



Place Setting Quick Reference Guide

Place Setting Guidelines:

In 4-H Foods Lab Project competitions, food should be displayed on a serving platter, tray, dish, bowl, basket, or other suitable container. Participants should display one place setting appropriate for the planned menu, including the prepared dish. The place setting should include the appropriate plate, flatware, napkin, glass or cup. The *menu card and recipe* should also be included on your display table.

Tablecloths, placemats, and centerpieces may be used, but are not required. However, plastic or paper plates, cups, and cutlery may be used if appropriate for the food prepared.

Setting Your Table:

When setting your table, only display utensils necessary for the planned menu. Follow these guidelines:

- Fork to the left of the plate, tines (points) up
- If a salad fork is used, place to the left of the dinner fork.
- If a salad plate is used, in an informal setting, place just above the tip of the fork. In a formal setting, the salad plate would be placed to the left of the napkin/fork.
- Plate is always in the center
- Knife to the right of the plate, cutting edge toward the plate
- Spoon to the right of the knife
- If a soup spoon is needed, it is placed to the right of the spoon.
- If a soup bowl is needed, it may be placed on the dinner plate.
- The flatware and plate should be one inch from the edge of the table.
- Cup or glass above knife and spoon.
- A mug, if used, is placed to the top right of the drinking glass or cup.
- Napkin placement is flexible; it may be placed to the left of the fork, under the fork, on the plate, or displayed creatively. If folded, the crease should be to the left.¹
- Bread and butter knives are optional

Easy Reminders:

When preparing your table, imagine the word, “FORKS.” Beginning on your left:

F	O	R	K	S
Fork comes first	for the shape of the plate	moves to the right →	for knives with blade pointed towards the plate	for spoons placed on the outside. ²

Use your hands to make the okay sign as a helpful reminder of where to place the bread plate and drinks.³



Bread plate
to the left
above the forks.

Drinks
go to the
upper right.



Place Setting Examples:

Use the following examples of place settings as a reference; however, be creative in how you plan to dress your table. The place setting should complement the menu you have planned.

Informal or Family Style Place Settings



Formal Place Settings*



⁴Photo Credit: Jason Estep, 2015

**Formal Place Settings are NOT expected in 4-H Food Labs. However, if you choose a formal place setting, use these examples as a guide. Formal Place Settings are used at the banquets at State 4-H Congress.*

References:

¹Post, Peggy, Anna Post, Lizzy Post and Daniel Post Senning. 2011. Emily Post Etiquette 18th Edition: Manners for a New World, New York: Harpercollins Publishers.

²Marable, Mandy, Casey Mull, Marilyn Poole, and Cheryl Varnadoe. 2014. "Dinning Etiquette." *Manners Worth Millions*, Georgia 4-H, UGA Extension Group Curriculum #3GC3.

³The Emily Post Institute, Inc. 2015. "Basic Table Setting." *Table Setting Guides*. <http://emilypost.com/advice/basic-table-setting/> (October 12, 2015).

⁴Jason Estep, 2015. Photo Credit.

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