables that were never opened in the POS**
  Ask your manager whether the kitchen printer can be reached without opening a table in the POS. If it can, that route is the leak, and no report will ever show it to you because nothing was recorded to report.

Close it

- ✓ **Make the pre-bill the only way a table is cleared** — Set Once
  No table gets cleared until a pre-bill has been printed against it. This single rule converts most unbilled KOTs into visible ones.
- ✓ **Give re-fires and remakes their own reason code**
  A remake punched as a fresh KOT with no reason is indistinguishable from a leak a week later.
- ✓ **Reconcile the gap against inventory once a week**
  If the items you cannot account for in billing are also the items short in your stock count, you have two reports agreeing, which is much harder to argue with than one.
  Cross-check with your physical stock count

> **A gap is not automatically theft, and treating it that way ends the audit**
>
> There are honest reasons for a mismatch: a re-fire after a dropped plate, a remake on a complaint, a staff meal punched through the kitchen printer, a test KOT during a menu change. The point of this section is not to catch someone. It is to make every one of those reasons appear as a recorded reason instead of as a silent difference, so that what is left over is genuinely unexplained.

03 Leak 02: Cancellations and Modifications After the Food Was Fired

Cancelling a KOT in the POS does not un-cook the dish. Everything cancelled after firing left your kitchen.

Look at the pattern, not the total

- ✓ **List every cancelled and modified KOT with the time gap from the original punch** — Critical
  Sort descending by that gap. The long ones are the expensive ones.
- ✓ **Group cancellations by user**
  One person holding a disproportionate share is worth a conversation. It is as often a training gap or a broken workflow as anything else.
- ✓ **Group cancellations by hour**
  A spike at the peak hour usually means the punch process is too slow and staff are punching first and correcting later.
- ✓ **Group by menu item**
  One dish cancelled repeatedly is usually a menu or kitchen problem: it is slow, it runs out, or it is being sent back.
- ✓ **Check quantity reductions, not just full cancellations**
  A KOT edited from four portions to two after firing is the same leak in a smaller package, and it is easier to miss.
- ✓ **Check whether reprinted KOTs create a second physical ticket in the kitchen**
  If a modification prints a fresh full ticket and the kitchen cooks both, you have paid twice for one sale. Ask the kitchen, not the software.

Set the rule

- ✓ **Require a manager to authorise any cancellation after the item is fired** — Set Once
  Before firing, let the captain cancel freely. After firing, do not. The line is the fire time, not a rupee value.
- ✓ **Make the reason mandatory and make the list short**
  Four or five reasons that people actually use beats twenty that get ignored: guest changed order, item unavailable, wrong punch, complaint remake, kitchen error.
- ✓ **Post the weekly cancellation count where the team can see it**
  Visibility does most of the work here. Nobody needs to be accused of anything for the number to fall.

> **The one distinction this whole section rests on**
>
> A KOT cancelled thirty seconds after punching, before the kitchen started, costs you nothing. A KOT cancelled twenty minutes later, after the dish was cooked and carried, costs you the full food cost and it will never appear on a bill. Your POS very likely records the time of both events. The audit is the difference between them.

04 Leak 03: Merges, Splits and Table Transfers

Every time an order moves between tables there is a chance a line does not move with it.

The count that catches it

- ✓ **After every merge, print the pre-bill and count the lines against the KOTs of both original tables** — Critical
  Ten seconds, at the one moment when a missing line is still fixable.
- ✓ **After every split, check the parts sum back to the original**
  Both in item count and in value, before either part is settled. A split that loses a line is invisible once one half is paid.
- ✓ **After every transfer, confirm the source table shows zero open items**
  A source table left with one orphan line is the classic version of this leak.

Audit it afterwards

- ✓ **Pull the list of merged, split and transferred tables for the day**
  Then re-derive each one: original KOT items in, final billed items out. Any table that does not reconcile gets a name and a reason.
- ✓ **Check whether discounts survive a split**
  A percentage discount applied to one table and then split can behave in ways nobody intended. Test it once on a live bill so you know how your system does it.
- ✓ **Check what happens to a merged table's KOT history**
  You need to be able to see, after settlement, which KOTs belonged to which original table. If you cannot, you cannot audit a merge at all and this section becomes a same-day check only.
- ✓ **Watch the tables that merge most often**
  The two-tops that get pushed together every weekend are where this repeats.

Where this actually goes wrong

A group arrives in two batches and you merge two tables. A couple asks to pay separately and you split one. A guest moves from the bar to a table and you transfer the order. Each of these is a normal, daily, correct thing to do. The risk is not the operation, it is that nobody counts the lines afterwards, because everyone is busy and the bill looks plausible.

05 Leak 04: Voided and Reprinted Bills

A void is a legitimate tool that also happens to be the cleanest way to make a sale disappear.

Read the void list properly

- ✓ **Pull every void with biller name, time, table, amount and reason** — Critical
  If any of those five fields is blank on any row, that is the first thing to fix.
- ✓ **Look at voids after the bill was printed, separately from voids before**
  A void before printing is usually a correction. A void after printing means a bill existed in the guest's hands, and it needs a reason that stands up.
- ✓ **Sort voids by biller and by hour**
  Same logic as the cancellation section. You are looking for concentration.
- ✓ **Check voids that were immediately followed by a smaller bill on the same table**
  A ₹4,000 bill voided and reissued at ₹2,400 for the same table and time is the pattern worth understanding, whatever the explanation turns out to be.
- ✓ **Count reprints per bill**
  A bill printed five times before settlement is either a printer problem or something else. Both are worth knowing about.
- ✓ **Check voids on cash settlements against voids on card and UPI**
  Card and UPI leave a trail outside your POS. Cash does not, which is why the mix matters.

Control it

- ✓ **Restrict void rights to named users** — Set Once
  Not to a role that half the floor shares, and not to a PIN that everyone knows. This is one of the three controls worth setting once and leaving alone.
- ✓ **Require a typed reason on every void, with no default option**
  A dropdown whose first entry is 'Other' will collect ninety percent of your voids.
- ✓ **Raise a credit note where an issued invoice is cancelled or reduced**
  Cancelling the bill in the POS does not discharge this. Section 34(1) is permissive, but a credit note is what actually reduces your output liability, and once issued its details must be declared in the return for the month of issue.
  Section 34(1) and 34(2), CGST Act 2017
- ✓ **Do not let a void sit undeclared past the outer date** — Deadline
  The declaration cannot be made later than 30 November following the end of the financial year in which the supply was made, or the date of furnishing the annual return, whichever is earlier. A void found during an audit eighteen months later is past saving.
  Section 34(2), CGST Act 2017
- ✓ **Review the void list yourself, weekly, by name**
  Ten minutes. The fact that it is reviewed by an owner is most of the control.

> **If a bill was already handed to the guest, cancelling it in the POS is not the end of it**
>
> Section 34(1) lets the supplier issue a credit note where the taxable value or tax charged in a tax invoice exceeds what is actually payable, which is what a cancelled or reduced bill produces. Issue one and Section 34(2) then requires the details to be declared in the return for the month it was issued, and no later than 30 November following the end of that financial year, or the date of the annual return, whichever is earlier. A void that only exists inside your POS leaves your books and your GST filings saying two different things, and after the outer date it can no longer be corrected this way.

06 Leak 05: Complimentary, Staff and Tasting Meals

These are all legitimate. The leak is that they are recorded as nothing at all.

Separate the categories

- ✓ **Stop comps being punched as voids** — Critical
  They are different events and mixing them destroys both reports. If your team currently voids a bill to comp a table, that habit is the first fix.
- ✓ **Use distinct reason codes: service recovery, management hospitality, staff meal, tasting and training, wastage**
  Five codes, defined once, written on a card near the till.
- ✓ **Record every comp at menu value, and separately at food cost**
  Menu value tells you what you gave away; food cost tells you what it actually cost you. Owners argue about the wrong one of these constantly.
- ✓ **Put a monthly value on each category and look at it**
  Not a limit to start with. Just a number, seen monthly, in ₹. Most of the correction happens the first month somebody looks.
- ✓ **Require a manager name against every service-recovery comp**
  Along with one line on what went wrong. That line is also your complaint log, which you need anyway.
- ✓ **Punch staff meals through the POS, even at zero value**
  Otherwise the kitchen consumption never ties to anything and every stock variance becomes arguable.

The tax position on staff meals, briefly

- ✓ **A perquisite provided under the employment contract is not subjected to GST**
  CBIC has clarified that perquisites provided by an employer to employees in terms of a contractual agreement between them will not be subjected to GST, on the reasoning that they are in lieu of services rendered by the employee in the course of employment.
  Circular No. 172/04/2022-GST, dated 06-Jul-2022, S.No. 5
- ✓ **The words 'in terms of the contract' are doing the work** — Worth Doing
  The clarification is expressed as applying where the perquisite is provided in terms of the contract between employer and employee. A staff meal written into your appointment letter or staff policy sits inside that description. Food handed over the counter ad hoc is not what the circular describes, so put the entitlement in writing.
  Circular No. 172/04/2022-GST, dated 06-Jul-2022, S.No. 5
- ✓ **Take your accountant's view before you change how anything is recorded**
  This checklist tells you to record staff meals. How they are then treated in your books and returns is a question for the person who signs them off.

Comping is a decision, and a decision needs an owner

Service recovery is worth the food cost many times over, and a chef who never tastes cannot run a kitchen. The problem is that a comp punched as a void, or a staff meal that never enters the system, becomes indistinguishable from a leak by the end of the month. Give each one its own reason code and the whole category turns into a manageable line you can look at and decide about.

07 Leak 06: Held Tables and No-shows

The only leak here that costs you nothing in food, and it is often the largest one in rupees.

Make it visible

- ✓ **Log every reservation with the table, the hold start time and the party size** — Critical
  A paper diary is enough to start. What matters is that the hold has a start time.
- ✓ **Record the outcome against each: seated, seated late, cancelled in advance, or no-show**
  Four outcomes. One tick per booking, at the moment it resolves.
- ✓ **Add up held-but-empty minutes on your two busiest nights**
  Then multiply by what a table of that size usually spends. That is the number this section is about, and it is your own number.
- ✓ **Check whether walk-ins were turned away while a table sat held**
  This is the pair of facts that makes the case. Held table plus refused walk-in, at the same clock time.
- ✓ **Split no-shows by booking channel**
  Phone, walk-in-made, aggregator, your own site. They do not behave the same and the fix differs by channel.

Then set a policy you will actually enforce

- ✓ **Set a release time and put it on the confirmation**
  Fifteen or twenty minutes is common. What matters is that it is stated, and that the floor is allowed to release the table without asking anyone.
- ✓ **Confirm the booking the same day, on WhatsApp or by phone**
  The cheapest no-show intervention there is, and it needs no software.
- ✓ **For large parties on peak nights, consider a deposit adjusted against the bill**
  State the cancellation terms in the same message that confirms the booking, before you take any money, and adjust the deposit against the final bill rather than treating it as a separate charge. A term the guest never saw is the one you will not be able to rely on, so do not hold back a deposit on terms that were never shown.
- ✓ **Keep the no-show list, and say on the booking that you keep one**
  A guest's name and booking history are personal data. Put the purpose in the confirmation message, keep the list to what the purpose needs, and take advice before you refuse anyone on the strength of it. The notice obligations under the Digital Personal Data Protection Rules 2025 commence eighteen months after publication, on 13 May 2027, so build the list now in the shape it will have to be in then.
  Rule 1(4), Digital Personal Data Protection Rules 2025, G.S.R. 846(E) dated 13-Nov-2025

A guest list is not the same as a staff report

Everything else in this checklist looks at your own tills and your own people, which Section 7(i) of the Act treats as a legitimate use. A list of guests is different. There is no employment limb to lean on, so the purpose has to be told to the guest and the list has to stay inside it. Auditing your own floor and turning a customer away are two different decisions, and only the first one is covered by this checklist.

This one is capacity, not cash

A four-top held from eight until half past eight for a booking that never arrives is thirty minutes of your best table, on your best night, sold to nobody. No report will ever show it as a loss, because nothing was consumed and nothing was voided. It only becomes visible if you decide to write down what you held and whether it seated.

08 Making It Routine

An audit run once finds a number. An audit run weekly changes behaviour.

The cadence

- ✓ **Nightly, five minutes, by the closing manager**
  Voids, comps and cancelled KOTs for the day, with a reason against each. Signed off before the cash is counted.
- ✓ **Weekly, twenty minutes, by the owner or general manager**
  KOT items against billed items for the week. Void list read by name. Comp value by category.
- ✓ **Monthly, one hour, with the accounts person**
  The billing gap against the stock variance for the same period. These two should point at the same items. When they do, you have found something real.
- ✓ **Keep a one-line log of each audit**
  Date, who ran it, what they found, what changed. Six months of these lines tells you which of your fixes actually worked.

Before you accuse anyone

- ✓ **Run the same audit twice, on two different weeks** Critical
  A single week's anomaly is usually a process fault or a reporting artefact. A pattern that repeats across two independent weeks is a pattern.
- ✓ **Check the boring explanations first**
  Shift boundary mismatch, a printer that drops tickets, a tablet that lost connection at peak, a menu item mapped to the wrong kitchen. These account for more gaps than dishonesty does.
- ✓ **Fix the process before you change the people**
  Most leaks in this checklist survive a change of staff and do not survive a change of rule.

The three controls to set once

Void rights restricted to named users, from Leak 04. Cancellation after firing requires a manager, from Leak 02. No table cleared until a pre-bill has been printed against it, from Leak 01. Set these three and a large share of this checklist stops being a weekly chore, because the events you are auditing can no longer happen quietly in the first place.

PETPOOJA

This checklist is provided by Petpooja for informational purposes. Verify all compliance details with official sources before acting.

www.petpooja.com

PETPOOJA

SEE THE LEAK BEFORE IT BECOMES A HABIT

The sale nobody recorded is the one *nobody has to explain*

Petpooja POSS records table-wise orders and merges, moves and splits table orders as one operation, so a line is less likely to go missing when a group splits the bill. Biller rights can be regulated per user, and staff reports cover sales data, tables assisted and cash register operations, alongside 80+ business reports that include staff actions. A Table Reservation Manager is available as part of the Operations Manager Scale plan if held tables are your biggest leak. Ask for a walkthrough of the reports before you buy anything.

Book a Free Demo

Call: +91-9104369797 | getposs@petpooja.com