



DINING ETIQUETTE



Making Your Mark at Business Dining Experiences



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etiquette noun

et·i·quette

Definition of *etiquette*

The set of rules or customs that control accepted behavior in particular social groups or social situations.



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What is Dining Etiquette?

- In the realm of dining, etiquette refers to proper manners and behavior in a formal dining situation.
- Table manners play an important part in making a favorable impression. They are visible signals of your manners, and therefore, are essential to professional success.
- Whether having lunch with a prospective employer or dinner with a business associate, your manners speak volumes about you and will leave a lasting impression.





Making Proper Introductions

- Introduce individuals to each other using both first and last names.
 - If an individual has a title, such as “doctor,” include the title as well as the first and last name.
 - Introduce the younger or less prominent individuals to the older or more prominent person first.
 - Make specific relationships clear.
- ***For example: “Dr. Walters, I would like you to meet James Smith, the chair of our department.”***





Name Tag Placement


- Name tags should be placed on the **right hand** side of your front shoulder area.
- **Why?** When shaking hands it allows for a natural progression for the eyes to the name tag.





Arrival and Greetings

When Meeting Someone

- Rise if seated
 - Smile and extend your hand
 - Repeat the other person's name in your greeting
- 
- A firm handshake should last three to four seconds.
 - Both men and women should be ready to initiate the handshake.
 - Do not remove your jacket unless the host does
 - If you are uncomfortable, you may ask the host(s) permission to remove your jacket.





Arrival and Greetings (Cont.)

Getting Started

- It is considered acceptable for men to assist women with their chair but it does not always happen; in upscale restaurants, wait staff may assist.
- Once seated, take your napkin, fold it in half and place it on your lap (again, wait staff may assist but it is appropriate to do this yourself).



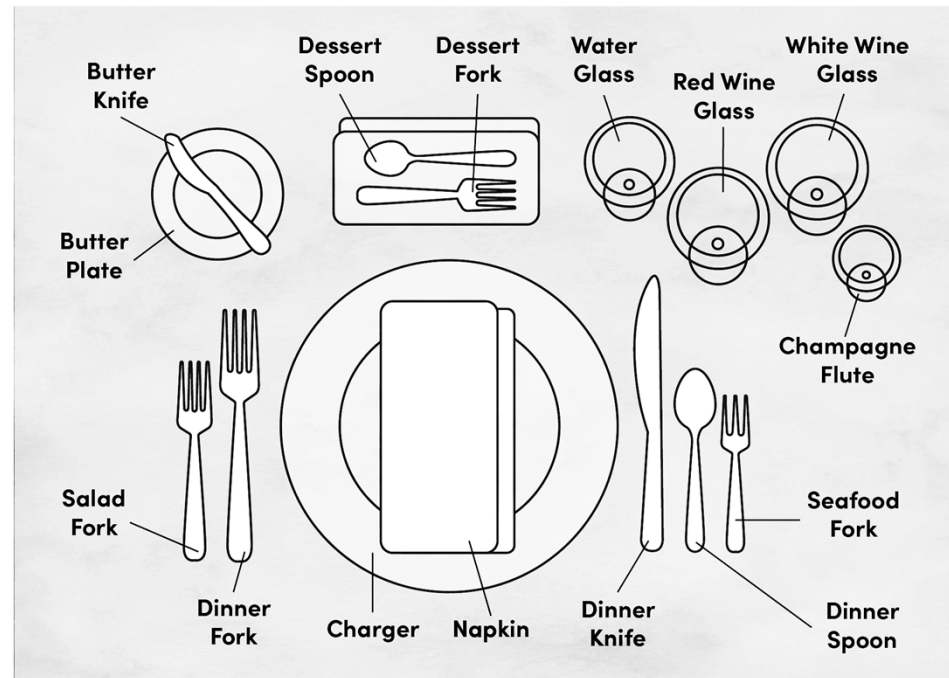
Electronics

- Your cell phone or other personal electronics should not be part of the dining experience.
 - Either silent your personal devices or power them off for the duration of the event and keep them put away.
- Checking your phone at the table implies that you have something more important going on than conversing with or listening to your hosts and is considered rude.



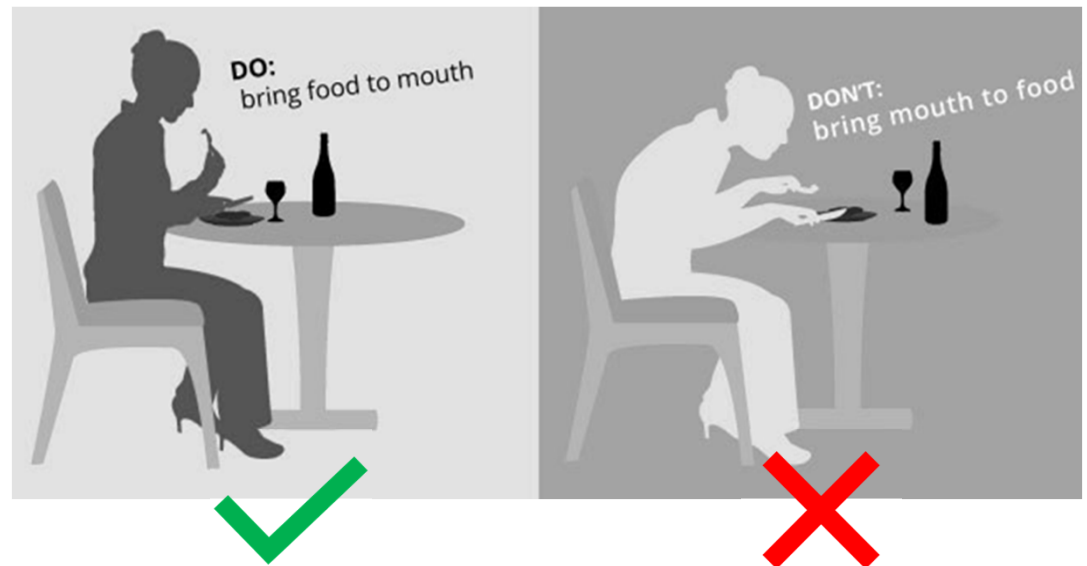
The Formal Place Setting

- Most formal dinners will have multiple courses.
- As a general rule of thumb, always begin eating with the flatware farthest from your plate and work your way in.
- Sometimes, a utensil will be provided at the time of the specific course.



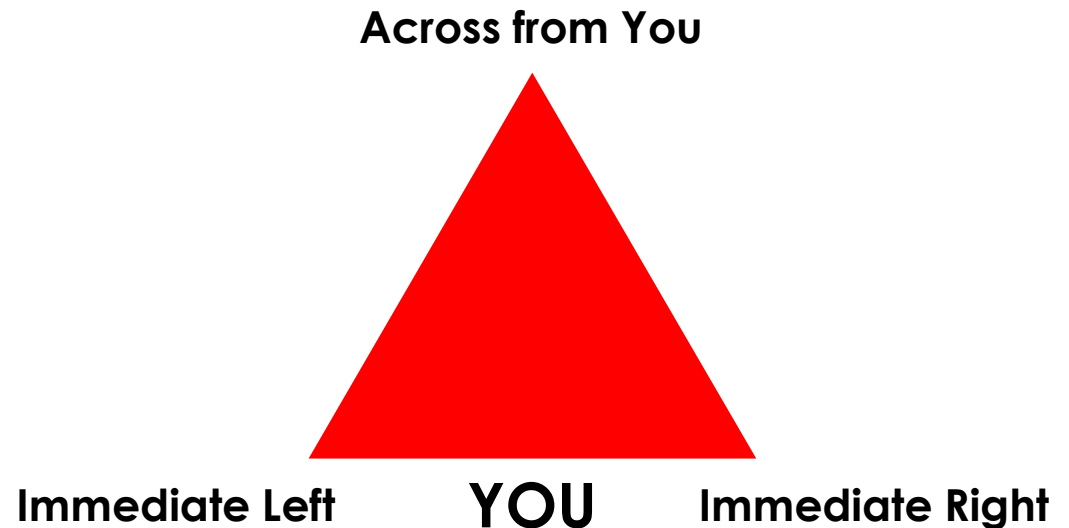
Posture

- Sit up straight with your feet on the floor.
- You may cross your ankles, but crossing legs causes slouching and makes you look too casual.
- Keep your elbows off the table and left or right hand in your lap.



Conversation

- You are responsible for conversing with your “triangle.”
- Keep conversations polite and professional. Avoid controversial subjects such as politics, religion and sports in some cases.
- It is okay to ask about family, job, etc.
- Try not to dominate the conversation.



Napkin

- As soon as you are seated, place the napkin on your lap.
- Let the napkin fall open naturally
- End of napkin on your legs should be folded over towards you.
- If you need to leave the table, place the napkin on your chair, loosely folded.
- After the meal, place your napkin to the left of your plate.



Ordering

Drinks

- Water, juice, or iced tea.
- One glass of wine may be acceptable.
- Never turn your wine glass over to indicate you do not want to drink. Simply use your hand on the glass to show that you are not interested.
- Coffee or tea after the meal is appropriate but limit yourself to one or two packets of sugar.





Ordering (Cont.)

Meal

- Go for simple foods, such as meat, simple salad, and soup.
- Avoid spaghetti, pizza, and hand-held items.
- If it is a fixed menu, and you do not like what you are being served, remain gracious and do not refuse the food.



Wine

- If the host and/or others at the table order a glass of wine, you may do so if you wish.
- If you are unsure what to order, look at the menu and ask the waiter for a recommendation.
- Formal dinners can serve a different wine with each course. You do *not* have to finish each glass!





Serving Food and Passing Items

- Plates are served on the left and removed from your right.
- The person closest to the plate should offer to the person on the left, serve themselves, and then pass the food to the right.
- Always pass to the right, and always include the service plate.
- Never use your own utensils to serve food out of a communal dish.
- Pass the salt and pepper together.
- Do not serve yourself first when asked to pass something.



Bread

- Transfer butter or dips to your own plate instead of directly to the bread.
- Do not take bites directly from the roll.
- Tear off bite size pieces, butter them, and then eat them.
- Do not cut rolls or bread with a knife. Break the bread.
- Never completely cover it in butter, and do not stuff it all in your mouth at once – take small bites.



Soup

- Wait for everyone to be served, then follow the host's lead to start.
- Dip soup spoon into soup moving away from yourself. Do not fill the entire spoon.
- Sip from the edge of the spoon, do not place the whole spoon in your mouth. Do not slurp or gulp.
- To finish the soup, tilt the bowl away from you and use the spoon. When finished, put the spoon on the plate under the bowl.



Dip the soup spoon away from you



Salad

- Ideally, the salad will be prepared so that it consists of bite-size pieces.
- If not, use your salad fork to cut them into smaller pieces. And if that does not work, you may use your dinner knife. Make sure to keep your dinner knife for the main course.
- If an item falls off the plate, pick it up with a utensil and place it on the edge of the plate – do not eat it.





Main Course

- **Two styles of using utensils**

- **Zig Zag Method**

- The most common method used in America, you will hold your fork in your left hand, cut bite size piece with your knife in your right hand, set the knife down on your plate, and transfer the fork to your right hand and eat.

- **European Method**

- Use the utensils in the same hands as explained in the Zig Zag Method, but use your left hand to put food into your mouth.

- Either way, never cut more than 1-2 bites at a time.





Main Course (Cont.)

- Do not blow on hot food.
- Never season your food before trying it.
- Do not complain about the quality of your food or small errors.
- Take very small bites and always finish chewing before speaking.





Main Course (Cont.)

- If you dislike an item in the meal, move food around on the plate a little to appear as though you at least tried it.
- If you have a food allergy, it is your (the guest's) responsibility to notify the host ahead of time.
- If you get a piece of an inedible item, such as a stem or bone, politely remove it from your mouth with a utensil and place it on the edge of your plate trying to cover with another piece of food.
- Do not spit into your napkin.



Main Course (Cont.)

- When finished with the main course, place utensils parallel, with cutting edge of your knife facing you and fork to the left of the knife on the plate at a 4 o'clock position. This signals to the wait staff that you are finished.
- Always leave your dishes in place and let the wait staff remove them. Do not push plates away from you.



American style - I'm resting position

American style - I'm finished position



Sorbet

- Sorbet may be served immediately before the main course.
- This serves as a palate cleanser, so that you can appreciate the flavors of the main entrée.



Toasts

- Be prepared, keep it brief and simple.
- Always stand when offering a toast and do not bang your glass to get attention.
- If you are on the receiving end of a toast, never stand or drink and always say thank you.
- Allow the host to toast the guest of honor first, and if they do not, you may ask his or her permission to offer the toast.
- Never refuse to participate, you can always use an empty glass or non-alcoholic beverage.





Other Reminders

- Some invitations state “acceptance or regrets,” while others say RSVP or possibly nothing at all – it is polite to notify the host of your intent to attend either way.
- Always be on time.
- If proper attire is not stated, it is okay to call and ask the host.
 - Always err on the side of over-dressing (dressing up) and being neat (no wrinkled clothes, etc.)
- Rule of 9 – never wear more than 9 accessories (including all jewelry, glasses, and decorative buttons or pins).





THANK YOU



Do not forget to say thank you and then send a note of gratitude to your host following the dinner.



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