

Fast Food vs. Fast Casual What's the Difference?

When you hear the term “fast casual,” what comes to mind? The line between fast food and fast casual has become a bit blurry, but here are some of the main differences.

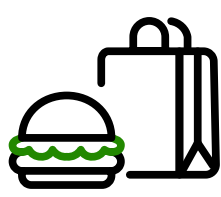
Fast Casual & Fast Food — Definitions

Fast Food — A dining experience with emphasis on speed, low prices, and convenience.

Fast Casual — Similar to fast food, but with more emphasis on food quality and overall dining experience.

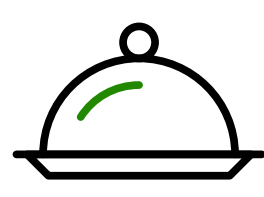
Examples of Fast Food Brands

- McDonald's
- Burger King
- Taco Bell



Examples of Fast Casual Brands

- Panera Bread
- Chipotle
- MOD Pizza



Fast Casual & Fast Food — Differences

Differences	Fast Food	Fast Casual
Atmosphere	Minimal furnishings to encourage quick visits	Comfortable furnishings to encourage longer visits
Food	Emphasis on economical menu items	Emphasis on better ingredients, healthier options
Service	Customers collect their order from the counter and bus their tables	Servers may be available to bring miscellaneous items and clear tables
Pricing*	Average check size is \$5.00	Average check size is \$12.00

*franchisehelp.com/industry-reports/fast-casual-industry-analysis-2020-cost-trends

Fast Casual & Fast Food — Typical Customers

- **Over 50%** of fast food customers **are men**
- **34% of children 2-19 years old** consume fast food daily
- **About 42%** of fast casual customers **are millennials**
- **About 44%** of fast casual customers report a **household income of \$75,000+**



restaurantbusinessonline.com/consumer-trends/fast-casual-consumers-who-are-they#page=1
time.com/4035490/fast-food-kids/

Fast Casual & Fast Food — Amenities

Amenities	Fast Food	Fast Casual
Drive-thru service	Drive-thru service common	Drive-thru service uncommon
Serving alcohol	Serving alcohol less common	Serving alcohol more common
Open 24 hours	Many are open 24 hours	Few are open 24 hours
Meal customization	Limited meal customization	Lots of meal customization