

Dining Etiquette

General Advice

- Follow lead of host/hostess for napkin placement, meal/courses start and finish, and anything about which you're uncertain.
- Cell phones are always put away and off or silenced during a meal. If you are anticipating an important call, you could notify host/hostess/others before the meal, and excuse yourself to accept the call if absolutely necessary.
- Hold glass stemware by the stem at base of glass/goblet (not base of stem).
- Hold a handled cup by handle with pointer/index finger through handle, thumb on top of handle, and middle finger under handle to stabilize and avoid elevating pinky finger.
- If you're not 21 years of age, then you will not have alcoholic beverages; if you are, then you may have an alcoholic beverage in some situations, but certainly not as part of an interview and not more than 1-2 drinks at any event associated with your (or your partner's) professional life.

Table Behavior

- Sit up straight, lean in slightly, no elbows on the table (forearms are acceptable).
- Chew with your mouth closed; don't talk with food in your mouth; don't pick your teeth.
- Avoid making eating noises (e.g., smacking of lips, chewing loudly, gulping, burping, blowing nose, coughing or laughing uncontrollably).
- Excuse yourself from table to blow your nose if needed – do NOT use your napkin as a tissue.
- Don't apply makeup, brush hair, or fuss with makeup/face/hair/hands while at table.
- Salt and pepper are treated as a pair, so always passed together (Note: don't season food until you've tasted it).
- When passing food around table (e.g., bread basket, salad dressing, ...), offer to the person on your left, then serve self, then pass to person on your right (counter-clockwise).

Being a Good Guest (or Host)

- Be kind, polite, positive, and smile.
- Make good conversation, ask relevant questions, and be an active listener (e.g., good eye contact, head nodding and tilting as appropriate).
- Remember that people like to talk about themselves and share, so demonstrate interest.
- Don't be a story-topper, don't interrupt, and avoid topics such as politics, religion, sex, drugs, alcohol, and anything that is potentially controversial or offensive.
- Be inclusive and give everyone a chance to talk or invite them to do so.
- Accommodate dietary needs/restrictions as possible and without making a big fuss.

Your Place Setting

- Use flatware working from the outside inward.
- Once a utensil is used, it doesn't touch the table again.
- Rest flatware on your plate during meal, with blade of knife facing you.
- When meal is over, flatware is place parallel and at a 4:20 clock-hour angle.
- Utensils are never left inside a bowl or cup (could lead to a table accident).
- May hold fork and knife Continental style or American style.
- Remember b & d (use fingers to remind you): bread plate left, drinks right.

Your Napkin

- Your napkin should be folded in half like a rectangle on your lap as soon as you're seated, with the fold next to your body.
- Napkin on chair when leaving table during meal.
- Napkin folded casually and placed to left of plate when finished with meal.
- Napkin may be used to dab mouth, but no major wiping of face.
- Napkin may be used to soak up spills, but new napkin should then be requested from the server.
- No tucking napkin into shirt collar, belt, or waistband of slacks/skirt.

Dining and Eating

- Courses are served in this order, typically: Bread/Appetizer, Soup, Salad, Entrée, Dessert (in a very formal setting, a main course or entrée will be served before salad).
- When cutting food, cut into bite-size pieces of only 1-2 bites at a time; eat the 1-2 bites, then cut 1-2 more bites and continue this pattern until you're finished.
- When eating bread/roll, break off a piece that consists of 1-2 bites, butter it (if you choose to do so), eat it, then repeat until you're finished.
- When eating salad, may cut 1-2 bites at a time; if cutting vegetables, pierce lightly with fork to hold in place as cutting.
- Spoon soup away from you, then bring to mouth; no slurping; may tip cup/bowl away from you to get last drops of soup, but no drinking from the cup/bowl.
- Never hold any of your utensils in your fist, this appears to be uncivilized behavior.

Dining at a Networking Event

- Try to eat BEFORE the event – this way you can be present and focus on making connections, not trying to find a server.
- Never have both a drink and a plate/napkin of food at the same time. Remember to leave one hand free to shake hands.
- Never put a drink on a finished surface. Find a coaster or napkin to set it on.

Many thanks to Tammy Manko, Ph.D., with her contribution to Education Week Career Corner: It's Not About Which Fork You Use: Dining Etiquette for Today's Professional.
http://blogs.edweek.org/topschooljobs/careers/2018/05/its_not_about_which_fork_you_u.html?utm_source=feedblitz&utm_medium=FeedBlitzRss&utm_campaign=careercorner

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