How to split checks in Toast POS

This guide explains how to split checks in Toast POS, starting with opening a table and entering the guest count. You then set up a tab with a card, enter orders, split the tab into separate checks, recombine items, and finalize payment, including split payments.

Prerequisites

Before you begin, make sure you have the following:

- Access to the Toast POS device, in **Operations > Toast > Normal Operations > Training Number Three**.
- The **Table Service** screen open, showing the floor plan.
- A credit card from each guest who wants a separate tab.

Set up the table and guest count

Step 1: Open the Table Service screen

Confirm you are on the **Table Service** screen. It shows a floor plan with labeled tables and areas such as Bar, Event Space, Patio, and Taproom.

The top navigation bar shows **BAR**, **EVENT SPACE**, **PATIO**, and **TAPROOM**. The current time and device status appear at the top right.



Tablet showing the Toast POS Table Service screen with labeled tables and navigation tabs for Bar, Event Space, Patio, and Taproom

Step 2: Select the guests' table

Tap the table number where your guests are seated, such as 202, 203, or 204. The table opens a new order screen.

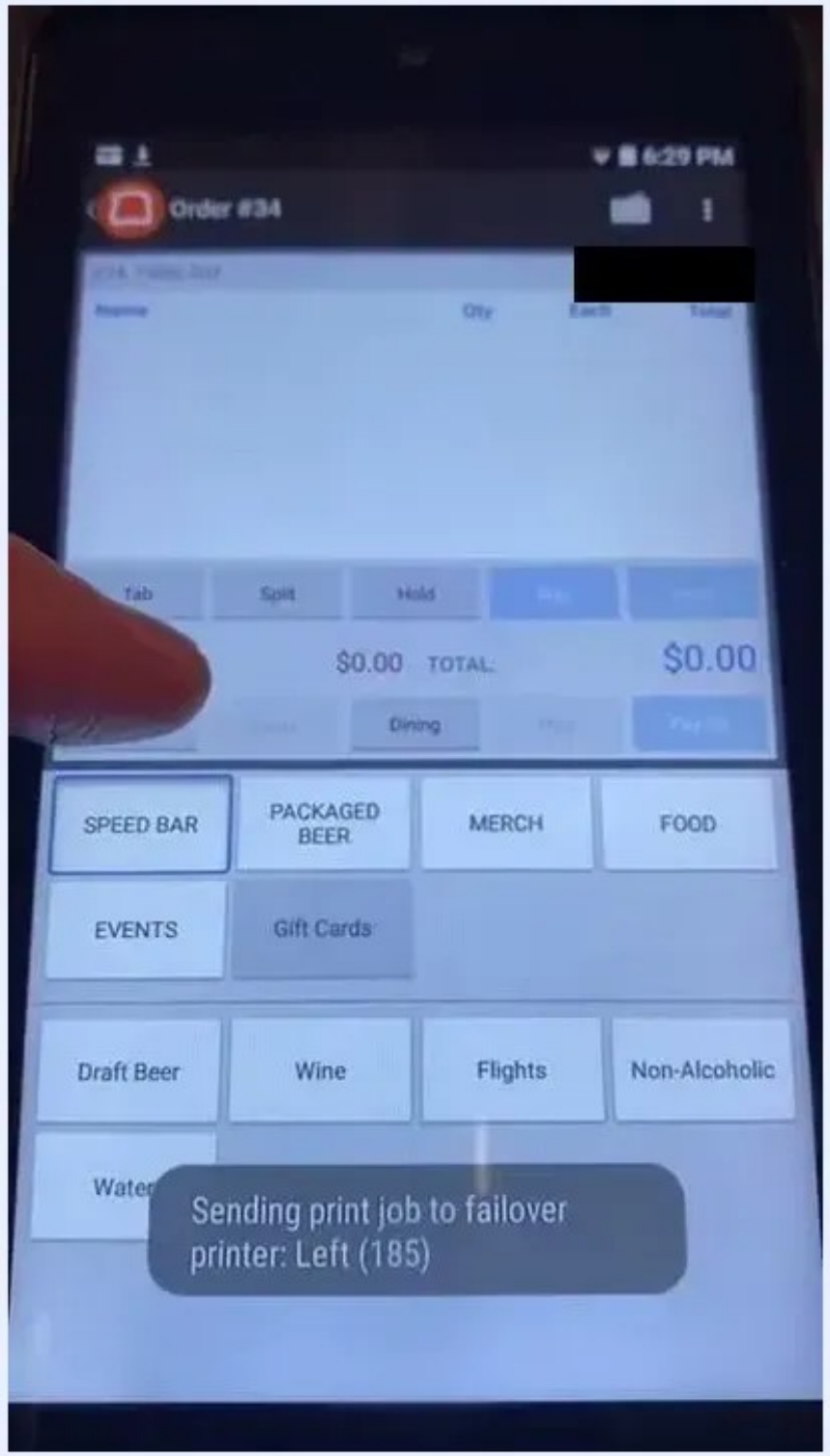
Step 3: Know what guest count to enter

Accurate guest counts are essential for financial tracking and for understanding guest throughput. Always enter the total number of people at the table, not the number of people per tab.

For example, if 6 people sit at the table but they use 3 tabs, enter **6**.

Step 4: Enter the guest count

On the order screen, find the guest count section, labeled **2 Guests** or similar depending on the default or previously entered value. Tap it to open the **Number of Guests** dialog.



Toast POS order screen showing the guest count, order options, and menu categories

Use the on-screen keypad to enter the total number of guests. For example, enter **2** for two guests. Tap **Done** to confirm.

The order screen now shows the updated guest count, such as "2 Guests". This information is used for reporting and helps ensure accurate service.

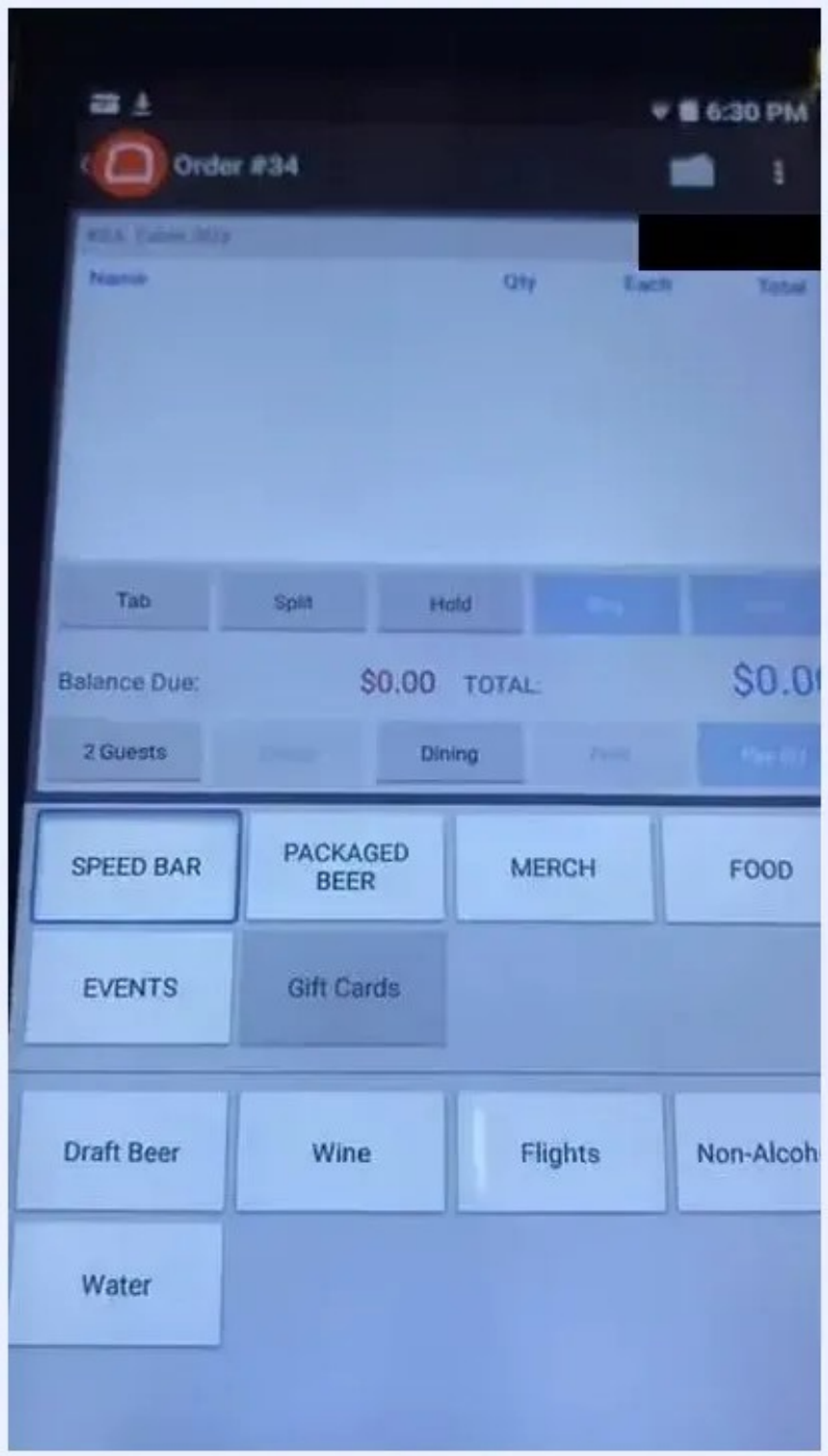
Create a tab for each guest

Step 5: Ask for a card

After taking a guest's order, ask, "Can I get a card for your tab?" Repeat this for each guest who wants a separate tab.

Step 6: Tap the Tab button

On the order screen, find the **Tab** button in the row above the menu categories. Tap it to start creating a new tab for the guest.



Toast POS order screen with the Tab button visible, ready to start a new tab

Step 7: Swipe the guest's card

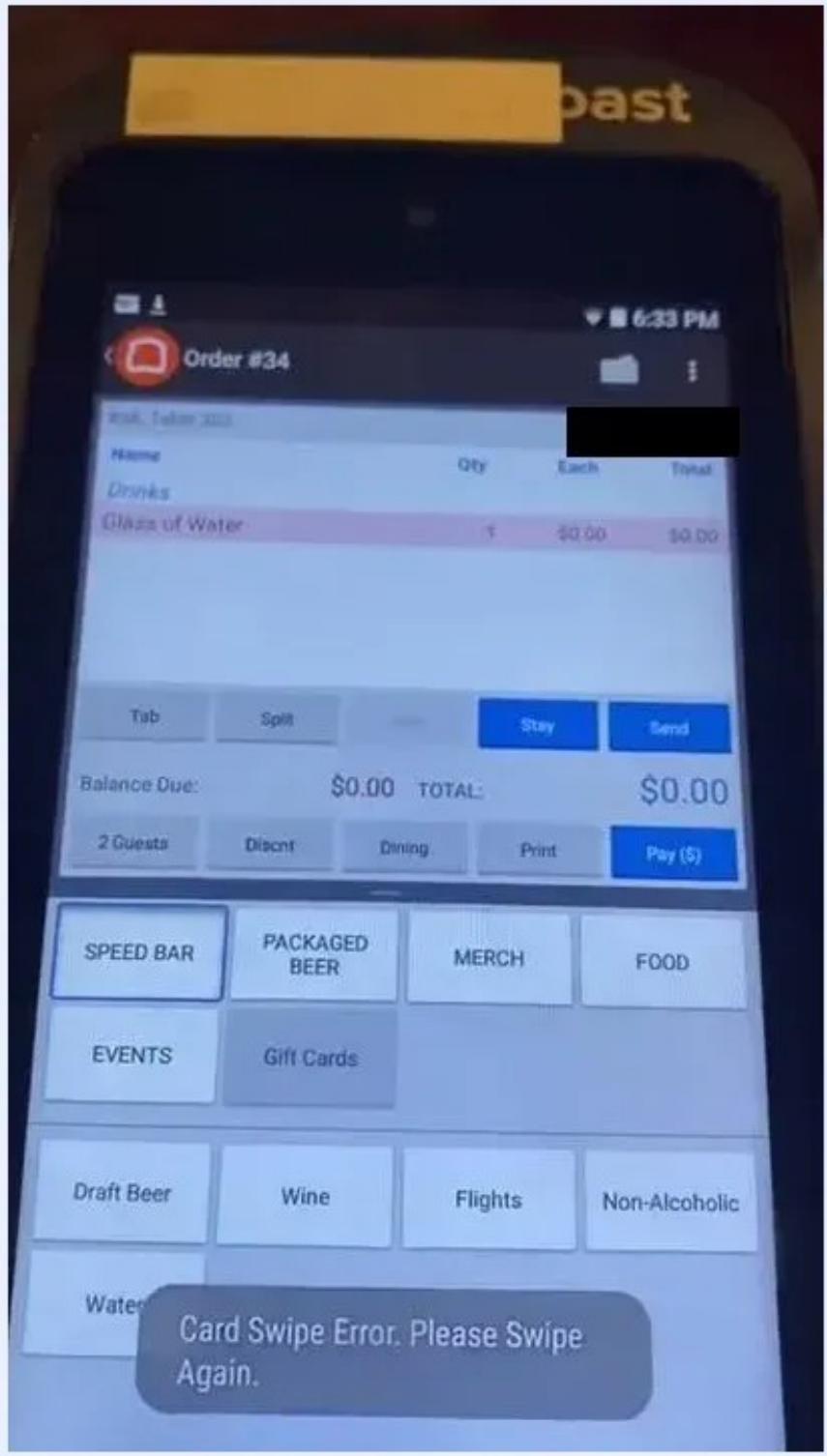
When prompted, swipe the guest's credit card through the Toast POS device. The system reads the card and associates it with the current tab.

Step 8: Resolve card swipe errors

If you see a message such as **Card Swipe Error. Please Swipe Again.** at the bottom of the screen, do not continue until the card is read successfully.

- Tell the guest the card did not swipe correctly and ask to try again.
- Swipe the card again as the system prompts. Swipe it smoothly and fully through the reader to avoid repeated errors.
- Do not continue with payment or tab association until the error message disappears.

- If the error persists after several attempts, consider another payment method or card, and notify a manager if necessary.



Toast POS handheld device displaying the message "Card Swipe Error. Please Swipe Again." with a Glass of Water order, payment options, and menu categories

Address swipe errors right away to avoid delays in service. Make sure every check is associated with a guest's card before you move to payment or close the tab.

Step 9: Verify the tab name and table number

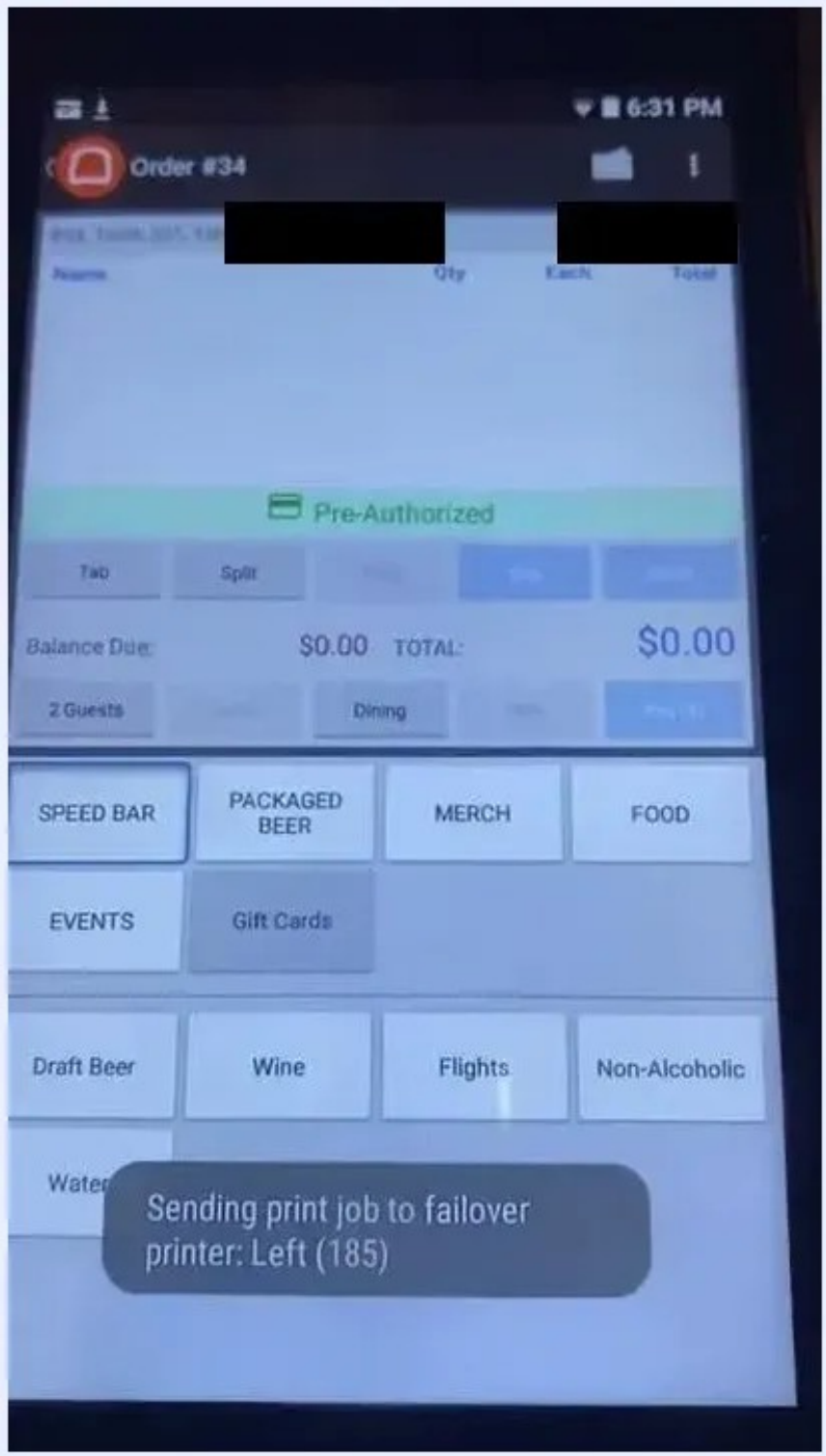
After the swipe, the guest's name from the credit card appears at the top of the order screen, next to the table and tab number. For example, "Tab: KLESMITH, PATRICK" appears for Table 303, Order #34.

Confirm that the correct name and table number are displayed.

Step 10: Check for pre-authorization

Look for a green bar labeled **Pre-Authorized** at the top of the order screen. It indicates the card was successfully pre-authorized, which protects your transaction if the guest leaves without paying.

If the green bar is not visible, the card may not have been accepted, or there may be an issue.

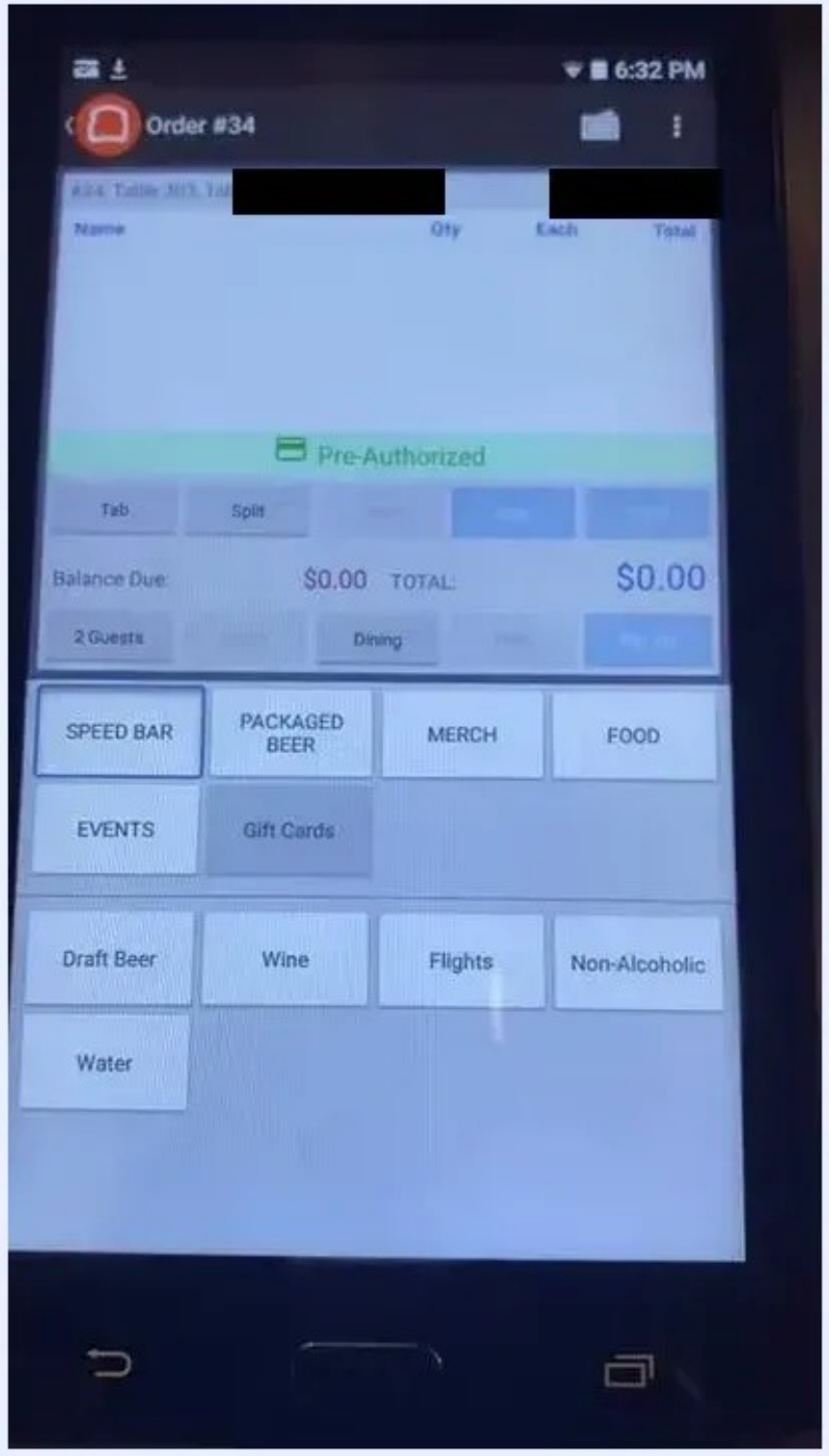


Toast POS screen showing the green Pre-Authorized bar after a successful card swipe

Step 11: Handle pre-authorization issues

Always attempt to pre-authorize a guest's card when you set up a tab. If the system fails to pre-authorize after several attempts, proceed without it. Some debit cards, for example, may not pre-authorize.

In that case, make sure you have recorded the guest's tab name. Make a note to close out the tab at the end of the guest's visit to avoid unpaid checks.



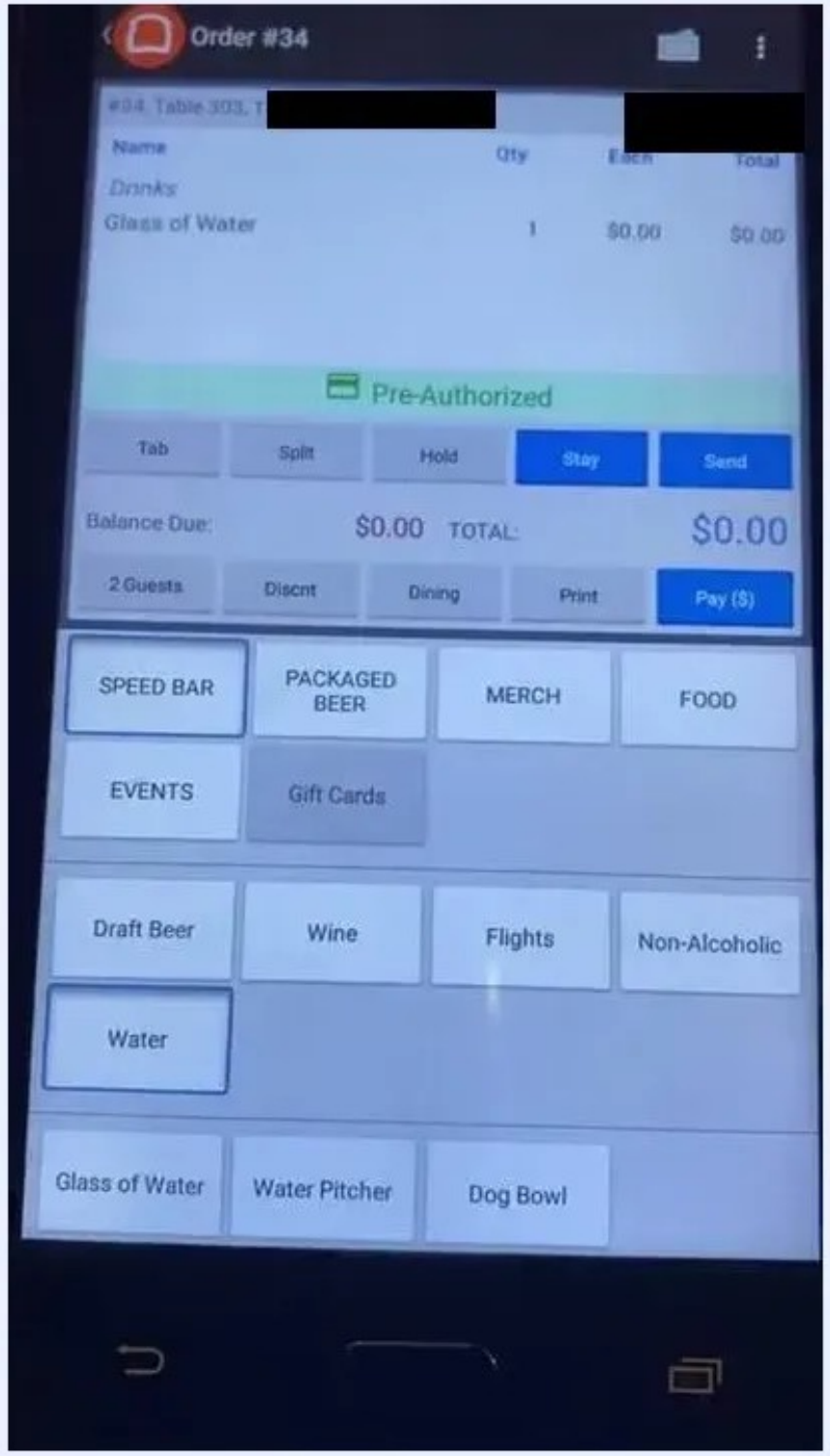
Toast POS order screen showing a successfully pre-authorized tab, with the guest name and table number visible

Enter and send the order

Step 12: Enter the guest's order

After you set up the tab, begin entering the guest's order. For example, if the guest orders a glass of water, tap the **Water** button on the menu screen, then select **Glass of Water** from the submenu.

The order appears in the order summary at the top of the screen.

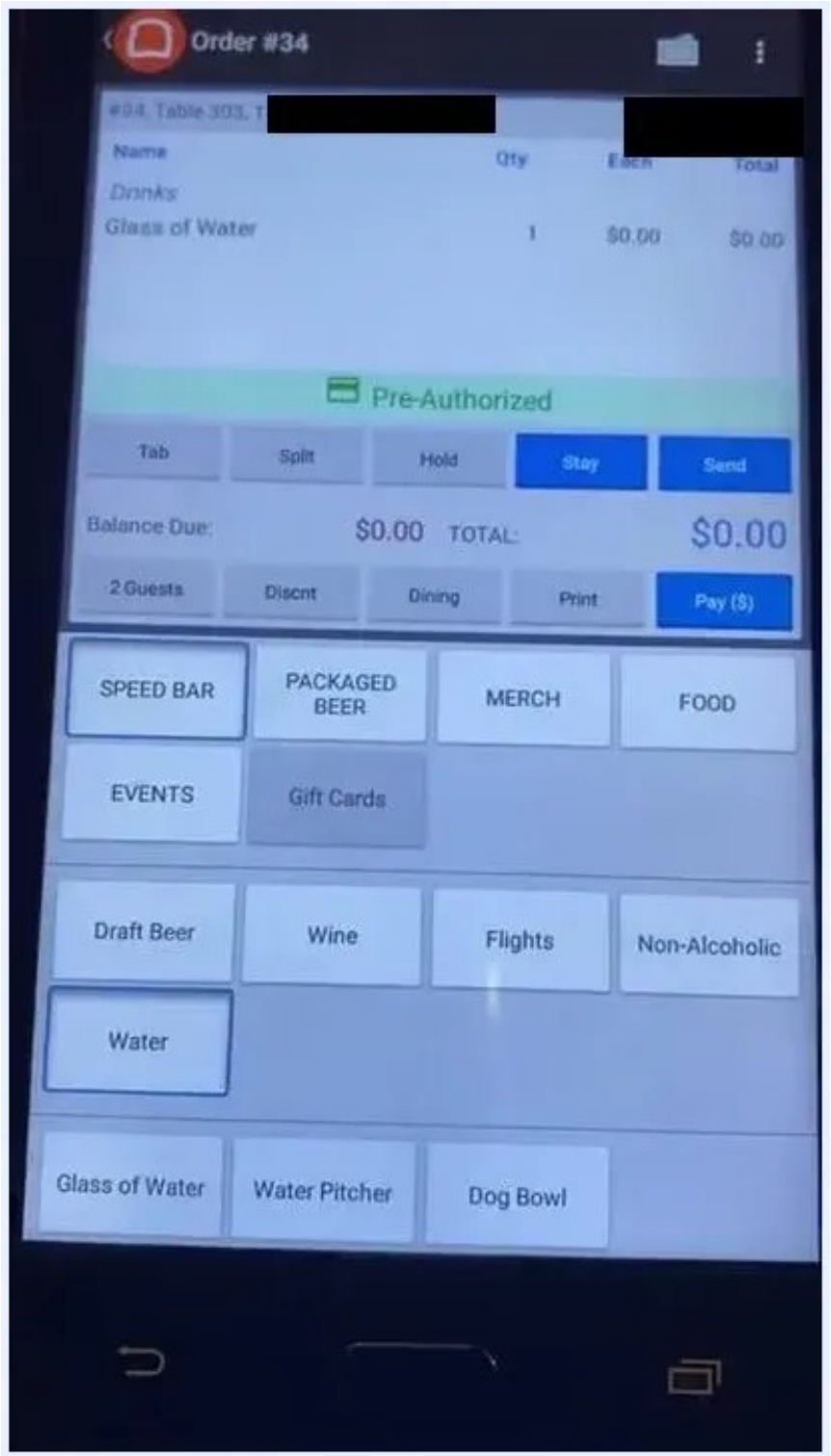


Toast POS screen with Glass of Water added to the order, showing menu categories and the order summary

Step 13: Tap Stay to keep taking orders

If several guests are at the table or you need to keep taking orders, tap **Stay**. This keeps the current order screen active so you can add more items without leaving the order.

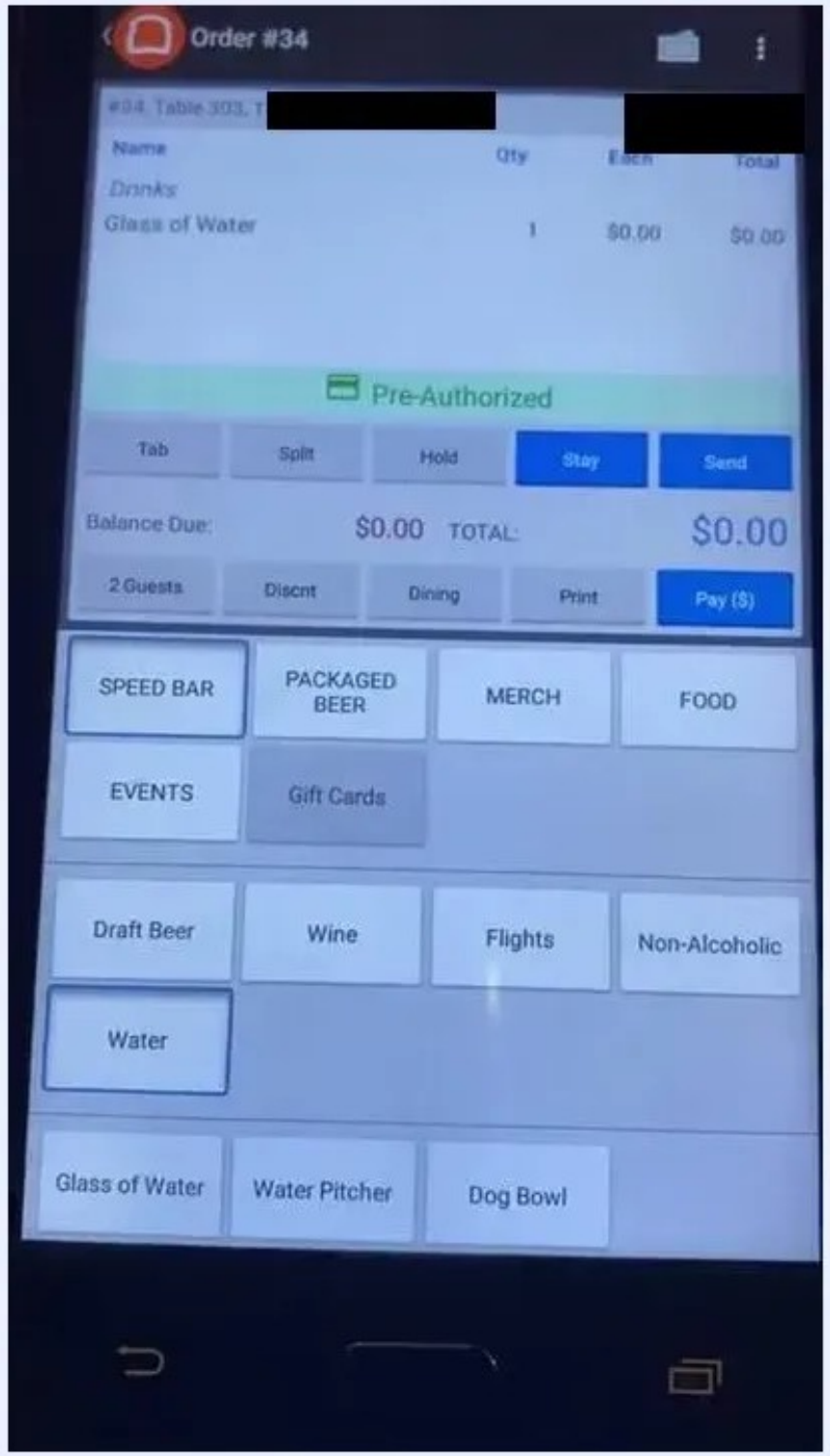
Avoid the **Hold** button, which exits the order screen and interrupts your workflow.



Toast POS screen with the Stay button highlighted, the order summary showing Glass of Water, and menu options visible

Step 14: Send the order

When you are ready to send the order, for example after confirming all items, tap **Send**. The order status updates to show the time sent, such as "Sent 6:32 PM". The item stays visible in the order summary.

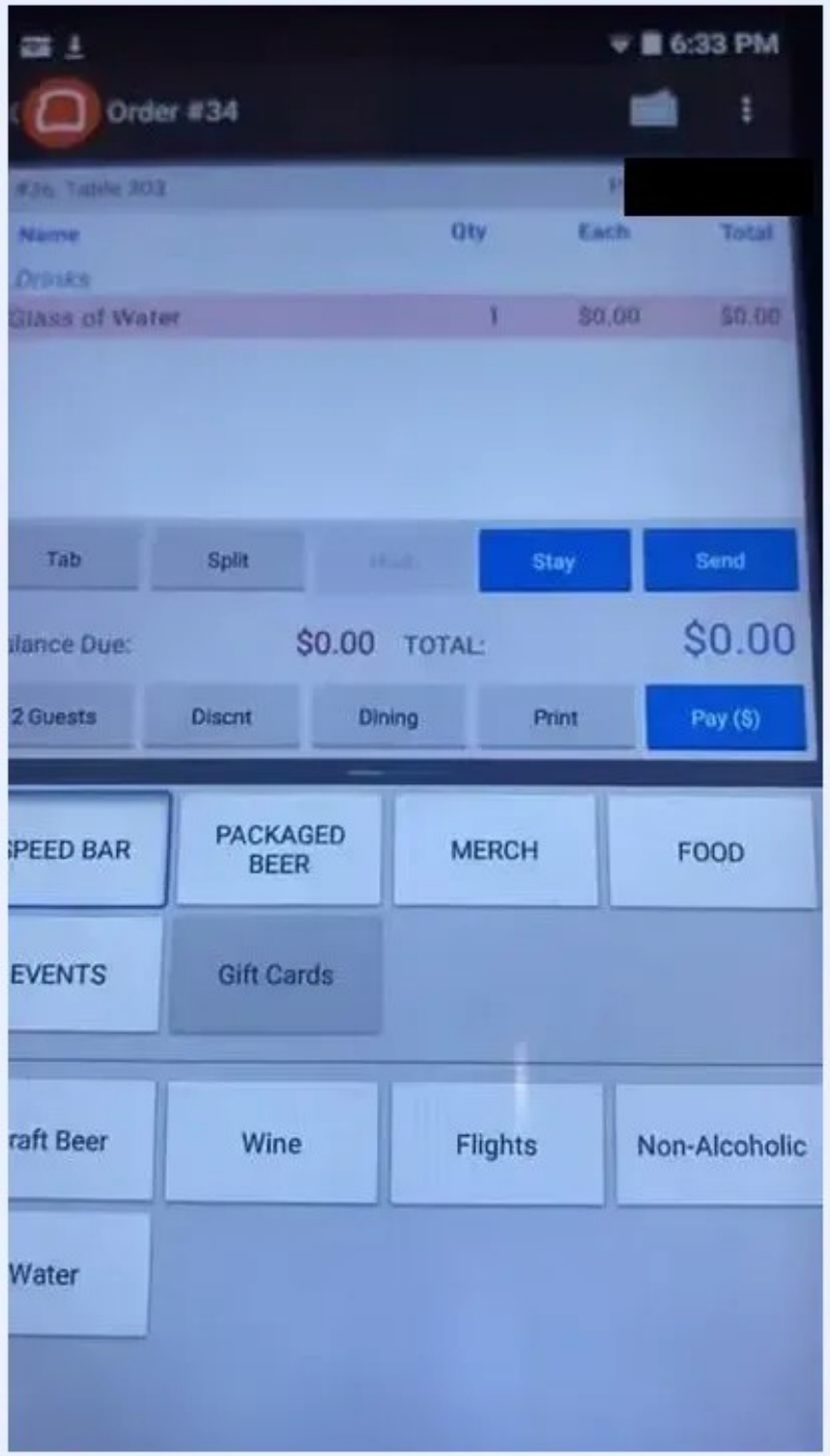


Toast POS screen showing Glass of Water sent at 6:32 PM, with Pre-Authorized status and menu options

Split checks in Toast POS

Step 15: Add more items to the order

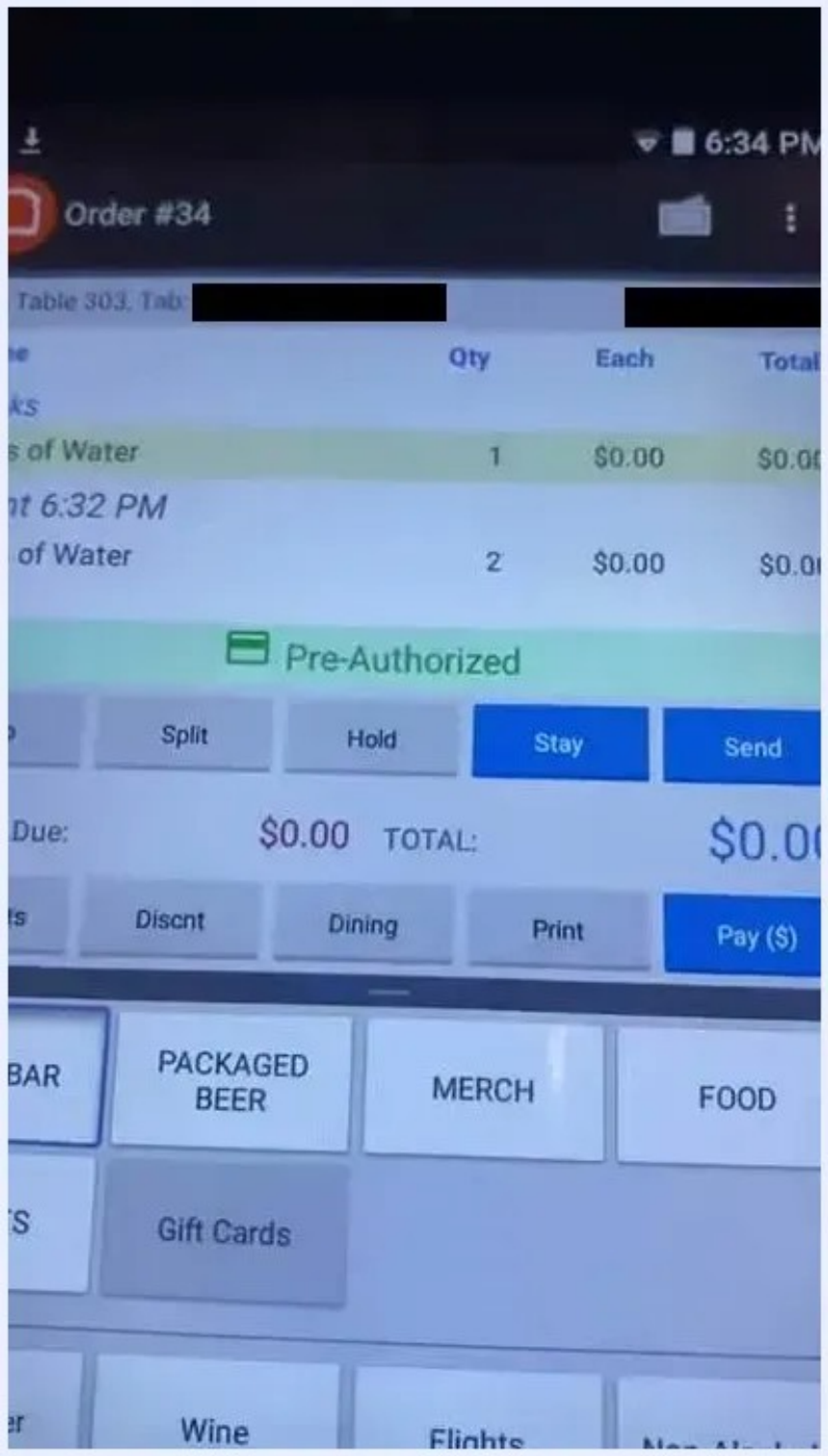
You can only split a tab when the order has more than one item. Add a second item, such as another **Glass of Water**, by repeating the item selection process. Both items now appear in the order summary.



Toast POS screen with two Glass of Water items in the order summary, ready for splitting

If guests ask for more drinks, for example "We would like two waters," tap the **Water** button at the bottom of the screen. Confirm that a second "Glass of Water" appears in the order list.

The order now shows two separate entries for "Glass of Water," each with a quantity of 1 and a price of $0.00. The order remains pre-authorized, and the balance due is still $0.00.



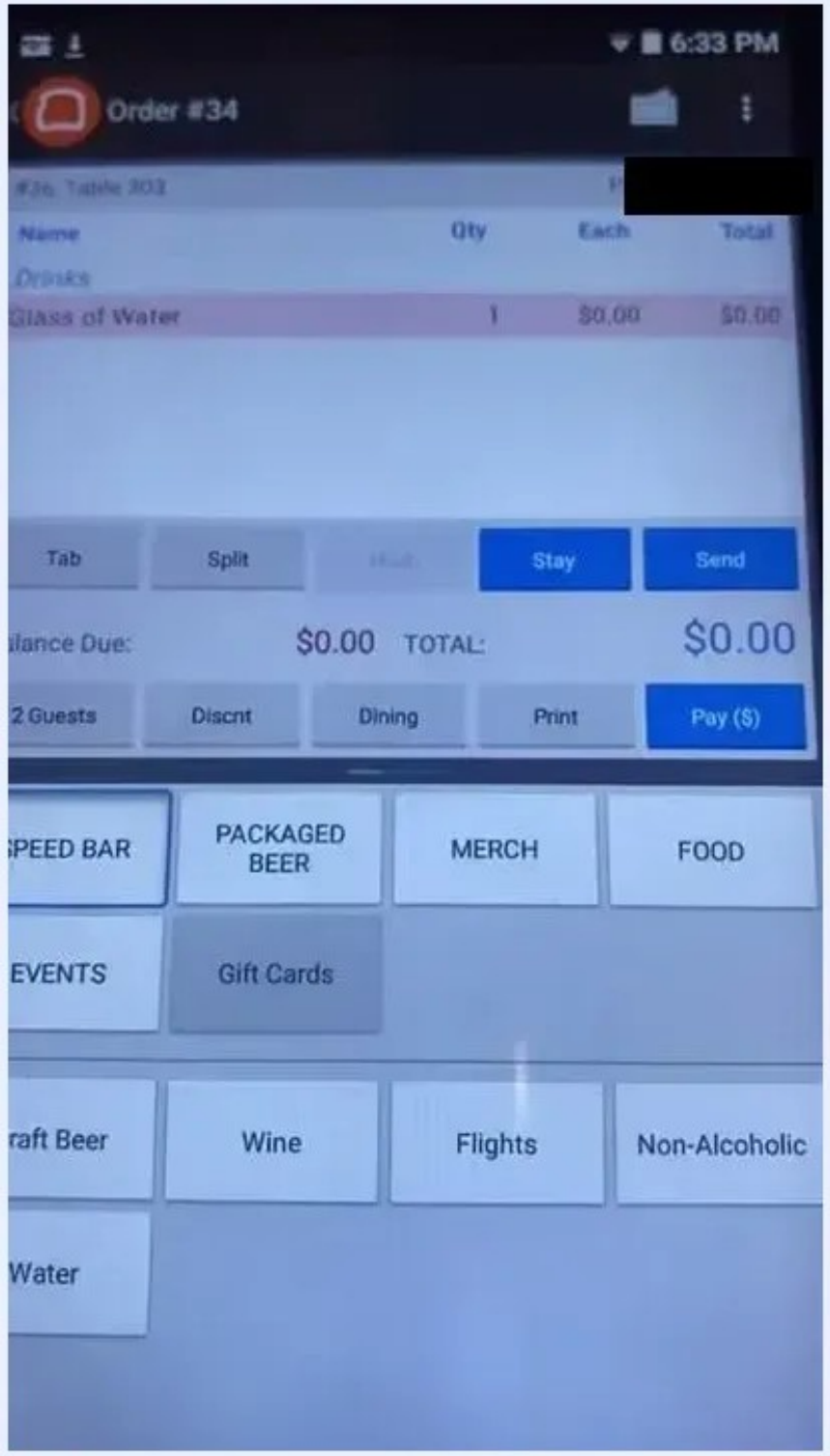
Order screen showing two glasses of water, both at $0.00, on a pre-authorized tab

Step 16: Split the tab into separate checks

To split checks in Toast POS, follow these steps:

1. Tap **Split** on the order screen.
2. Select the item or items you want to move to a new check.
3. Tap **New Check** to create a separate check for the selected items.
4. Tap **Done** to finalize the split.

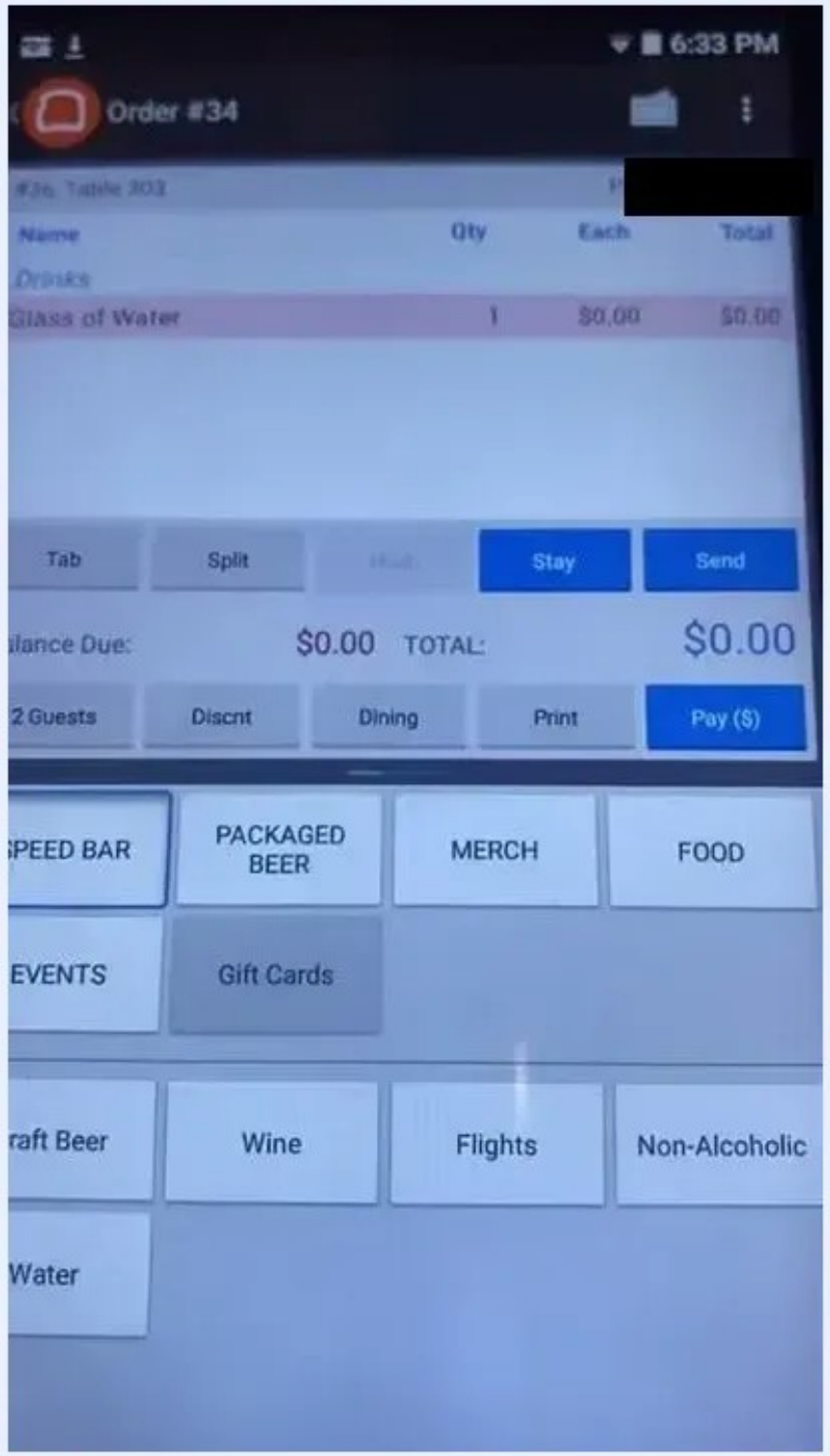
You now see two checks, one for each guest or item.



Toast POS screen showing split checks, with one check highlighted in red because it is not sent, and no tab name at the top

Step 17: Request a card for each new tab

For each new check, ask the corresponding guest for their card. Swipe the card to associate it with the new tab. Make sure the guest's name appears at the top of the order screen for each tab.



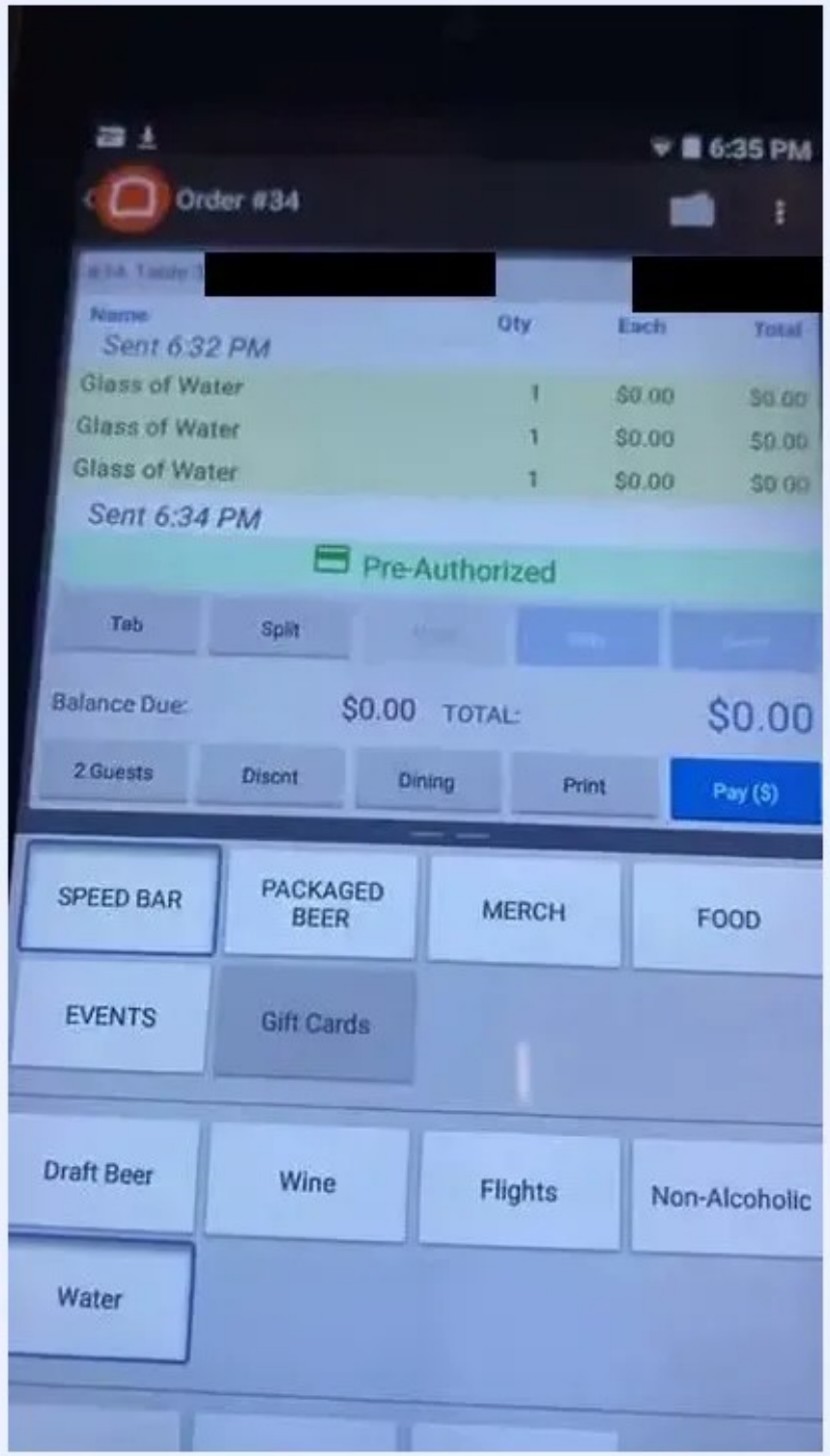
Toast POS screen showing a new check with no tab name, ready for card association

Keep these points in mind:

- Always attempt pre-authorization. If it fails and you have the guest's name, proceed and make sure the tab is closed at the end of their visit.
- Use **Stay** to keep the order screen active for ongoing orders.
- You cannot split a tab until it has multiple items to divide.
- After splitting, associate each check with a guest's card for proper tracking and payment.
- Monitor the status of each check and make sure all are closed before the end of the shift.

Step 18: Combine items back into a single tab

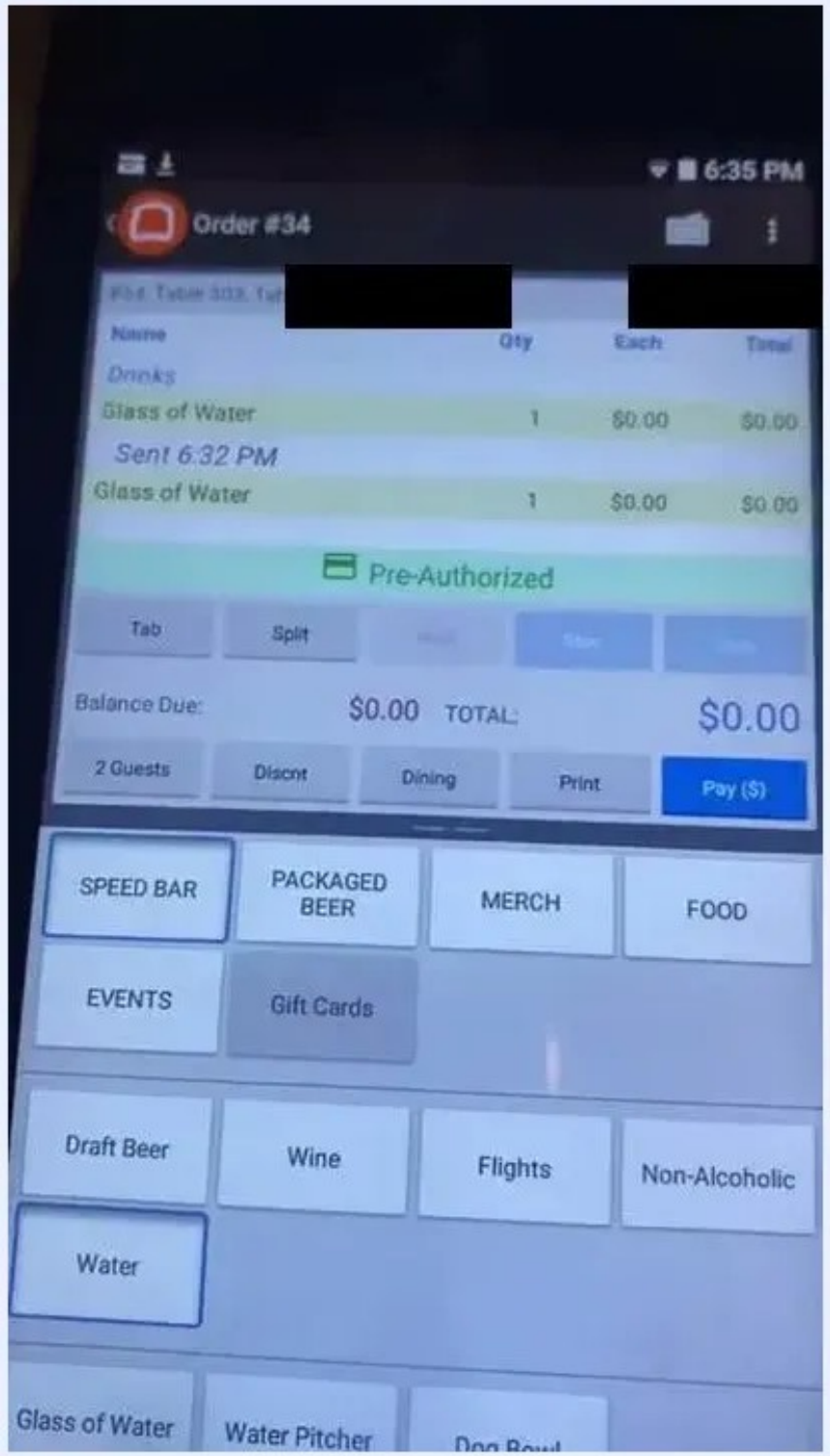
To recombine items, select all the relevant entries on the order screen. Use the available options, such as "Combine" or similar if present, to merge the items back into one tab. The order screen then shows the combined items under one tab.



Order screen with two glasses of water and a finger pointing at the items to select for combining

Step 19: Split items by seat number

For a faster way to split checks in Toast POS, tap "Split" and then immediately tap "By Seat #." The system automatically moves each item to its respective seat or check. Confirm that the order screen reflects the split by seat.



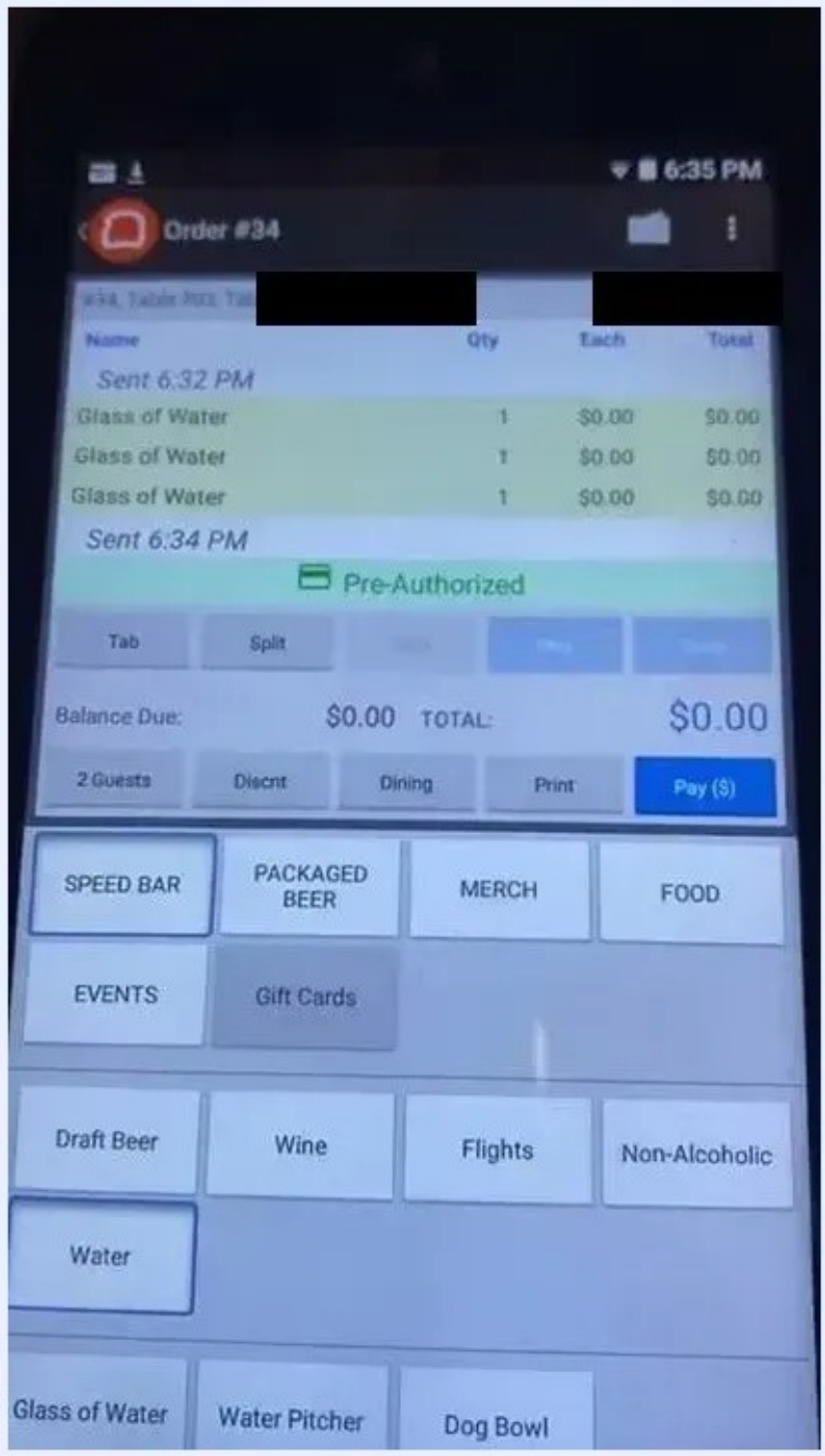
Order screen after using Split and By Seat #, showing items split by seat

Finalize and cash out the tab

Step 20: Review the tab and pay

Review the order screen for Tab #34 (Table 303, Patrick Klesmith). In this example it has three "Glass of Water" entries, all at $0.00. The tab remains "Pre-Authorized" and the balance due is $0.00.

If the first order is not the one that wants to pay, you need to take a different credit card when guests cash out.

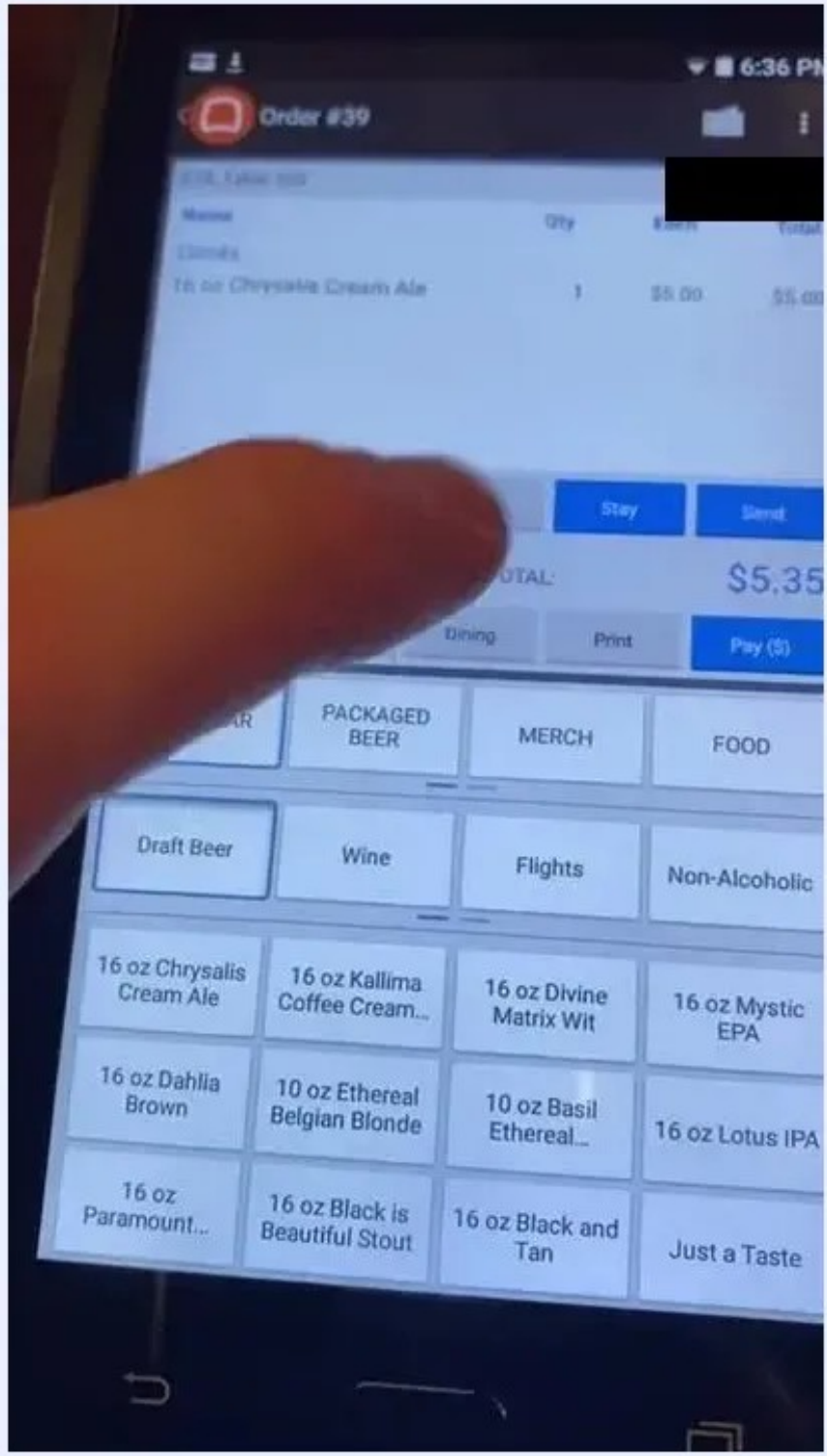


Order screen for Tab #34 showing three glasses of water, all at $0.00, pre-authorized, with payment and split options visible

Tap "Pay ($)" to go to the payment screen. Then:

- Enter the amount tendered if necessary.
- Choose the payment method, "Credit" or "Cash."
- Tap "Done" to complete the transaction.

The system processes the payment and closes the tab if the balance is $0.00.

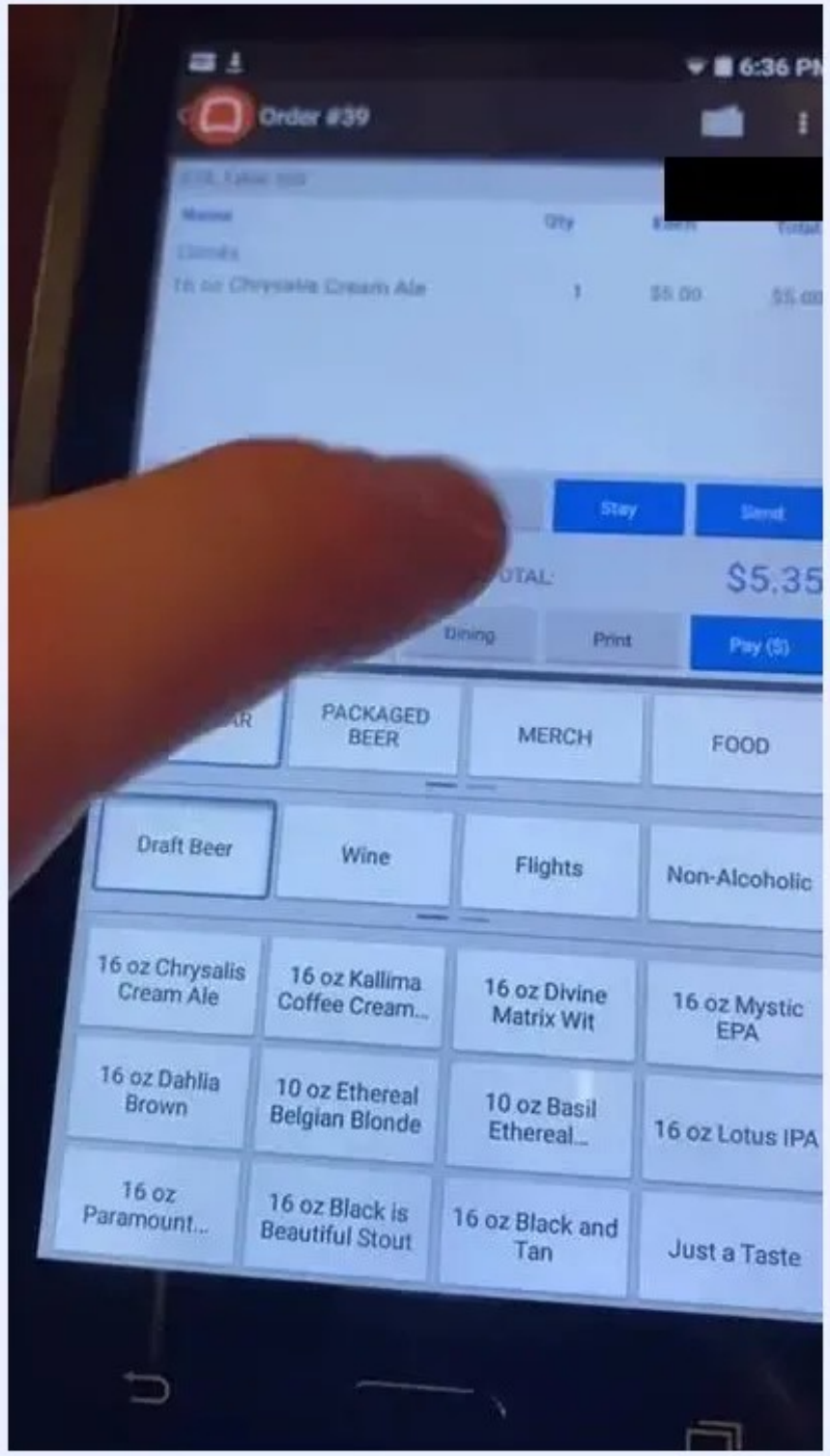


Payment screen for Tab #34 showing the amount tendered, credit and cash options, and a finger about to tap Done

Step 21: Open the split payment options

On the payment screen, tap "Split." The system shows options to split the balance due ($5.35 in this example) from 2 to 9 ways, with each split amount displayed. For example, /2 = $2.68 and /3 = $1.78.

Select the split option that matches the number of guests paying separately.



Payment split screen showing $5.35 split 2 to 9 ways, with the amount for each split and credit and cash options

Step 22: Complete the split payments

For each guest, enter the amount tendered or swipe their card. Continue processing payments for each split until the entire balance is paid. Repeat the process as needed for large groups or multiple payment methods.



Payment split screen with split options and payment buttons, ready for multiple transactions

Summary

You now know how to split checks in Toast POS. Enter the total guest count, create a tab with each guest's card, and check for pre-authorization. Add multiple items, then use **Split** to create separate checks, or split by seat number for a faster result.

You can also recombine items into one tab and split the final payment 2 to 9 ways. Each action is reflected on the order screen, so you can keep orders accurate and respond to guest requests.