



DINING WITH ETIQUETTE



Saint Peter's College
Hospitality
Services

Five Rules of Professional Behavior

- I. Be Focused
- II. Be Discreet
- III. Don't Waste Your Time, or Anyone Else's
- IV. Be Reliable
- V. Be Positive and Acknowledge Others

Business Lunches Checklist

- Be prompt!
- Order familiar & easy to eat foods.
- If host orders an alcoholic beverage, then proceed. Watch the booze, "less" is better.
- After opening pleasantries, keep the conversation to business. Don't get too personal.
- Don't loiter after the meal.
- Send your host/hostess a thank you note.

The Invitation

Invitations should be issued in a manner that should plainly inform you as to whether your company is requested or if you may bring a guest. If a formal invitation is issued "...for the presence of your company..." and does not further indicate that you may bring a guest, you should assume that the invitation is for one. It is poor taste to contact the host/hostess and "hint" for approval to bring a guest. Often when the invitation is for a small party or a large food function, there will be space or price considerations to be dealt with and limitations must be imposed by the host/hostess. It puts the invited party in an awkward situation to say the least. Whenever put in this position, they must either continually increase the number of invited guests or decide to stick to the original list and risk having you opt not to attend.

RSVP

- Repondez, s'il vous plait
- Respond if you please
- Kindly give me an answer
- The favor of a reply is requested
- Tell me if you're comin'

No matter how you interpret the message, PLEASE respond! You'll realize just how important a response is when the first party/event you host requires knowing in advance how many guests will be attending.

Breaking Various Engagements

There are social engagements that may be broken, and there are those that may not. These rules apply to any commitment – whether it is pleasure or business. When a commitment is broken it sends a message of total disregard and often there are embarrassing consequences to suffer for using poor judgement.

In the matter of dining engagements, the following may not be broken under any circumstances short of sudden death:

- Seated dinners for ten or fewer people.
- Dinners at which you have been requested by the host to help entertain a difficult guest.
- Restaurant meals when you have promised to meet one other person and cannot notify him or her that you will not be there.
- Theater engagements when tickets are especially hard to obtain.
- Any written invitation that you have RSVP of your attendance.

“On Time”

Three words in regards to being “on time” for an event, parties, meets, meetings, etc., you have been invited to attend... BE ON TIME!

It is very poor manners to arrive early. If the host/hostess had intended for you to help, they would have asked you at the time the invitation was issued.

There is no such rule in proper etiquette that states it is fine to arrive “fashionably late”. Eight minutes after the starting time is the limit. BE ON TIME!

Cocktails

Yes, have fun! Have a drink or two, if you so desire. The secret word to remember is LIMITATION! Cocktail parties are not meant to represent a drinking contest. Please put this thought uppermost in your mind when attending these events.

Gentlemen Seating Ladies

The proper procedure for a man pushing in the chair of a woman has nothing whatsoever to do with moving her chair physically. It goes as follows: The lady approaches the chair. The gentleman puts a hand on the back of the chair. The lady sits on the chair. She scoots along towards the table pulling the chair with her by means of her own hand, placed behind her knees to grip the front of the chair as she draws toward the table. The lady quietly acknowledges this contribution to her comfort with a quiet “thank you”.

Dressing For The Occasion

Formal, semi-formal, informal, don't dress and optional are the terms to describe acceptable forms of dress for specific occasions. There are a few “hard and fast” rules to follow. Good logical thinking and asking a discreet question here or there seem to be the most frequently used basis for determining dress. Here are some general guidelines.

Formal

GENTLEMEN Tuxedo, Tuxedo shirt, black or white tie, suspenders or cummerbund, black shoes and socks.

LADIES Long or mid-length evening dress with matching/ coordinating shoes, evening bag and jewelry.

Semi-Formal

GENTLEMEN Dark business suit, white dress shirt, dark tie, dark shoes. Dinner jackets are acceptable.

LADIES Knee length or mid length evening dress/gown, cocktail dress or evening suit.

Informal

GENTLEMEN Polo-style shirt, golf shirts, patterned shirts, dress slacks, golf slacks, dress blue jeans.

LADIES Slacks, jumpsuits, sport coordinates, dress blue jeans.

Don't Dress

GENTLEMEN Seasonal clothing (shorts, blue jeans) tactful trendy cloths.

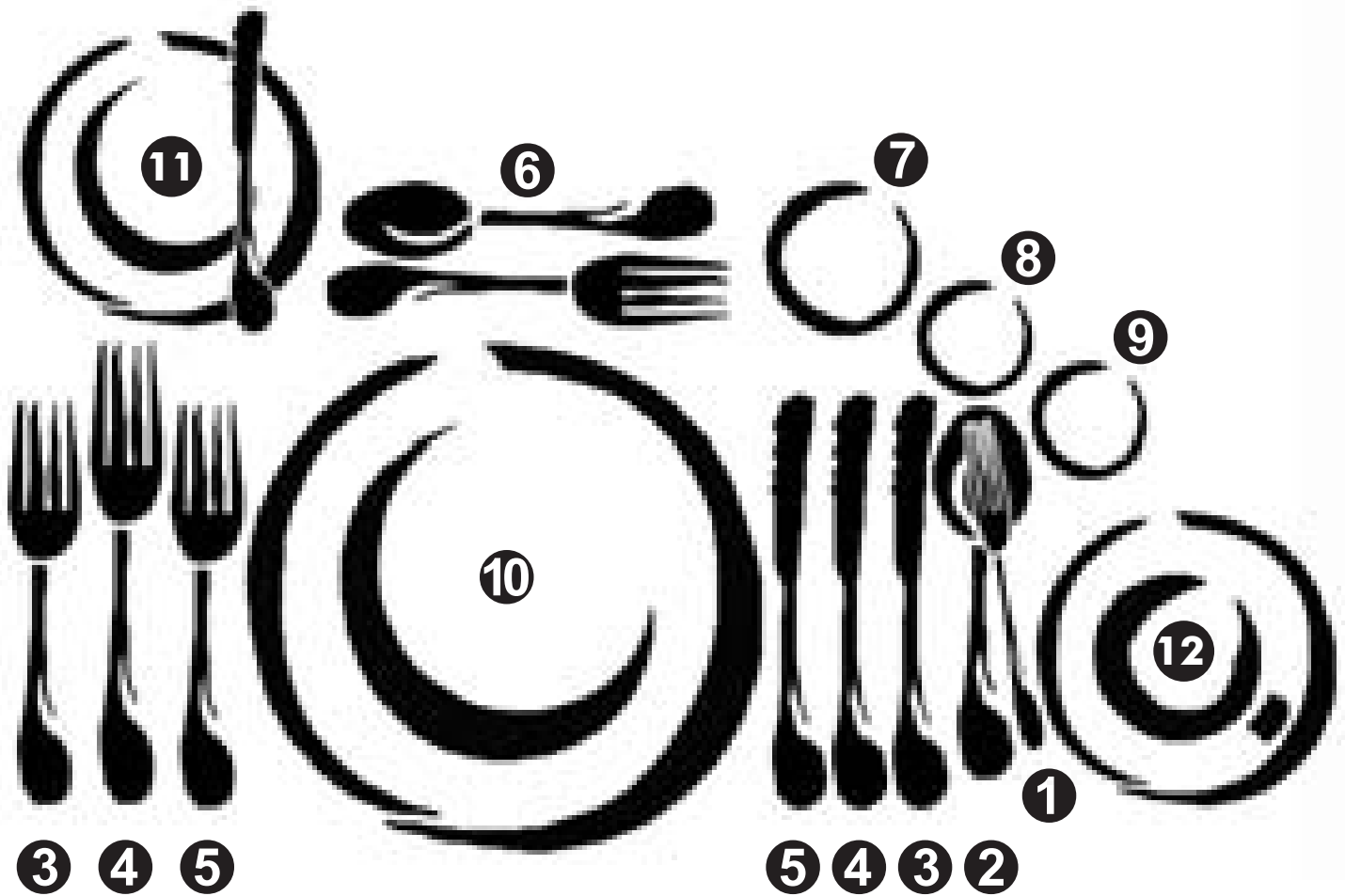
LADIES Seasonal clothing (shorts, blue jeans) tactful trendy cloths.

Optional

GENTLEMEN Your choice – usually a combination of semi-formal or formal

LADIES Your choice – usually a combination of semi-formal or formal

Formal Dinner Table Setting



1. Seafood Fork
2. Soup Spoon
3. Fish Course Knife/Fork
4. Meat Course Knife/Fork
5. Salad Course Knife/Fork
6. Dessert/Coffee
7. Water Glass
8. Wine Glass
9. Wine Glass
10. Plate and/or Napkin
11. Bread Plate & Butter Knife
12. Coffee Cup & Saucer

Important Tips

- Use silverware from the outside in.
- Never cut more than three bites at one time.
- When passing main dishes, always pass to the right.
- To indicate you have finished eating a meal, place silverware together on your plate in a clock position of ten to four, with the handles at four.

Seventeen Basic Rules

1. Napkin on your lap as soon as you are seated.
2. Course silverware accompanies course china service.
3. Pass salt & pepper as a set.
4. Wait for everyone at your table to be served before beginning to eat.
5. When passing food platters, pass them around the table not across.
6. Pushing food on to your fork with a piece of bread/roll is unacceptable as is using your fingers.
7. Remove foreign objects with the same conveyance on which it entered the mouth. Exception: fish bones
8. Never put silverware on the table surface after it has been used, lay it on the butter plate.
9. Never ask for items that are not presented by the host/hostess.
10. Some foods are better eaten at home.
11. Never draw attention to food served to you that you can't or won't eat.
12. Do not pre-season food before tasting it.
13. Butter bite-sized portions of bread/roll as you eat them.
14. Transport food to your mouth...not your mouth to the food.
15. Never request seconds. Accept them graciously if they are offered.
16. When you are in doubt of proper procedures, observe and follow good examples.
17. Send Host/Hostess gifts, thank you note, etc...

Twenty Definite No-No's

1. Don't put liquid of any kind in your mouth while there is still food in it. Swallow first. The only exception is if hot food is scalding your mouth and a cold drink is applied as first aid.
2. Don't spit inedible objects into your palm and put them back on your plate. Use an inconspicuous motion to remove the fish bone or whatever with your thumb and forefinger. Then, place it on your bread and butter plate.
3. Gum! Never at the table.
4. Don't chew with your mouth open.
5. Don't talk with food in your mouth.
6. Don't replenish the supply of food in your mouth before you have swallowed the previous mouthful.
7. Don't blow your nose using your napkin, its sole purpose is to wipe your mouth.
8. Don't use your napkin, handkerchief, the tablecloth or anything else to clean your silverware. If it isn't clean, discreetly ask the waiter for another piece.
9. Don't fiddle with your silverware. You will look nervous and make others edgy.
10. Don't leave the coffee spoon in your cup while drinking from it. Similarly, don't treat the spoon and cup as a musical instrument making clinking noises as you stir.
11. Enjoy your meal quietly! Don't smack your lips or heave sighs of satisfaction after swallowing.
12. Holding two items of food in two hands is unacceptable.
13. Don't try the "boarding house reach", ask someone to pass you any item that is out of arms reach.
14. Don't share someone's food by spearing it with a fork and guiding it across the table like a toy airplane! The correct way is to pass the person your bread plate or main plate and request a little of the food be put on it.
15. Don't mash all the food together in the center of your plate.
16. Don't dunk!
17. Don't apply cosmetics at the table – not even lipstick
18. Elbows off the table!
19. Never read at the table if anyone else is present.
20. Don't lean back on the rear legs of your chair. You could break the chair, or worse your neck!

Etiquette By Course

APPETIZER COURSE

- A food or drink served before the meal to stimulate the appetite. Use appropriate silverware for:
- Shrimp Cocktail
- Oyster Appetizers & Escargot
- Pate
- “Retire” used silverware on underliner or appetizer table.

SOUP COURSE

- Use appropriate silverware.

NOTE: Soups should always be kept flowing in the opposite direction of one's lap. The soup spoon should be filled from its far side and the soup then poured gently into the mouth with its near side. Hold the spoon parallel to your mouth. It is the side of the spoon that should enter the mouth, not the oval tip.

FISH COURSE

- When applying lemon, squeeze the lemon with the right hand, using the left hand as an umbrella to protect dinner partners.
- To cut and eat whole fish: Anchor fish with fork and cut down center of side from head to tail. Using your fish knife, pry flesh loose at midpoint on this line. Lift top sections and eat. Lift bottom sections and eat... from left to right. Remove skeleton with knife and eat underside.
- Hold fish fork in left hand. Hold fish knife in right hand.

MEAT COURSE

- Use appropriate knife and fork. Spoons are not used during the meat course. It is NOT appropriate to spoon up sauces, etc...
- Rest knife and fork on edge of plate when not being used. Do not place them on the table linen once used.
- “Retire” used silverware on dinner plate when finished.

SALAD COURSE

- Use appropriate knife and fork.
- Europeans follow the conventional order for dinner courses and enjoy the salad course after the meat course as a palate cleanser.
- Cut salad into bite-sized pieces.
- “Retire” used silverware on salad plate when finished.

NOTE: Restaurants in America often serve salad courses prior to the meat course to give people something to eat besides bread while they are cooking the dinner. Many people copy this because they believe that restaurants epitomize correct service, this is incorrect by proper etiquette rules.

DESSERT COURSE

- In formal service, both a dessert fork and a dessert spoon will be brought to the diner on the dessert plate. Then dessert is served.
- Fruit is often served in place of a baked or frozen dessert in which case a dull knife and fork would be supplied.
- “Retire” used silverware on dessert plate when finished.

COFFEE SERVICE

- Coffee, sparkling waters and liqueurs. Often served from a coffee table in an adjoining room.

Etiquette for Particular Foods

CANDY

- Take one piece at a time.
- Remove the paper frill with the candy. Never leave behind evidence of how much you have taken.
- Take the one you touched.

RAW VEGETABLES, CHIPS & DIP

- No “double dipping”!
- Never return a particular vegetable or chip from which you have taken a bite to the dip container.

ECLAIRS

- These are NOT finger foods. They should be eaten from a plate with a fork.

CHERRIES & BERRIES

- Grasp stem with hand and pull while securing berry with teeth. Remove pit from cherries with hand.

STEWED FRUITS WITH SEEDS OR PITS

- The rule is that if you put it into your mouth with a spoon, the inedible comes out on the spoon. The skill is to get the pit clean while it is in your mouth, so what comes out has no food attached to it. Put the pits on the plate under the dish in which the fruit was served.

OLIVES WITH SEEDS

- Remember: In with your hands, you must take it out with your hand. Lay the seed on the edge of your plate.

CLUB SANDWICHES

- Do not attempt to eat the club sandwich with a fork.
- Remove the frill pick, lay it on the edge of your plate and eat the sandwich in sections. Save your fork for eating whatever has dropped out of the sandwich when it is eaten.

SHISH KABOB

- If served on a metal skewer for a meal, hold skewer by one end in the left hand, while the right hand holding a fork slides the meat and vegetables onto the dinner plate.
- Shish Kabob served from a wooden skewer are of a hors d'oeuvre type only and should be eaten one ingredient at a time by holding the item between the teeth and pulling skewer out. This is considered a finger food and should not be eaten as such.

SPAGHETTI

- The fork accompanied by a spoon is to be used when eating spaghetti by twirling a small portion of spaghetti on the fork using the spoon to guide/push it on.

STEAK SAUCES

- Use a ladle, put the sauce directly on the steak.

FRESH FRUIT AT FORMAL/SEMI-FORMAL DINNERS

- Stab with a fork, quarter, cut out pit/core, and cut into bite-sized pieces, eat with a fork.
- Bananas: Strip peels entirely, cut slices and eat with fork.
- Berries: Use a spoon
- Grapes: Eaten by hand, pits quietly transferred to hand and then to plate.

Etiquette For Served Beverages

WINES BY THE BOTTLE

- The bottle is presented to the host/hostess to allow for verification that the proper bottle is being served.
- When approval is signaled, the bottled is uncorked. The cork will be removed from the corkscrew and handed to the host/hostess.
- Approximately 1 ounce of the wine, being poured with the label up, will be poured into the host's/hostess's glass.
- After approval is given, the first woman to the host's/hostess's right will be served, then each of the remaining women, then the men, and the host/hostess last.

PROPER WINE SERVICE

A wine glass should never be lifted when filling/refilling it.

- Red wines are poured to fill about 1/2 the glass.
- White wines are poured to fill about 2/3 the glass.

NOTE: One 750ml bottle holds 25.4 ounces or fills approximately 8 glasses. One liter bottle holds 34 ounces or fills approximately 12 glasses.

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