



PROFESSIONAL COURTESY

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Dining skills are an important part of socialization. Every culture in history has had rules for dining. Even though, using the wrong fork is not the end of the world, it is important to demonstrate a sense of dining knowledge to make a good impression at the table. The rules of dining are designed to increase our comfort level and show consideration for others. Individuals with poor table manners can sabotage themselves and make dining for others an unpleasant experience.

Essentials for a Savvy Diner

1. Assess the table and pause before picking up any silver. Wait for your host or hostess to start or senior person at the table. Once you have picked up flatware it never goes back on the table again.
2. Put napkin on lap to unfold. When leaving the table temporarily, place the napkin on the chair. At the end of the meal, place napkin to the left of plate.
3. When encountering a multi-course meal with multiple pieces of flat ware and you are questioning what fork to use first, start from the outside and work in toward the plate.
4. Cut one bite at a time.
5. Solids are on the left of your dinner plate, such as, bread and butter plate and liquids are on the right.
6. Break bread in bite size pieces and butter one bite at a time over the bread and butter plate.
7. Your food will be served from the left and cleared from the right. Liquids are served from the right.

8. We pass food to the right because the guest of honor sits to the right of the host. If you start the food, offer it to the person on your right and then take your portion before sending it around the table counterclockwise.
9. When someone asks for the salt, pass both the salt and pepper in anticipation of their need. It also keeps the pair together. Do not pass hand to hand because in some cultures it is considered bad luck. Place the pair in front of the receiver.
10. Keep personal items such as; purses, glasses, cell telephones, etc. off the table. Purses should stay on your lap or under the chair.
11. Refrain from putting on make-up, combing hair, picking teeth, blowing nose vigorously at the table. "If you do it the bathroom, don't do it at the table."
12. If someone offers a toast to you do not drink to yourself.
13. When offering a toast, remember the three B's; **be prepared, be brief, be seated.**
14. If in doubt about what to do, watch someone at the table who knows. It can prevent an embarrassing situation.
15. When leaving the table temporarily do not announce where you are going; just say, "Excuse me."
16. Chew with your mouth closed. Take small bites to avoid talking with food in your mouth.
17. Try a little of everything presented unless you are allergic to a certain food.
18. Don't talk about food likes and dislikes at the table.
19. Maintain good posture at the table. Keep arms and elbows off the table.
20. Don't push your plate away from you when finished eating, wait for everyone to finish before plates are cleared.
21. Don't gesture with your knife and fork.
22. Eating in the *American or Continental* fashion is acceptable in America today.

"Nothing indicates a well-bred man more than a proper mode of eating his dinner. A man may pass muster by dressing well, and may sustain himself tolerably in conversation; but if he is not perfectly *au fait*, (up to date), dinner will betray him."----- "AGOGOS", 1834

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