

The Top 5 Stocktake Mistakes Galway Hospitality Managers Make (And How to Fix Them)

A stocktake is a powerful tool, but like any tool, it's only as good as the person using it. A small mistake in the counting process can have a ripple effect, creating a completely fictional report.

When the data is bad, you end up making critical business decisions—on staffing, on pricing, on suppliers—based on a "lie."

In our decades of experience, we've seen even the best-intentioned Galway managers make the same handful of costly mistakes. They rush, they get distracted, or they use an inconsistent process, and in doing so, they waste their own time and end up more confused than when they started.

Are you or your team making one of these five common errors?

1. The "Inconsistent Counting" Error

This is the most common and destructive error. It happens when there is no single, defined "way" to count.

- **The Mistake:** In May, the bar manager, John, "eye-balls" all the open spirit bottles. He's been doing it for years and "just knows." In June, John is on holiday, so the assistant manager, Sarah, meticulously weighs every bottle on a scale.
- **The Result:** The report will be a disaster. John's "50% full" bottle (500ml) is now 42% full (420ml) according to Sarah's *accurate* data. The report will show a *fictional* 80ml loss. You'll spend hours trying to "find" a problem that doesn't even exist.
- **The Fix:** You must have a **single, non-negotiable process**. Either use "tenting" (marking the bottle in 10% increments) for all spirits, or use a scale for all spirits. The same goes for kegs: "guestimating" by lifting them is useless. They must be weighed or use a keg-check system. Consistency is more important than anything.

2. The "Mid-Count Delivery" Error

A stocktake is a *snapshot in time*. It must be a 100% accurate picture of all stock on the premises at that *exact* moment.

- **The Mistake:** You start counting at 9 AM. At 11 AM, your main drinks delivery arrives. The driver is in a hurry, so a staff member signs for it, and the kegs are rolled into the cold room *before* you've counted that section.
- **The Result:** You have just contaminated your data. You count the *new* delivery as part of your *old* stock. Your report will show a massive, imaginary *surplus* (or a tiny loss), making you think you've had a brilliant month. In reality, you've just masked all your real-world waste and theft.
- **The Fix:** Implement a "Stocktake Lockdown." All deliveries *must* be fully processed and put away *before* the count starts. Or, they must be left in a clearly marked "quarantine zone" (like the front hall) and not be touched or counted.

3. The "Ignoring Waste & Transfers" Error

Your stock doesn't just "vanish." It is either **Sold, Wasted, Transferred**, or **Stolen**. Your system *must* account for the first three.

- **The Mistake:** A bartender drops a full bottle of red wine. It gets cleaned up, thrown in the bin... and nobody writes it down. Or, the kitchen needs a bottle of brandy for a dessert, takes it from the bar... and nobody writes it down.
- **The Result:** At the end of the month, your report shows you are "missing" one bottle of wine and one bottle of brandy. You will assume theft or over-padding, when it was a simple, unrecorded operational action.
- **The Fix:** Have an iron-clad (but simple) "Waste & Transfers" sheet. A clipboard in the bar and one in the kitchen. If it's dropped, spilled, or sent to the kitchen, *write it down*. This "explains" your losses and keeps your data clean.

4. The "Trusting the Till" Error

Your stocktake is also an audit of your EPOS/till system.

- **The Mistake:** A new staff member, in a rush, rings in a "Hendrick's Gin" as a "Gordon's Gin." The customer gets the right drink, the money is correct, so who cares?
- **The Result:** You do. At month's end, your stock report will show you are "down" one measure of Hendrick's and "up" one measure of Gordon's. Now, multiply this by 100 till errors, and your spirit report is a meaningless jumble of variances.
- **The Fix:** A professional stocktake *finds* these patterns. We'll see it and tell you, "You don't have a theft problem; you have a *till-training* problem. Your staff are pressing the wrong buttons."

5. The "File and Forget" Error

This is the most tragic mistake. You do all the hard work, get the 20-page report... and file it in the office drawer.

- **The Mistake:** The report shows your Guinness yield is 2% low. You see it. You think, "I must look into that." Then a chef calls in sick, a delivery is late, and you forget.
- **The Result:** That 2% leak—which could be costing you €100 a week—continues. Forever.
- **The Fix:** Treat your report as an *action list*. Pick the **Top 3 Problems** and fix only those. This is where a professional [Galway stocktake company](#) adds the most value. We don't just *give* you the report; we sit with you and help you create the action plan.