



The First Shift Checklist

A one-page guide to walking a new orientee through day one — before the shift starts, during the welcome, and through the first emotional check-ins.

HOW TO USE THIS: Print this and keep it at the nurses' station on the orientee's first day. Work through it together, section by section.

Before the Shift Starts (Preceptor Prep)

- ☐ Review the orientee's file and skills checklist — note prior experience level and any specific learning goals.
- ☐ Confirm the patient assignment is appropriate for a first day (lower acuity where possible).
- ☐ Print or bookmark unit-specific resources: phone list, code cart location, charge nurse name.
- ☐ Block 5 minutes at shift start for a welcome conversation before jumping into tasks.

Welcome & Orientation Basics (First 30 Minutes)

- ☐ Introduce the orientee to the charge nurse, unit secretary, and immediate team members.
- ☐ Walk the unit: supply room, med room, break room, restrooms, exits.
- ☐ Show how to log into the EHR, smart pumps, Medication Dispensing Cart, and any unit-specific software.
- ☐ Review the call light system and how to answer and respond.
- ☐ Explain the code system: rapid response, code blue, fire, security.
- ☐ Confirm badge access works for all needed areas.

Key Contacts & Resources

Fill this in together during the first hour, so the orientee has it for reference all shift.

Role	Name	How to Reach
Charge Nurse		
Unit Educator		
Rapid Response		
Pharmacy		
Preceptor (you)		

Emotional Check-In Moments

- ☐ Mid-shift: "How are you feeling? What's one thing that's clicked, and one thing that's confusing?"
- ☐ Before a new or unfamiliar task: "Walk me through what you're about to do before we start."
- ☐ End-of-shift: "What's one thing you want to remember from today? What should we focus on tomorrow?"