

Operations PACE Gold Standard Quality Guide



2026

Contents

Introduction	3
Goals and Objectives of Product Quality Evaluations at the Restaurant	3
How to Conduct Product Quality Evaluations	3
Operations PACE Product Quality Evaluation	4
French Fries	4
Sandwich or Entrée Evaluations	5
Regular Menu	6
Breakfast Menu	20
Drinks	30
Desserts	37
Quality Troubleshooting Information	41

© McDonald's Corporation. This information may be confidential and proprietary. The unauthorized use of confidential and proprietary information is prohibited. The contents of this document are subject to change; the latest version is available on the US Operations PACE @mcd website.

Introduction

By focusing on **Gold Standard Quality**, we can make a significant improvement in the quality and consistency of the food and beverage menu items we serve to the McDonald's brand's guests.

Goals and Objectives of Product Evaluations at the Restaurant

Product evaluation provides us with an opportunity to help the McDonald's brand restaurants improve the quality and consistency of the food they serve every day.

By properly evaluating products in the restaurant, one can identify when important quality attributes of the food do not meet the Gold Standards.

Using the quality troubleshooting tools, you will be able to help the restaurant identify the cause of specific quality issues, correct those issues, and in turn, improve the quality of the food they are serving to the customers.

How to Conduct Product Quality Evaluations

A proper and accurate evaluation of food quality requires a solid understanding of the Gold Standards and the use of a consistent product evaluation method performed in a consistent manner.

To begin, we will start by defining the term Gold Standard Quality, which is the sensory experience achieved through the combination of the right products, calibrated equipment, and strong operational procedures.

When conducting quality evaluations of completed sandwiches, french fries, and other menu items during Operations PACE Visits, follow these guidelines:

- Once the food is received, sit down and begin the evaluation as soon as possible and always within two minutes, starting with french fries. After this time period passes, it is more likely the french fries may start to cool off.
- Conduct the evaluations of food quality at different times throughout the visit rather than all at one time to gain an overall view of quality.

Use the Gold Standard Quality product descriptions as your guide when evaluating the products. You always want to compare the product you are evaluating against the Gold Standard Quality attributes to determine if the product meets McDonald's standards.

Example:

Assume that you are conducting a quality evaluation and have just received the order for a McDouble and french fries. Following the steps on the next few pages will ensure consistency and result in an accurate evaluation of product quality.

Operations PACE Product Quality Evaluation: Quality Section

FRENCH FRIES FIRST – ALWAYS

French fries cool the fastest, so regardless of what is ordered, evaluate the quality of the french fries first. Follow these simple steps to ensure a consistent and accurate product evaluation. The entire evaluation should only take a couple of minutes to complete.

APPEARANCE	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Check to see that a full box or bag of french fries is received2. Ensure the presentation is clean and neat3. Take the fry order and empty the french fries onto a tray liner.4. Within 30 seconds, quickly scan the french fries for the following attributes:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Externally bright, light golden with natural color highlights and a slight sheen• French fries are straight and uniformly cut with varying lengths• Some salt crystals are visible on the surface• Slight separation of the crust from the flesh
TEMPERATURE	French fries should be hot.
TASTE	Taste the french fries and focus on their flavor. Eat three or four strips of medium length french fries at a time to get a more representative sample. Focus on the following attributes as french fries are tasted: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Freshly cooked potato flavor• Clean oil flavor• Properly salted
TEXTURE	The texture of the french fries is very important. Evaluate the French fries for the following attributes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Exterior texture is slightly crisp with a tender bite• Interior texture is mealy, slightly moist with a baked potato texture

Did the French Fries meet all the Gold Standard Quality attributes for appearance, temperature, taste, and texture? If yes, the product meets McDonald's standards.

If not, you should note specific comments about the attributes that did not meet the Gold Standards that will help troubleshoot the cause of the quality issue.

Operations PACE Product Quality Evaluation: Quality Section

Sandwich or entrée evaluation

Sandwiches and entrées hold their heat a little longer than french fries, so evaluating these products after the french fries is not a problem as long as it is done immediately following the evaluation of the fries. Evaluate the sandwich no more than two minutes after you have received the order.

The following example is of a sandwich quality evaluation, a McDouble. When evaluating other sandwiches and entrées, refer to the Gold Standard Quality Descriptions for the sandwich being evaluated.

APPEARANCE	Quickly unwrap the sandwich and look for the following attributes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The sandwich has a uniform golden brown bun• The sandwich looks neat and holds together well• The melted cheese has draped corners
TEMPERATURE	The sandwich should be hot. Taste the sandwich. Do not dissect the sandwich or take it apart before tasting it. Take a couple of bites to make sure all of the sandwich ingredients are tasted. The sandwiches can now be evaluated for temperature, texture, and taste.
TASTE	Focus on the following attributes as you taste the sandwich: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Freshly caramelized bread – has the taste of “toast”• Seared, seasoned, mild beef – has a “cooked” beef taste and is properly seasoned with the salt/pepper grill seasoning blend• Caramelized onion• Creamy, mild cheddar cheese• Sweet tangy McDonald’s ketchup• Mustard• Isolated acidic bite from the dill pickle
TEXTURE	Focus on the following attributes as you are biting into the sandwich: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Soft and tender bun• Tender juicy beef• Moistness from the melted creamy cheese and condiments• Occasional crispness of the dill pickle slices

Did the sandwich meet all the Gold Standard Quality Attributes for appearance, temperature, texture, and taste? If yes, the product meets McDonald’s standards.

If not, you should note specific comments about the attributes that did not meet the Gold Standards that will help troubleshoot the cause of the quality issue.

French Fries

Appearance

Externally bright, light golden with natural color highlights and a slight sheen. Internally white, fluffy and mealy like a freshly baked potato with slight separation of crust from flesh.

French fries are straight and uniformly cut with varying lengths and minimal defects. Some salt crystals are visible on the surface.

Served in a full bag or box.

Temperature/Texture

French fries are hot.

Exterior texture is slightly crisp with a tender bite. Interior texture is mealy, slightly moist like a baked potato.

Taste

The signature taste is a well-balanced flavor profile of freshly cooked fried potato, clean oil, and salt.



Hamburger

Appearance

The sandwich has a uniform golden brown, lightly glazed bun with some visible crown defects. The sandwich looks neat and holds together well.

Temperature/Texture

The sandwich is hot.

The texture of the sandwich is slightly slippery to handle and smooth, easy to bite and chew, with a soft, tender bun, tender, juicy beef, moistness from the condiments and crispness from the dill pickles.

Taste

The taste is a balanced blend of freshly toasted bread flavor and aroma, moderate caramelized onion, sweet tangy McDonald's ketchup, with a noticeable acidic bite from the dill pickle, mustard, and a seasoned mild beef finish.



Cheeseburger

Appearance

The sandwich has a uniform golden brown, lightly glazed bun with some visible crown defects. The sandwich looks neat and holds together well.

The melted cheese has visible draped corners.

Temperature/Texture

The sandwich is hot.

The texture of the sandwich is slightly slippery to handle, smooth, easy to bite and chew, with a soft, tender bun, tender, juicy beef, moistness from the melted creamy cheese and condiments and crispness from the dill pickles.

Taste

The taste is a balanced blend of freshly toasted bread flavor and aroma, moderate caramelized onion, sweet tangy McDonald's ketchup, with a noticeable acidic bite from the dill pickle, mustard, mild cheddar cheese, and a seasoned mild beef finish.



McDouble

Appearance

The sandwich has a uniform golden brown, lightly glazed bun with some visible crown defects. The sandwich looks neat and holds together well. A slice of melted cheese is in between the two beef patties with visible draped corners.

Temperature/Texture

The sandwich is hot.

The texture of the sandwich is slightly slippery to handle, smooth, easy to bite and chew, with soft, tender bun, tender, juicy beef, moistness and some drip from the melted creamy cheese and condiments, and crispness from the dill pickles.

Taste

The taste is a balanced blend of freshly toasted bread flavor and aroma, mild cheddar cheese, seared seasoned mild beef, moderate caramelized onions, sweet tangy McDonald's ketchup, with a slight isolated acidic bite from the dill pickle and mustard.



Big Mac

Appearance

The sandwich stands tall on a three layered deep medium brown lightly glazed bun with randomly patterned sesame seeds on the crown. It is hand crafted (neatly assembled), overflowing with fresh green shredded lettuce. The melted cheese has draped corners.

Temperature/Texture

The sandwich is hot, starts neat and falls apart as you eat.

The texture of the sandwich is all about contrast - easy to bite and chew with a soft, tender bun, with tender, juicy beef, crisp lettuce, moist, melted creamy cheese and creamy sauce, with occasional crispness of the dill pickles, onions, and relish

Taste

The taste is a signature taste that combines a distinctive balanced blend of freshly toasted bread aromatics and flavors, sesame seeds, seared, seasoned mild beef, and creamy Big Mac sauce with a balance of sour, pungent mustard, sweet pickle relish, onion and savory tastes, noticeable caramelized onion flavor, fresh lettuce, creamy cheddar cheese with an isolated acidic bite from the dill pickle.



Quarter Pounder with Cheese

Appearance

The sandwich is neat and holds together well on a medium brown, lightly glazed sesame seeded bun. The melted cheese is staggered with draped corners. The beef patty is visible outside the bun.

Temperature/Texture

The sandwich is hot.

The texture of the sandwich is a soft, tender bun, with tender, crumbly, juicy beef, moistness from the melted creamy cheese and the condiments with occasional crispness of the dill pickles and fresh onions.

Taste

The taste is a balanced blend of aromatics and flavors from freshly toasted bread, nutty-ness of sesame seeds, dominant seared and seasoned beef, creamy cheddar cheese, sweet tangy McDonald's ketchup and mustard with an isolated acidic bite that lingers from the dill pickle and fresh onion.



McChicken

Appearance

It is neatly assembled with overflowing fresh, green, shredded lettuce and holds together well. Fried McChicken breading is light golden brown in color and uniformly coated with distinctive ridges and crispy edges. The McChicken patty is visible outside the uniform golden brown, lightly glazed bun with some visible crown defects.

Temperature/Texture

The sandwich is pleasantly warm.

The texture of the sandwich is soft; a freshly toasted bun with crisp, refreshing lettuce, crisp-but-tender chicken, and creamy mayonnaise sauce. The breading texture has a crisp and tender coating that adheres firmly to the meat. The meat texture has a uniform, firm bite and is slightly juicy.

Taste

The signature taste combines a distinctive, balanced blend of freshly toasted bread. Crisp and tender fried breading with caramelized notes and a clean oil taste. The mild chicken is slightly salty. It includes a creamy, slightly acidic mayonnaise-style sauce, with a balance of mustard, egg, and savory tastes. It is finished with a fresh, slightly sweet, crisp lettuce.



Chicken McNuggets

Appearance

Fried Chicken McNugget tempura breading is light golden brown in color with natural reddish brown highlights.

Chicken McNuggets should be in the four distinct shapes and are uniformly coated with ridges and peaks.

Temperature/Texture

The product is served fresh and hot.

The breading texture has a light crisp and tender tempura coating that adheres firmly to the meat. Meat texture has a uniform firm bite and is slightly juicy.

Taste

The taste is a slight fried corn and wheat flour breading taste with caramelized notes and clean oil taste. Mild chicken taste that is slightly salty with a hint of black pepper and celery taste in the breading.



McCrispy

Appearance

The sandwich has a split top bakery style toasted potato roll, a golden brown breading, all white meat whole muscle chicken thick fillet with premium crinkle cut pickles. The sandwich looks neat and holds together well.

Temperature/Texture

The sandwich is hot and feels heavy in the hand.

The bun is soft, resilient, tender, and moist. The whole muscle chicken filet is tender, juicy and with a light, crispy breading that adheres firmly to the chicken fillet. Crinkle cut pickles add a fresh crisp crunch.

Taste

The taste includes savory, juicy, crispy chicken with a sweet fried breading, seasoned with dill and hint of garlic, cool crisp dill pickles, rich salted butter on a freshly caramelized, slightly sweet potato roll.



Deluxe McCrispy

Appearance

The sandwich has a split top bakery style toasted potato roll, a golden brown breading, all white meat whole muscle thick chicken fillet, fresh green shredded lettuce, Roma tomatoes, and mayonnaise. The sandwich looks neat and holds together well.

Temperature/Texture

The sandwich is hot and feels heavy in the hand.

The bun is soft, resilient, tender, and moist. The whole muscle chicken filet is tender, juicy and with a light, crispy breading that adheres firmly to the chicken fillet. Cool Roma tomatoes and shredded lettuce add a freshness and crisp crunch.

Taste

The taste includes savory, juicy, crispy chicken fillet, sweet and tangy tomatoes, fresh green shredded lettuce, creamy mild lemon-character mayonnaise, on a freshly caramelized, slightly sweet potato roll.



Spicy McCrispy

Appearance

The sandwich has a split top bakery style toasted potato roll, a golden brown crispy, all white meat whole muscle thick chicken fillet, a creamy medium red sauce with visible red pepper flakes on the heel and crown, and premium crinkle cut pickles. The sandwich looks neat and holds together well.

Temperature/Texture

The sandwich is hot and feels heavy in the hand.

The bun is soft, resilient, tender, and moist. The whole muscle chicken filet is tender, juicy and with a light, crispy breading that adheres firmly to the chicken fillet. Crinkle cut pickles add a fresh crisp crunch and the spicy sauce has a creamy texture.

Taste

The taste includes savory, juicy, crispy chicken with a sweet fried breading, seasoned with dill and hint of garlic, cool crisp dill pickles, a creamy sauce with balanced and pronounced heat, spicy aged character and a unique balance of mustard, garlic and onion on a freshly caramelized, slightly sweet potato roll.



McCrispy Strips

Appearance

Whole muscle chicken breast strips uniformly coated with golden brown breading. Flour based coating system with crumb and visual black pepper. Bottom surface of strip will have ridging from processing belt.

Temperature/Texture

Breading: Light crisp with good breading adhesion. Meat: Naturally firm, tender, and moist.

Taste

Savory fried chicken with salt, garlic, onion, and black pepper.



Ranch Snack Wrap

Appearance

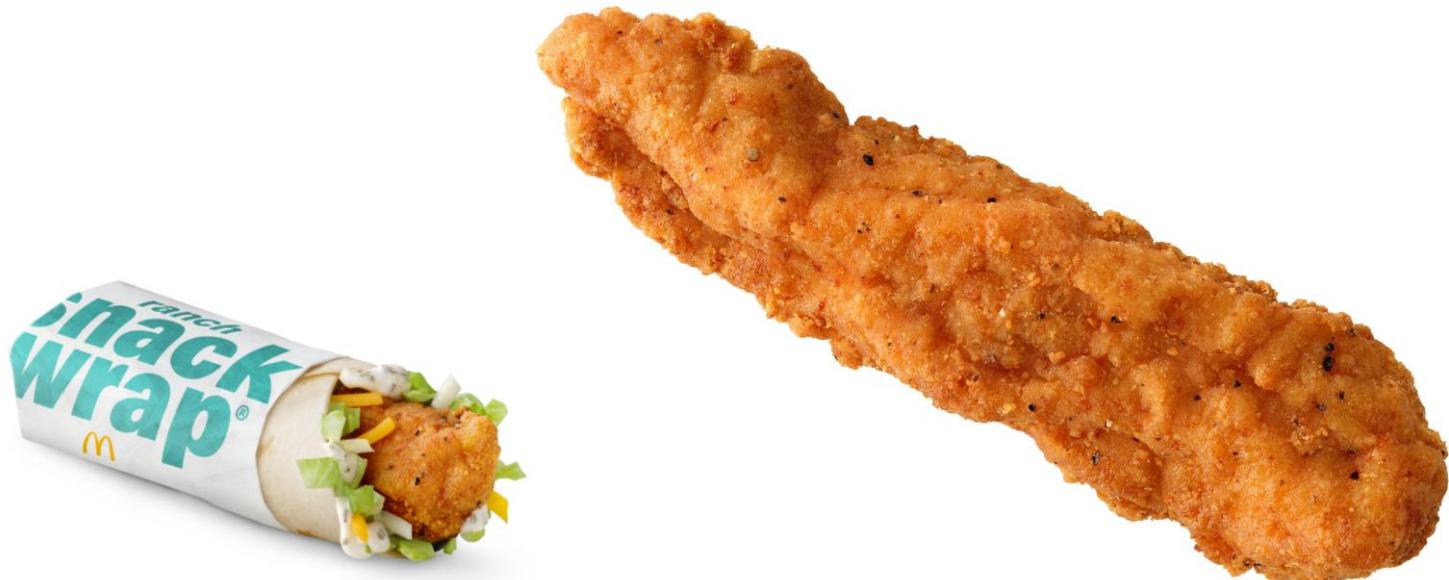
Snack wrap features a McCrispy strip topped with shredded cheese and shredded lettuce, all brought together with sauce of choice and wrapped in a soft tortilla.

Temperature/Texture

The texture of the snack wrap is composed of silky, soft, and pliable tortilla, tender shredded cheese, crisp shredded lettuce, and juicy McCrispy strip.

Taste

The taste is a balance of clean home baked tortilla flavor and aroma, mild shredded cheese, mild shredded lettuce, peppery McCrispy strip, and sweet/savory sauce of choice.



Filet-O-Fish

Appearance

The sandwich has a uniform golden brown steamed bun with a moderate sheen. The corners of the golden brown fish portion are slightly visible. Sandwich looks neat and holds together well.

Temperature/Texture

The sandwich is hot, moist, and resilient.

The texture of the sandwich is easy to bite and chew distinguished by a soft, smooth, steamed bun, with fish filet that is lightly crisp outside, tender, moist and flaky inside, with creamy tartar sauce and melted cheese.

Taste

The taste is a balanced blend of fresh steamed, baked bread taste, dominant mild fish, creamy noticeable acidic tartar sauce with a balanced blend of a dill pickle relish and fresh onion, and slight mild fish and cheddar cheese lingering finish.



Hash Browns

Appearance

The appearance is oval, with varying degrees of golden tones on the surface, minor highlights, and white interior.

Firm enough to hold without breaking easily.

Not excessively oily.

Temperature/Texture

Served hot and fresh.

The texture is a crisp firm bite with moist potato inside and a distinct piece identity, with slight bite resistance.

Taste

Lightly seasoned, freshly cooked fried potato flavor, with clean oil flavor and slightly salty.



Egg McMuffin

Appearance

Egg McMuffin is an egg, Canadian bacon, and cheese breakfast sandwich. The sandwich is neat and holds together well.

The English muffin is a round, creamy-white muffin with medium golden brown exterior highlights, and a light cornmeal dusting. Internally, the muffin is porous with varying small and large holes (has pronounced nooks and crannies), with a brown, uniform toast (not burnt). Cheese is slightly melted with draped corners.

The whole round egg is fully cooked, with a cooked/gelled yellow yolk.

Round Canadian style bacon is reddish pink, with a slightly darker rind.

Temperature/Texture

The Egg McMuffin sandwich is hot.

Moderately toasted the English Muffin is slightly crisp, with a tender, resilient, slightly moist texture. The egg is tender, moist, and slightly resilient, with a smooth creamy texture from the cheese. The Canadian style bacon is moist and tender with a slight chew.

Taste

The taste is freshly toasted English Muffin; with mild egg; butter and cheddar cheese flavors, with a sweet and salty, smoked cured pork flavor.



Sausage Biscuit

Appearance

Sausage Biscuit is simply a sausage and biscuit breakfast sandwich. The sandwich is neat and holds together well. The biscuit is a uniform golden brown and the round sausage patty is evenly browned (seared).

Temperature/Texture

The sandwich is hot.

Biscuit is slightly crispy with a flaky, moist interior. The sausage is moist and has a tender bite.

Taste

The sandwich is hot. Biscuit is slightly crispy with a flaky, moist interior. The sausage is moist and has a tender bite.



Bacon, Egg and Cheese Biscuit

Appearance

The sandwich is neat and holds together well. The biscuit has a uniform, golden brown, slightly shiny surface. Golden yellow folded egg, with 2 half strips of reddish-brown, thick-cut sliced bacon. Cheese is slightly melted with draped corners.

Temperature/Texture

The sandwich is hot.

Biscuit is slightly crispy with a flaky, moist interior. The folded egg is tender, moist, and fluffy with a smooth creamy texture from the cheese.

The bacon is slightly crisp and tender.

Taste

The taste is a balanced blend of buttermilk biscuit, egg and creamy, mild cheddar cheese flavor and Applewood smoked, salty bacon flavor.



Sausage, Egg and Cheese McGriddle

Appearance

The sandwich is neat and holds together well. The golden brown McGriddle cake has bits of syrup nuggets with the McDonald's logo facing out. Golden yellow folded egg and a seared, brown, pork sausage patty top the slightly melted cheese with draped corners.

Temperature/Texture

The sandwich is hot.

The sandwich is characterized by soft, resilient, moist McGriddle cake with moist, tender, folded egg and tender, juicy sausage with a creamy moistness from the melted cheese.

Taste

Sweet maple flavor from the McGriddle cake, with mild egg, spicy sage and red pepper heat from the pork sausage, and creamy cheddar cheese flavor.



Bagel

Appearance

The bagel is medium brown to golden brown and slight color variation is acceptable. The hole color is ivory to slightly tan and dime to quarter sized. Smooth surface with a light sheen and hair line cracking acceptable. Round to slightly asymmetrical with either an inconspicuous hinge or a complete split.

Temperature/Texture

The product is served hot and fresh.

Initial bite is slightly resistant with a slight tug or pull. Bagel is moist, tender, and slightly soft. Crumb is moist with a tender chew.

Taste

The bagel has a toasted bread flavor with some slight yeasty notes.



Steak Bagel

Appearance

The steak, egg, and cheese bagel is toasted with real butter and holds a tender, juicy steak patty, a fluffy folded egg, melty American cheese, creamy breakfast sauce and savory grilled onions.

Temperature/Texture

The texture of the sandwich has a slight resistance with a slight tug or pull on the initial bite, with a tender bagel, juicy steak, moistness from the melted American cheese and creamy breakfast sauce.

Taste

The taste is a balanced blend of freshly toasted bagel flavor and aroma, moderate grilled onion, creamy breakfast sauce with noticeable pepper and smoke flavors, mild American cheese, and seasoned mild steak finish.



Breakfast Sausage Burrito

Appearance

Sausage Burrito is an 8-inch creamy white flour tortilla with brown toast points filled with cheese, egg scrambles, red and green pepper pieces, and brown sausage crumbles.

Temperature/Texture

The burrito is hot.

The tortilla is soft, tender and pliable. One end is folded and is tender, not hard or dry. The filling is a blend of moist, tender egg, sausage and vegetable pieces, and creamy cheese slightly melted.

Taste

The taste is a well-balanced blend of tortilla, vegetables, egg, mild cheddar cheese, and slightly spicy pork sausage flavors, with a mild black pepper flavor.



Big Breakfast with Hotcakes, Scrambled Eggs, Sausage and Biscuit

Appearance

Big Breakfast w/Hotcakes is a platter with fluffy, bright yellow scrambled eggs, a seared, round pork sausage patty, a stack of golden brown, round hotcakes, and a golden brown biscuit. Hash brown has varying degrees of golden tones on the surface with minor highlights and bright white interior. Hash brown is firm enough to hold without breaking easily and not excessively oily.

Temperature/Texture

The sausage patty is moist and has a tender bite. Scrambled egg is moist and tender. Hotcakes are tender and have an airy texture, and the biscuit is slightly crispy with a flaky and moist interior. Hash brown is hot and fresh. Hash brown has a crisp firm bite with moist potato inside and distinct piece identity, with slight bite resistance.

Taste

Pork sausage is slightly spicy with a moderate sage flavor and finishes with a slight sweetness and saltiness. Hotcakes have a balanced flavor of sweetness, a hint of vanilla and dairy flavor. Biscuit has a buttery, buttermilk flavor and the eggs have a mild eggy flavor. Hash brown is lightly seasoned, freshly cooked fried potato flavor, with clean oil flavor and slightly salty.



Oatmeal

Appearance

Oatmeal is uniformly mixed, hydrated, rolled oat flakes suspended in a creamy beige viscous liquid; oatmeal is topped with apples, cranberries, and raisins.

Temperature/Texture

Oatmeal is rich, thick, uniformly smooth (free of lumps), characterized by slightly chewy oat flakes surrounded by a smooth, thick liquid. Diced apples are firm, crisp, and juicy; cranberries and raisins have a soft initial bite with some chewiness.

Taste

Oatmeal has a moderate rich brown sugar/maple aromatic, followed by creamy/dairy and subtle butter notes in a lightly toasted oat flake base that is moderately sweet. Diced apples have a sweet, tart, apple flavor; cranberries have some tartness and raisins are sweet.



Cold Beverage

Appearance

Characteristic of the given beverage, with right color, full serving, and free of sediment. Ice is not melted.

Temperature/Texture

Beverage is served and feels cold, with ice not melted.

Carbonated beverages from the automated beverage station are properly carbonated (have the "fizz").

Taste

Drink meets characteristic flavor profile with clean taste and not weak or watered down according to standard description.



Orange Juice

Appearance

Orange Juice is light orange in color, typical of orange fruit. It is opaque and has the consistency of typical 100% orange juice, not thick. Free from pulp or particulates.

Temperature/Texture

Orange juice has a consistent smooth viscosity typical of pulp free 100% orange juice with a slight tingling sensation (burn).

Taste

Orange juice has initial fresh orange flavor followed by a balanced sweet and sour taste with a citrus finish. Orange juice can have a slight cooked note



McCafé Drip Coffee

Appearance

McDonald's McCafé coffee, made from 100% Arabica coffee beans, is hot and freshly brewed, dark brown in color and free of sediments, served in a full cup and properly customized with cream and/or sweetener, as ordered.

Temperature/Texture

Hot, medium body freshly brewed (within 30 minutes of brewing).

Taste

Fresh, rich, medium roast coffee aroma. Flavor is slightly bitter with a noticeable pleasant coffee aftertaste. NOTE: Evaluate without cream or sweeteners.



McCafé Hot Mocha

Appearance

McCafé Hot Mocha is served in a full McCafé hot cup, a rich hot espresso beverage, made with espresso, steamed (foamed) whole or non-fat milk and chocolate syrup, topped with whipped cream and dark chocolate drizzle.

Temperature/Texture

Hot, creamy, smooth, heavy bodied.

Taste

A well balanced blend of rich, dark roast espresso coffee, steamed milk, and dark chocolate flavor with a creamy, sweetened dairy flavor with noticeable vanilla notes, and a sweet, dark fudge flavor from the syrup and the drizzle.



McCafé Iced Caramel Macchiato

Appearance

A beverage made with ice, steamed milk, caramel-flavored syrup, marked with espresso and topped with caramel drizzle.

Temperature/Texture

Beverage is served cold.

Taste

A well-balanced blend of dark roast espresso coffee steamed milk, and caramel flavor, topped with caramel drizzle that is a sweet, flavored syrup. Drink is not weak or watered down.



Frappe

Appearance

Creamy chocolate brown in color, icy smooth, creamy, thick fully blended ice beverage.

Temperature/Texture

Cold, thick and creamy iced beverage with uniform ice particles.

Taste

Initial bittersweet chocolate, in a clean dairy base with a slight coffee note. Pronounced sweetness, finishing with a pleasant coffee aftertaste.



Shake

Appearance

Shake is smooth, thick, and swirled either creamy white, light pink, or cocoa brown in color. Has some ice crystals noticeable, swirled to a peak and topped with whipped light cream. Served neatly in a full cup.

Temperature/Texture

Shake is noticeably cold.

The draw should be difficult yet sippable through the standard straw. Shake is thick and creamy, slightly icy and melts quickly in the mouth, with a clean, light mouthcoating.

Taste

Rich, creamy, sweet clean milk/dairy base with a mild vanilla, strawberry, or cocoa flavor.



Hot Fudge Sundae

Appearance

Ice cream is smooth, thick and creamy white, with some ice crystals noticeable, swirled to a peak and topped with smooth, dark brown hot fudge topping that clings to the ice cream. Served neatly in a full cup.

Temperature/Texture

Soft serve ice cream is cold, hot fudge topping is hot, and the hot/cold temperature contrast is noticeable.

Firm creamy structure with slight amount of fine ice crystals. Melts slowly against tongue and palate, with a clean, light mouth coating. Hot fudge topping is thick and smooth.

Taste

Rich, creamy, sweet clean dairy flavor, with a slight vanilla note. Hot fudge topping has a sweet dark chocolate flavor with well-rounded cocoa, vanilla, and dairy notes.



Apple Pie

Appearance

Baked Apple Pie pastry crust is slightly uneven golden brown and flaky. The top pastry is an open lattice exposing filling with an even sprinkling of sugar across the top pastry. Filling is shiny, slightly thick, light brown with brown spice flecks with evenly distributed sliced apples.

Temperature/Texture

The product is served hot and fresh.

The crust is tender and flaky with a slight crispness. The filling is slightly thick and smooth with slightly firm apple pieces.

Taste

The crust is rich and buttery and the apple filling is sweet and slightly tart from the apples, with pronounced lingering cinnamon flavors.



McFlurry

Appearance

The soft serve vanilla ice cream, is smooth and creamy; not melted. Swirled with pieces of confectionary, cookie, or nuts, which are well blended into the ice cream. It may or may not have a liquid component which should be blended in, but visibly separate from the ice cream.

The inclusions should always be mixed into the soft serve* ice cream prior to serving to the consumer.

**Alternate soft serve flavors can be used*

Temperature/Texture

The McFlurry should be ice cold, the soft serve* ice cream component should be white, with a slightly granular surface texture and holds shape before melting. The added pieces should be crunchy or have a contrasting texture to the soft serve vanilla ice cream, and uniformly mixed in to the ice cream.

Taste

The taste is consistent with the flavor ordered and soft serve* dairy ice cream. No off or objectionable flavors. The soft serve* ice cream should always be dairy based.



Ice Cream Cone

Appearance

An ice cream cone features a white, smooth spiral of soft serve ice cream elegantly stacked in a circular motion, tapering to a gentle peak at the top. This creamy swirl sits atop a cake cone that has a uniformly yellow to light golden-brown color with a flat bottom.

Temperature/Texture

Soft serve ice cream is smooth and creamy; cone is fresh, crisp, light, and flaky.

Taste

Soft serve ice cream has a creamy dairy flavor, with moderate sweetness and vanilla. The cone offers a mild toasted flavor complemented by a very subtle sweetness.



Quality Troubleshooting Information

Operations & Training Manual (O&T) and the Quality Reference Guide (QRG)

If quality issues with products are discovered when completing product evaluations, the first step is to determine the cause(s) of the quality issue that have been identified.

Once the cause(s) are identified, you will be able to help the McDonald's brand restaurant determine what actions need to be taken to correct the quality issue.

Pay careful attention to these production steps to ensure Gold Standard Quality:

1. Proper primary storage conditions and product holding upon receiving are very important to food safety and quality.
2. Proper secondary storage/holding in grill-side and fryer-side freezers and restaurant coolers.
3. All equipment must be clean, calibrated, properly set, and maintained. Check grills, fryers, toasters, ovens, steamers, coffee, and espresso equipment, shake/sundae machines, ABS, and Blended ice beverage stations to ensure equipment is in good working order.
4. Oil quality is key to Gold Standard freshly fried chicken, fish, fries, and hash browns.
5. Proper cook times and temperatures – remember to dial in proper grill cook times based on product integrity and food safety temperatures.
6. Proper holding times – the established hold times in the Universal Holding Cabinets (UHC) have been determined based on food quality and are essential to Gold Standard Quality characteristics.
7. Accurate and neatly finished menu items must meet Quality Standards.

Use the following quality troubleshooting information found at www.fredatmcd.com, in the O&T, and/or Pocket Quality Reference Guide (PQRG) to assist you in this process.

Product/Area	O&T or PQRG	Section
Breakfast Products	PQRG	Breakfast
Round Egg Cooking	O&T	Food Safety: Troubleshooting Cooked Product
Hot holding in the Universal Holding Cabinets	O&T	Food Safety: Checklist for Troubleshooting UHC or Marinator
Regular Menu Grilled & Fried Products	PQRG	Regular Menu
Beef patty internal temperatures and cooking	O&T	Food Safety: Troubleshooting Cooked Product
	PQRG	Regular Menu
Chicken and Fish product internal temperatures and cooking	O&T	Food Safety: Troubleshooting Cooked Product
	PQRG	Regular Menu
French Fries	PQRG	Regular Menu: French Fries
Refrigerated and Frozen Products	O&T	Food Safety: Checklist for Troubleshooting Refrigerated and Frozen Products
McCafé Beverages	PQRG	McCafé Beverage Menu Items
Cold Beverage	PQRG	Beverage Menu Items
McCafé Baked Goods	PQRG	McCafé Baked Goods



Operations PACE

Performance and Customer Excellence