Feature Focus Guide:
Course Ordering

Core Product: Aloha Table Service
Last Updated: May 30, 2024

Contents

NCR V:YIX

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Revision Record

Date	Version #	Description
Prior to 12/13/2022	v6.5+	Introduced the Course Ordering feature.
	v15.1+	Updated Course Ordering Feature Focus Guide to reflect CFC and Aloha Manager.
01/11/2023		Converted document to use new templates and updated front cover and back page to reflect new NCR branding.
05/28/2024		Updated document to reflect NCR Voyix branding.

About Course Ordering

Course Ordering at a Glance	
Core Product	Aloha Table Service
Complementary Products	None
Separate License Required?	No
Other References	Aloha Table Service Manager Guide; Aloha Table Service Reference Guide; Aloha Table Service Server Guide; Delay Send Feature Focus Guide

Course Ordering, available in Aloha® Table Service, refers to the practice of delivering a multiple course meal to guests one course at a time. This type of food delivery is very common in banquet environments and fine dining restaurants. The type and number of courses varies based on geographic region. A common five course meal is soup, salad, appetizer, entrée, and dessert, in that order. When serving guests by course, you monitor and regulate the timing of each course. As guests complete a course, you clear and prepare the area for the next course until all courses are complete.

In general, the system orders and sends items to the kitchen when you select an order mode or touch certain buttons on the Front-of-House (FOH) order entry screen, such as Done, WWT, Close, Print, and Reprint. With course ordering, you may need to approach the sending of orders to the kitchen differently, depending on the environment under which your restaurant operates.

In this document, we discuss the various methods of using Course Ordering. You can choose the method that best suits your environment, or you can change your existing method to take advantage of features available in the Aloha Point-of-Sale (POS) system, such as using pivot seating and delaying the sending of courses based on increments of time.

> **Note**
> Pivot seating refers to the practice of taking orders beginning with a designated seating position and moving either clockwise or counter-clockwise around the table. You tray and deliver the order based on seating positions, eliminating the need to 'auction off' plates to the correct guest and disrupt the dining experience.

There are basically three course ordering environments:

Environment 1: The restaurant follows a predetermined schedule for the dining flow, such as in a dinner theatre that serves dinner at 6:30 and starts the play at 8:00. After assigning a course number to each item, the server sends the entire order to the kitchen with a cut between each course on the chit. The kitchen staff controls course timing.

Environment 2: The server manually regulates the dining flow of guests. After assigning a course number to each item, the server either sends the entire order to the kitchen, with a cut between each

course on the chit, and then informs the kitchen staff when to prepare the next course, or sends the items to the kitchen one course at a time. Sending items to the kitchen one course at a time requires you to disable auto-ordering. We discuss how to disable auto-ordering on .

Environment 3: After assigning a course number to each item, the server uses a Hold button to delay the sending of each course by an increment of time. This is the most popular method for course ordering. The server can adjust the hold time for a course, if necessary. To delay the sending of courses based on increments of time is only possible if you configure the system to use the Delay Send feature in conjunction with Course Ordering. If you operate in this environment, refer to the Delay Send Feature Focus Guide for more information.

Configuring Course Ordering

This section details the configuration requirements within Aloha Manager and Aloha Configuration Center (CFC) for Course Ordering. If you are an experienced user, refer to Procedures at a Glance for abbreviated steps. If you prefer more detail, continue reading this document.

Course Ordering Procedures at a Glance:	
If you are viewing this document using Adobe Acrobat Reader, click each link for detailed information regarding the task.	
1.	To add a Course button to the FOH requires you to create a custom panel to replace the hard-coded buttons that appear in the lower right portion of the POS order entry screen. Select **Maintenance > Screen Designer > Table Service Screen Designer** to create your replacement panel for this area of the screen, and then use the 'Set Order Screen Panel by Jobcode' event to activate the new panel. To learn how to create this panel, refer to the **Custom TS Order Entry Screen Feature Focus Guide**. Once you create the panel, add the Course button. See page 7.
2.	(Optional) If you want to send courses using preset increments of time, you need to implement the Delay Send feature. Add the preset Hold buttons to the same custom panel to which you add the Course button. Refer to the **Delay Send Feature Focus Guide** for more information.
3.	(Optional) Select **Maintenance > Menu > Item Routing** and assign a value to each item in 'priority.' The system offers a 'priority view' which allows you to easily assign course numbers on the FOH. See page 9.
4.	Select **Cut between courses on kitchen chits** and/or **Cut between courses on expediter chits** under the 'Kitchen Chit > Content' group bar in the Chit Printing group on the Store Settings tab in Maintenance > Business > Store to configure the chit paper cut for regular and/or expediter chit printing. See page 10.
5.	(Optional) If you want to send items to the kitchen one course at a time, select **Disable auto-ordering** under the 'Tabs and Tables' group bar in the Order Entry group on the Store Settings tab in Maintenance > Business > Store. See page 11.
6.	Select **Utilities > Refresh POS & All Products** to refresh the data. See page 12.

Adding buttons for course ordering to the FOH

Aloha Table Service uses hard-coded screens to maintain familiarity and a consistent screen flow. The hard-coded design of the Table Service order entry screen includes the following areas:

Figure 1 Order Entry Screen

The area located on the lower right side of the order entry screen, labeled 'standard buttons' in Figure 1, typically contains the following buttons: Item Lookup, Recipe, Quantity, Repeat, Modify, Delete, and Hold; however, it is possible to have an optional fifth order mode in place of the Hold button. Some of these buttons are available at all times, and some depend on the configuration of the Back-of-House (BOH).

To allow the assignment of course numbers, the Course Ordering feature requires that you create a custom panel to replace the hard-coded buttons that appear in the lower right side of the order entry screen. After adding a Course button, you can manually monitor the table and send courses to the kitchen without any additional configuration. If, however, you want to send courses based on preset increments of time, you must add preset Hold buttons to the same custom panel on which you place the Course button. Teaching you how to create a custom panel to replace the hard-coded buttons that appear on the lower right side of the order entry screen is beyond the scope of this document. To learn how to create this panel, refer to the Custom TS Order Entry Screen Feature Focus Guide. Teaching you how to create Hold buttons with preset increments of time is beyond the scope of this document. Refer to the Delay Send Feature Focus Guide for complete instructions on implementing this functionality.

Once you create the custom panel and set it up for activation, return here to this document to learn how to add the Course button to the custom panel.

To add the buttons required for Course Ordering to a custom order entry panel:

1. Select **Maintenance > Screen Designer > Table Service Screen Designer**.
2. Select **Work with Panels**.
3. Select **Panel > Open Panel**, select the **custom order entry panel** on which to add the Course button, and click **OK**.
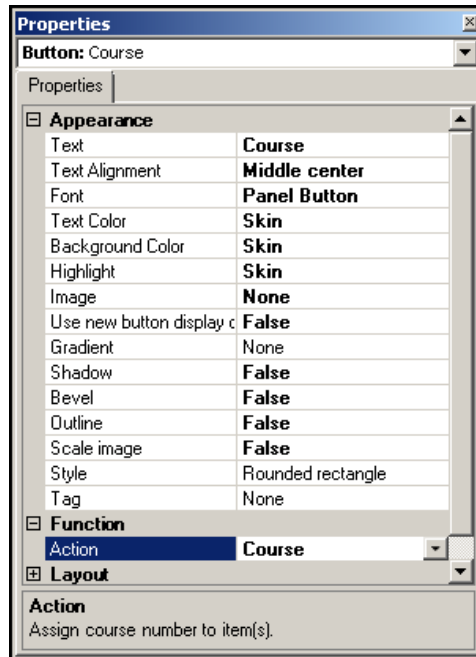4. Select an **available button** or create a **new button**. The Properties dialog box appears.

Figure 2 Course Button Function

5. Under the 'Function' group bar, select **Course** from the 'Action' drop-down list. You cannot include the Course button function in a script.
6. Under the 'Appearance' group bar, type a **name** for the button, such as 'Course.' To display text on multiple lines, insert '\n' without spaces for line breaks.
7. Configure the **remaining options** as you would for any other button.
8. If necessary, add the **preset Hold buttons** to this same custom panel using the Delay Send Feature Focus Guide.
9. Select **Panel > Save Panel**.
10. Exit the **Screen Designer** function.

Assigning priorities to items (optional)

When you enter an order on the FOH and then touch 'Course' to display the course entry screen, you can sort the items by item priority using the 'Priority view' button. If you are already using item priorities, the 'Priority view' button provides a more user-friendly method of assigning courses on the FOH. If not, assigning a priority to items is optional.

To assign a priority to an item:

1. Select **Maintenance > Menu > Item Routing**. The Item Routing record appears on the screen.

Figure 3 Assigning Priorities to Items

2. Under the 'Routing Assignment' group bar, select the **item** from the 'Available' list and click **>>** to move the item to the 'Included' list.

3. Under the 'Priority' column, assign a **priority** to the item. A valid range is from 1 to 255, with an item assigned a priority of 1 appearing above an item assigned a priority of 255. For appetizers, assign a low digit, such as '1,' for entrées, assign a mid-number, such as '100,' and for desserts, assign a high-digit number, such as '200.'

4. Repeat **steps 3 and 4** until you assign a priority to the desired items.

5. Click **Save** and exit the **Item Routing** function.

Configuring the chit paper cut for course ordering

The Course Ordering feature uses regular chit printing or expediter chit printing for the delivery of courses to the table. Because you divide the order by course, you must configure the type of chit you use in your environment to provide a paper cut on the chit for each course. Each cut contains header information indicating the course on which you are working.

To configure the paper cut for regular chit printing and/or expediter chit printing:

1. Select **Maintenance > Business > Store**.
2. Select the **Store Settings** tab.
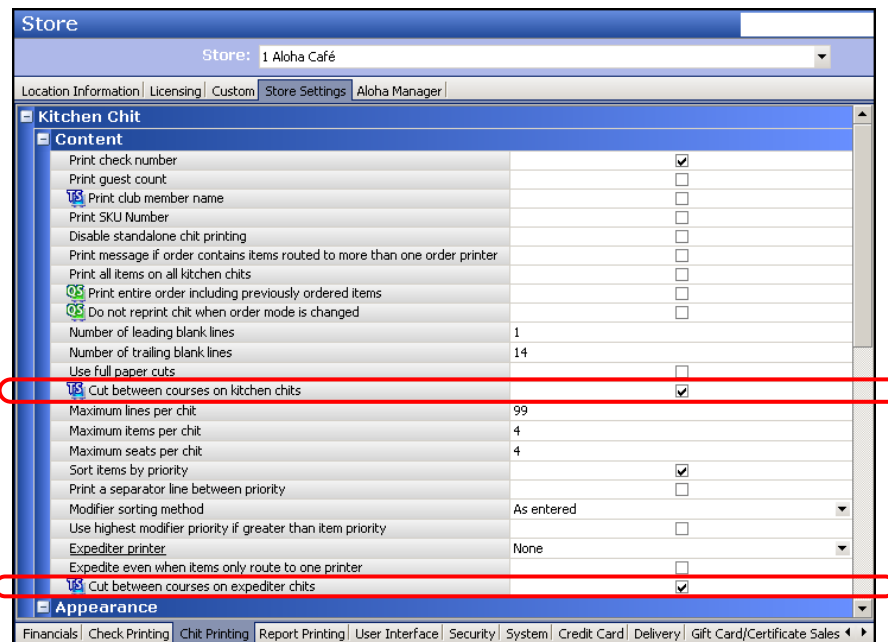3. Select the **Chit Printing** group located at the bottom of the screen.

Figure 4 Chit Printing Group

4. Under the 'Kitchen Chit > Content' group bar, select **Cut between courses on kitchen chits** to provide a cut between each course on the chit that prints for the kitchen staff.
5. Select **Cut between courses on expediter chits** to provide a cut between each course on the chit that prints at the expediter station.
6. Click **Save** and exit the **Store** function.

Disabling auto-ordering (optional)

Auto-ordering is a Table Service feature that enables you to order all unordered items when you exit the FOH Order Entry screen to ensure an employee does not leave items unordered. To send the items to the kitchen one course at a time, you must disable auto-ordering.

> 📖 **Reference**
>
> Refer to Scenario 2 under "Environment 2: Server manually controls course timing" on page 22.

To disable auto-ordering:

1. Select **Maintenance > Business > Store**.
2. Select the **Store Settings** tab.
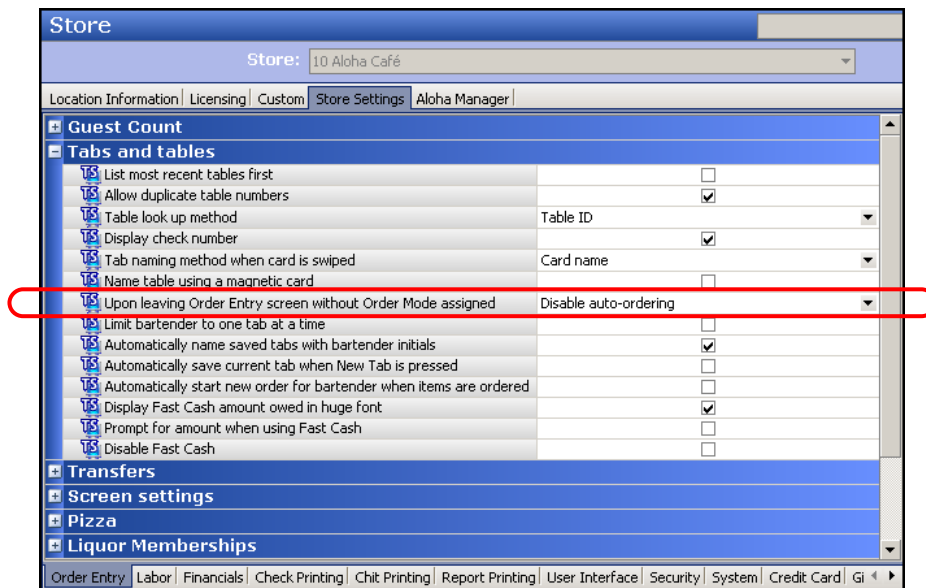3. Select the **Order Entry** group located at the bottom of the screen.

Figure 5 Order Entry Group

4. Under the 'Tabs and Tables' group bar, select **Disable auto-ordering** from the 'Upon leaving Order Entry screen without Order Mode assigned' drop-down list.
5. Click **Save** and exit the **Store** function.

Refreshing the data

After all settings are in place in Aloha Manager, you must select Utilities > POS > Refresh POS & All Installed Products to transfer the new information to the FOH terminals, or wait for the End-of-Day (EOD) process to accomplish the data refresh for you. If you run the refresh prior to the EOD process, select 'Automatically restart all POS terminals' and click OK to continue. After the data refresh is complete, all new settings become operational across the Aloha network.

⚠️ **Caution**

Refresh data with caution and never during peak hours of operation. All FOH terminals reboot during a refresh and are down for a short period of time.

Using Course Ordering

This section discusses how to assign courses to items on a guest check and operate the system in a Course Ordering environment.

Course ordering rules

- You can only assign course numbers to unordered and/or held items, not items that are already ordered (sent to the kitchen). If you select the Course button for a check that does not contain unordered items, an error message appears.
- You can assign course numbers on menu items only, not modifiers. All modifiers inherit the same course number as their respective menu item.
- If you touch the Repeat or Quantity buttons to copy an unordered item, the system assigns the new item with the same course number. If you touch the Repeat and Quantity buttons to copy an item that is already ordered, you must assign a course number to the new item.
- You can assign up to 99 courses. If you assign a course number greater than 99, an error message appears.
- You cannot assign course numbers to refill modifiers.

Assigning course numbers to items

You use the FOH course entry screen to assign courses after you enter the items on the guest check and before you order them. Use the view buttons across the top of the screen to change the order in which items appear in the guest check window, to help you sort the items according to personal preference. You can sort by seat, by order of entry, by item priority, or by assigned course once a course number is assigned.

Seat view

Seat View sorts the items by seat number, if pivot seating is in use. This is the default view for the FOH course entry screen in a pivot seating environment. Items you assign for the entire table and not to a seat, appear at the top of the list.
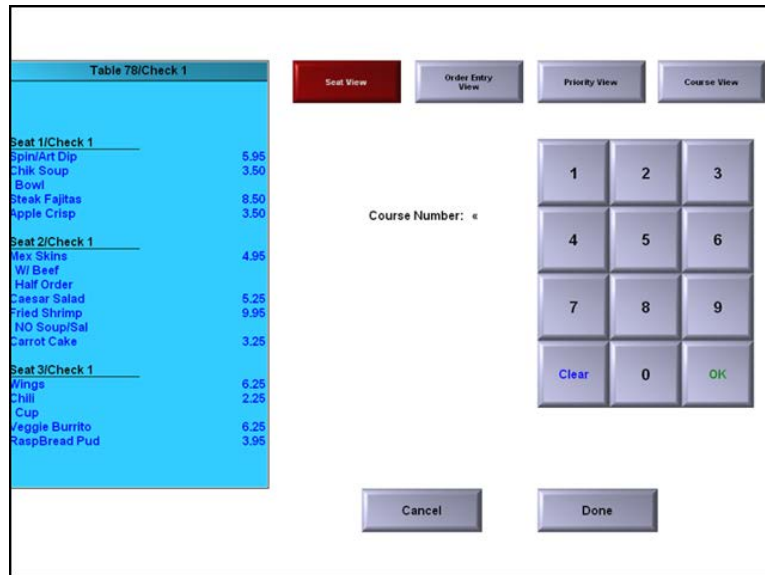

Figure 6 Seat View

Order entry view

Order Entry View sorts the items in the order in which you add them to the guest check. This is the default view for the FOH course entry screen when pivot seating is not in use.
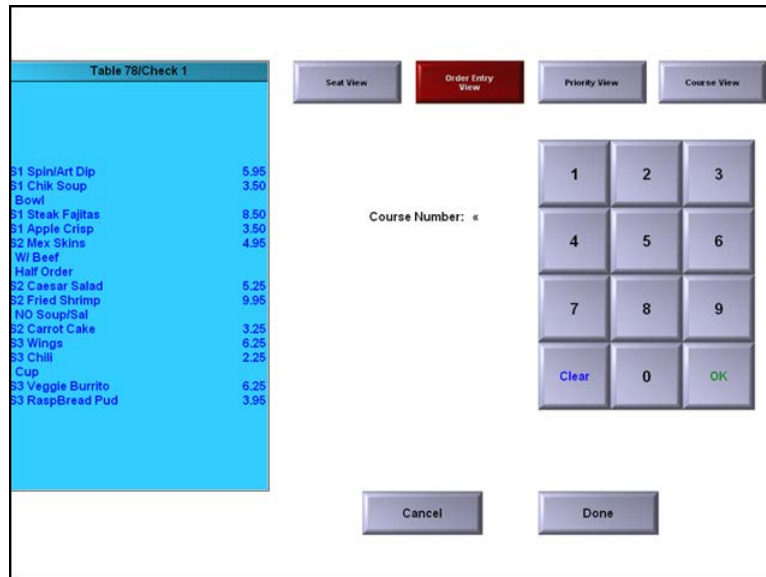

Figure 7 Order Entry View

Priority view

Priority View sorts items by item priority, if in use. Some restaurants assign item priorities to control the order in which items print on the kitchen chits. For example, they want appetizers to appear first on the chit, so they assign a higher priority to appetizer items.
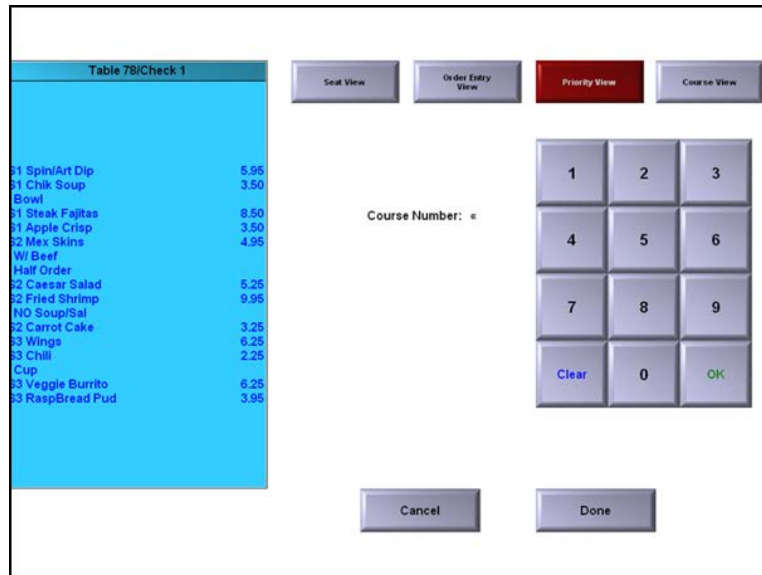

Figure 8 Priority View

Course view

Course View sorts the items by course number. Use this view only after you assign course numbers, to verify accuracy.
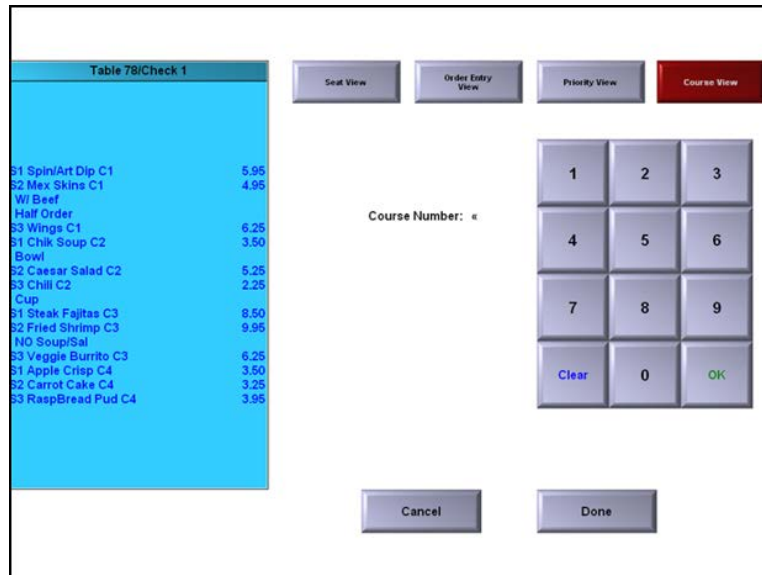

Figure 9 Course View

Assigning courses when pivot seating is in use

Pivot seating refers to the practice of taking orders beginning with a designated seating position and moving either clockwise or counter-clockwise around the table. You tray and deliver the order based on seating positions, eliminating the need to 'auction off' plates to the correct guest and disrupt the dining experience.

Pivot seating requires you to enter orders by seat. Because the default view of the course entry screen is Seat View, the system indicates each order with a 'Seat n' header, where n represents the seat number. If you choose another view, the system precedes each menu item with an indicator of 'Sn,' where 'n' represents the seat number.

To assign courses when pivot seating is in use:

1. Start a **table** and **enter** items as normal. Do not send items to the kitchen.
2. Touch **Course**. The FOH course entry screen appears.
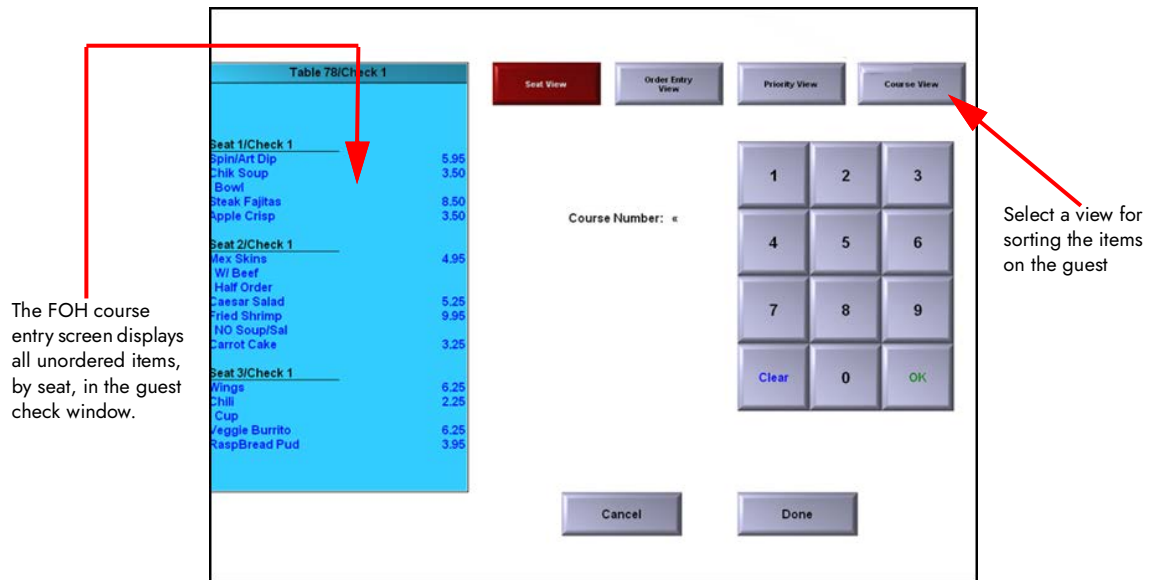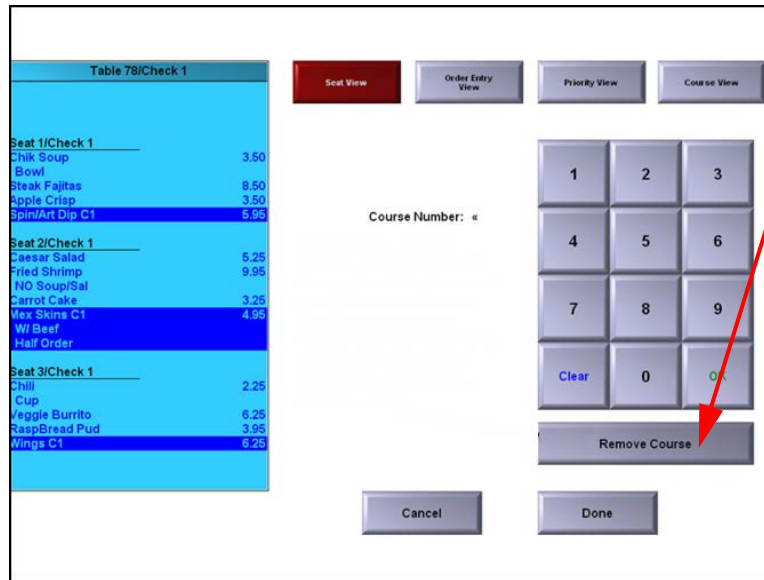

Figure 10 Seat View Using Pivot Seating

3. Select all **unordered items** to assign to course number 1.
4. Type the number **1** using the numeric keypad and touch **OK**. To clear a course number before you touch OK, touch **Clear**. The system places the course number next to the selected items with

a 'C' indicator. For example, a Dinner Salad assigned to course number 1 appears as Dinner Salad C1.

Figure 11 Seat View Using Pivot Seating With Items Selected

5. Repeat **steps 3 and 4** until you assign a course number to all menu items.

6. Touch **Done** to return to the FOH order entry screen. The items appear with the course number indicator, by seat.

Figure 12 Applied Courses Using Pivot Seating

7. Continue to .

Assigning courses when pivot seating is not in use

If pivot seating is not in use, you have the freedom to enter orders randomly, consolidate duplicate items, enter items in the order stated by the guest, or using any method.

To assign courses when pivot seating is not in use:

1. Start a **table** and enter **items** as normal. Do not send the items to the kitchen.
2. Touch **Course**. The FOH course entry screen appears.

The FOH course entry screen displays all unordered items in the guest check window in the order in which you entered the items.

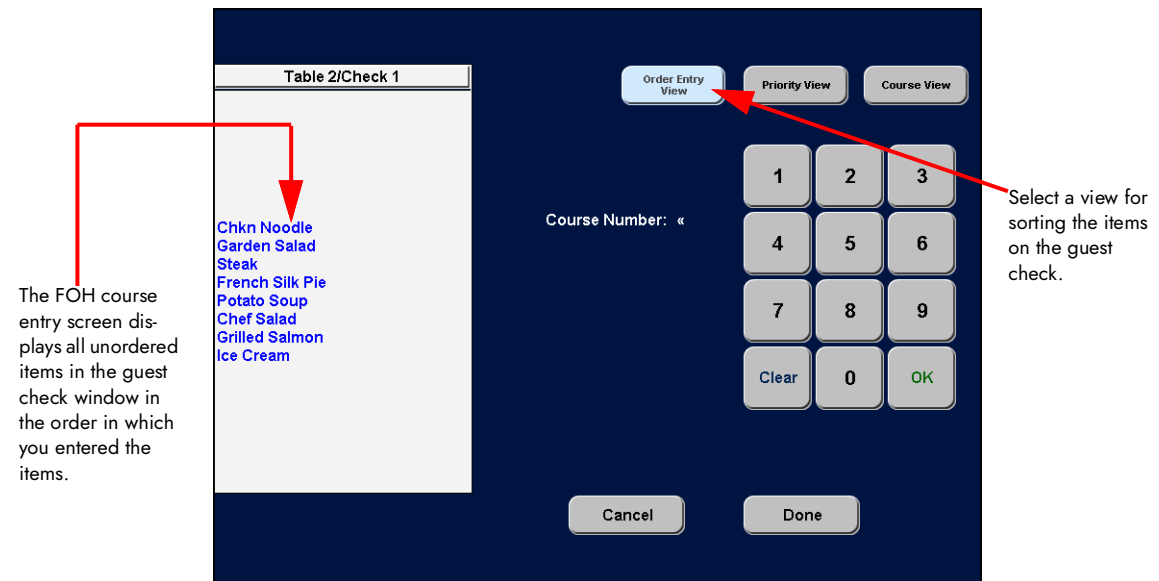Select a view for sorting the items on the guest check.

Figure 13 Order Entry View Without Pivot Seating

3. Select all **unordered items** to assign to course number 1.
4. Type the number **1** using the numeric keypad and touch **OK**. To clear a course number before you touch OK, touch Clear. The system places the course number next to the selected items with a 'C' indicator. For example, a Dinner Salad assigned to course number 1 appears as Dinner Salad C1.

To remove a course number assigned to an item, select the item and touch Remove Course. The Remove Course button appears only after you select an item you assigned to a course.
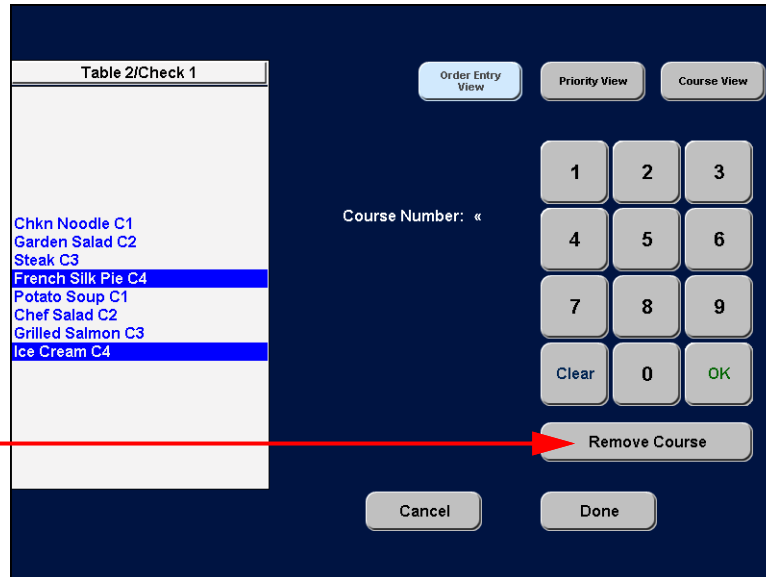
Figure 14 Order Entry View with Items Selected

5. Repeat **steps 3 and 4** until you assign a course number to all menu items.

6. Touch **Done** to return to the FOH order entry screen. The items appear with the course number indicator and in the order in which you entered them.

Figure 15 Applied Courses Without Pivot Seating

7. Continue to .

Controlling course timing

When using Course Ordering, you must assign a course number to each item on the guest check before you send the order to the kitchen, and you may need to approach the sending of orders to the kitchen differently, depending on the environment under which your restaurant operates. Choose the method that follows your environment.

Environment 1: Kitchen controls course timing

The restaurant follows a predetermined flow for the dining process, such as in a dinner theatre that serves dinner at 6:30 and starts the play at 8:00. You assign a course number to each item and then send the entire order to the kitchen, with cuts between each course on the chit. The kitchen staff controls course timing.

SCENARIO: You work for a dinner theater that serves dinner at 6:30 and starts the play at 8:00. The restaurant dictates that you serve appetizers at 6:30, salads at 6:45, entrées at 7:00, and so on. Enter the order and assign a course number to each item using the FOH course entry screen. When you complete the order and send it to the kitchen, the chit prints, with a cut between each course, and either the chef or the expediter control when you deliver each course to your guests.

Environment 2: Server manually controls course timing

In a more lax environment where you manually regulate the dining flow of the guest, you can do this in one of two ways. You can regulate the dining flow of the guest by assigning a course number to each item and then either sending the entire order to the kitchen, with cuts between each course, and letting the kitchen staff know when to prepare each course, or by sending the items to the kitchen one course at a time.

SCENARIO: 1) You work for a restaurant that requires you to monitor your guests and inform the kitchen staff when you are ready for the next course. After you enter the order and assign a course number to each item using the FOH course entry screen, go ahead and send the entire order to the kitchen, as normal. The chit prints, with a cut between each course. Monitor the table, and, when the time comes, return to the kitchen to let them know you are ready for the next course.

SCENARIO: 2) You work for a restaurant that requires you to monitor your guests and send the items to the kitchen one course at a time. Using this method, select an item for course 1, touch the order mode, and exit the check. All items in course 1 are sent to the kitchen and the remaining items on the guest check remain unordered. The expediter or kitchen receives the chit and prepares the first course. Monitor the table and when the time comes, recall the check, select an item in the next course, and touch the order mode. All items assigned to that course are sent to the kitchen. Repeat this process until you send all courses to the kitchen.

Environment 3: Server controls course timing using hold buttons

Delaying the sending of courses by increments of time is the most popular method for course ordering. This method requires the use of a single Hold button that allows you to designate the length of time to wait before releasing the next course to the kitchen, or the use of multiple Hold buttons, each preset with an amount of time to wait between courses. Using this method, you do not need to communicate with the kitchen on when to prepare a course. When the designated time lapses, the next course sends to the kitchen.

SCENARIO: Enter the order and assign a course number to each item using the FOH course entry screen. Before ordering the items (sending the items to the kitchen), select an item designated for the first course and touch the Hold button to display the Enter Release Information screen. Enter the time to wait before sending the first course, such as five minutes, and touch OK. All items assigned to the first course inherit the five minute hold time. Select an item from the second course and touch the Hold button. Enter the time to wait before sending the second course, such as ten minutes, and touch OK. All items assigned to the second course inherit the ten minute hold time. Continue this process until you assign a staggered hold time to each course. When all items have been assigned a hold time, select an order mode or touch Done, WWT, Close, Print, or Reprint from the order entry screen. The items in each course send to the kitchen at the appropriate time. If you see a guest requires more time for a course, return to the order, select an item in the next course, touch the Hold button, and alter the hold time.

SCENARIO: Enter the order and assign a course number to each item using the FOH course entry screen. Before ordering the items (sending the items to the kitchen), select an item designated for the first course and touch the Hold button with the lowest preset hold time, such as 5 Minutes. All items assigned to the first course inherit the five minute hold time. Select an item from the second course and touch the button with the next higher preset hold time, such as 10 Minutes. All items assigned to the second course inherit the ten minute hold time. Continue this process until you assign an incremental hold time to each course. When all items have been assigned a hold time, select an order mode or touch Done, WWT, Close, Print, or Reprint from the order entry screen. The items in each course send to the kitchen at the appropriate time. If you see a guest requires more time for a course, return to the order, select an item in the next course, touch the appropriate Hold button, and alter the hold time.

Printing Course Ordering

When you order by courses, the chit prints in the kitchen with a leading header for each course. Each course is separated by a paper cut, as shown in the following examples:

Figure 16 Course Ordering Examples with Pivot Seating (L) and Without Pivot Seating (R)

For expediter printing, the chit prints to the expediter as shown in the following examples:
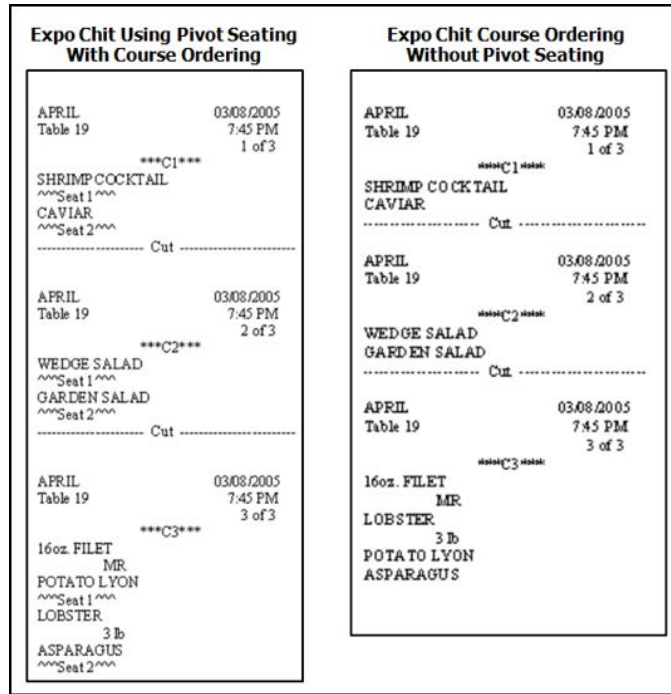

Figure 17 Course Ordering Expediter Printing Examples With Pivot Seating (L) and Without Pivot Seating (R)

If you enabled the system to consolidate like items, the chit prints as shown in the following examples:
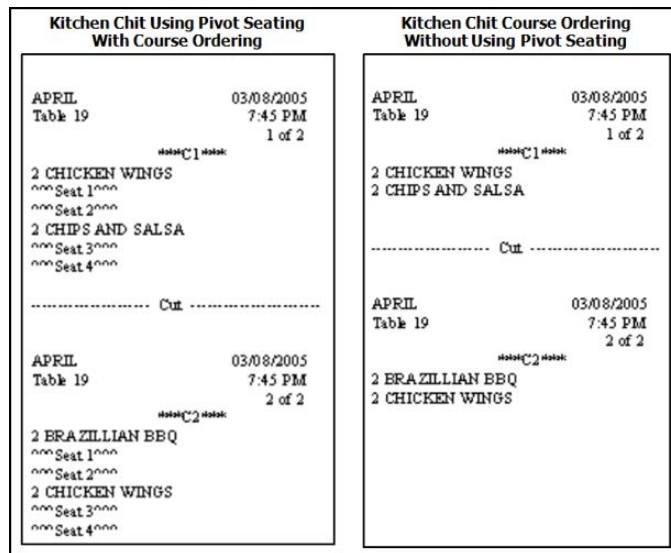

Figure 18 Course Ordering Consolidated Items Printing Examples With Pivot Seating (L) and Without Pivot Seating (R)

Troubleshooting Course Ordering

Below are reminders and troubleshooting tips provided for course ordering.

- You can assign course numbers to menu items only; not modifiers.
- If there is an unordered item on the guest check, and you touch Repeat or Quantity, the system assigns the new item with the same course number.
- If there is an ordered item on the guest check, and you touch Repeat or Quantity, the system does not assign the new item with a course number. You must assign a course number to the new item.
- You can assign up to 99 courses. If you assign a course greater than 99, an error message appears.
- You cannot assign course numbers to refill modifiers.
- Course information does not appear on video cells when using video display systems.

Error messages

The 'There currently are no items to which a course can be assigned' error message appears if you have not added items to the guest check.
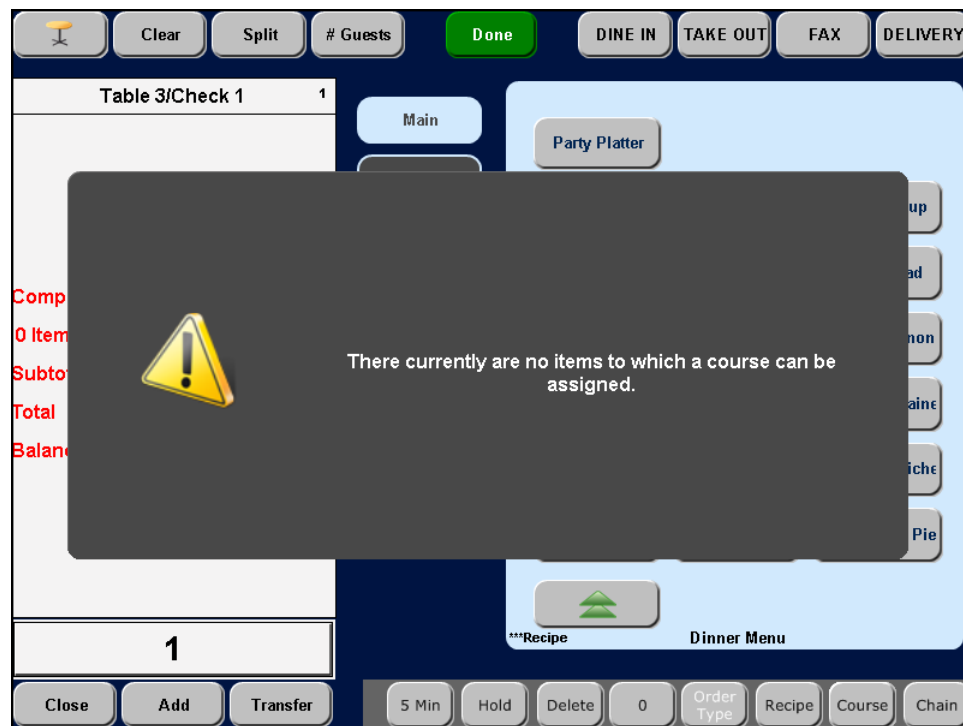

Figure 19 Unable to Assign Course Numbers

Touch to dismiss the error message. Add items to the guest check and then touch Course to assign unordered items.

The 'Invalid course designation. Course number must be between 1 and 99' error message appears if you enter an course number greater than 99.
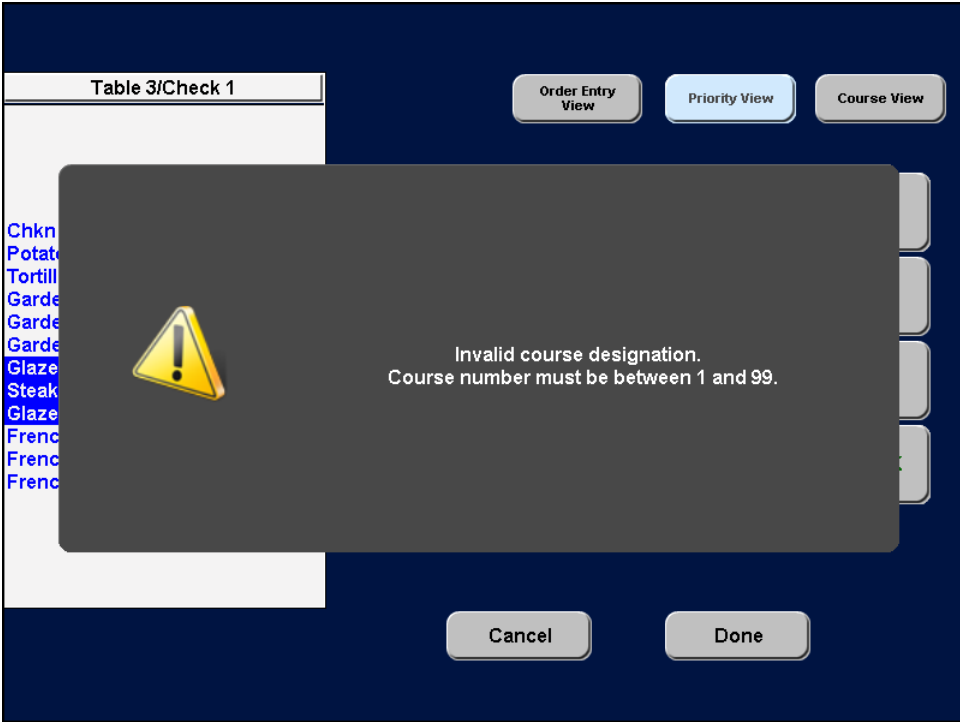

Figure 20 Invalid Course Designation

Touch to dismiss the error message. Re-enter the appropriate course number and touch OK.

Course Ordering, Feature Focus Guide

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