

Pineapple Pro Tip

Be Confident—Tips to Use Guest Names

Dale Carnegie said it best: “A person’s name is, to that person, the sweetest, most important sound in any language.” When we hear our name, it makes us feel like we belong. It creates a connection with the person who is addressing you and is interpreted as demonstrating more care and empathy. Not to mention, it builds loyalty, and people return to where they’re known and liked. Here are a few tips for remembering names.

1. **Name Game:** As mentioned in *Yes Is the Answer*, one of my favorite ways to remember names is to play my name game. I think of something about that person that begins with their first name. This works especially well with children—for example, Kool Mr. Kirkland or Awesome Annie.
2. **Stay in the Moment:** The main reason we forget a name is because we’re not focused on the person; we’re focused on the task we’re doing. Choose to care—it’s more about the person than the task.
3. **Meet and Repeat:** When getting someone’s name, repeat it right away. For example, if a guest says, “I’m Mr. Jones,” say, “Hi Mr. Jones. It’s nice to meet you!” Try to use the name three times in an interaction, as long as it doesn’t come off forced—you can also repeat the name in your head to not overuse it.
4. **Rhyme Time:** Rhyme the name you’re trying to remember: Mike-Like, I like Mike!

Use Your Tools: These are mainly for hotels, but restaurants and other service providers may have similar tools.

1. **Arrivals List:** Many of us have regulars whose faces we might remember, but not their names. I would review my arrivals list in the morning. That way, when the guest came in, I remembered his face, and it clicked!
2. **Credit Cards:** Again, we might remember a face over a name. When this happens at check-in, welcome them back, let them know they’re all set, and you just need to run their credit card. When you get the card, you’ve got the name! Close the transaction using the guest’s name. Many businesses have the chip reader sitting out for the guest to swipe or insert. When you do this, you, 1. Little by little, eliminate ways to serve our guests and 2. Eliminate the opportunity to use the guest’s name, connect, and build a relationship.
3. **Luggage Tags:** Bellhops, van drivers, and housekeepers can take advantage of luggage tags! When removing bags from the hotel van, taxi, or Lyft, rather than just taking them out, look at the tag, and get the guest’s name. Be a *Wise Pineapple*—escort the guest and introduce them to the guest service host. Take it even further and, if they are on the concierge level, call up to your concierge and let them know that Mrs. Smith is about to step off the elevators! *Cool or Cool?!* Housekeepers can also use the luggage tags to learn names and write stayover notes!
4. **Phones, Computers, and Micros:** When you put a room number in the computer or when a guest calls the front desk or an outlet, you get the name. Ensure you’re using the support systems around you to build loyalty and impress your guests. If a guest comes to check out, use their name as you enter their room number. Here is an excellent example of legendary service for a quick-serve restaurant. After ringing the guest, you’ll get their name in Micros. Then, you can use their name AND recognize their loyalty status. You can also write their name and status on the server ticket. When they deliver the entree or beverage, the server can then use their name! *Get it? Got it? Good!*
5. **Ask Them:** The easiest way is to simply introduce yourself and ask the guest for their name. 😊