

You and your best friend were invited to a very elaborate dinner party. Upon arrival, you look at the place cards and notice that while you are assigned to the same table, you are not seated next to each other. You rearrange the place cards so that you can sit side by side.

This is a "no-no!"

Your host/hostess has arranged seating for a particular reason. Do not move place cards or asked to be moved. Sit where you are assigned!

*Please move back to a spoon.  
Thank you!*

You have just finished your delicious dinner meal. You blot your lips with your napkin and decide that you need to apply a little lipstick/lip gloss. You excuse yourself from the table and make your way to the ladies' room to take care of this.

Applying lipstick, taking meds, using a toothpick or cell phone at the table is rude. Excuse yourself to take care of these needs ... but wait until the entree has been served.

*Please move forward to a spoon.  
Thank you!*

You are seated at a formal dinner in between two people you don't know. One is an outgoing lady who has traveled the world and is sharing stories of her many adventures. The other is an older man who hasn't said anything. You totally ignore him.

Never ignore the person to your immediate right or left. It is your responsibility to engage both parties in conversation.

*Please move back to a fork.  
Thank you!*

Yum! Yum!  
Your lunch interview meal was simply delicious. But ... you couldn't eat at all. It's hard to talk and eat at the same time. So, you ask the wait staff to bring you a to-go box. These leftovers will be delicious for lunch tomorrow!

Doggy bags are perfectly acceptable for casual or informal dining. But this is an absolute "no-no" for formal dining occasions -- especially job interviews.

*Please move back to a knife.  
Thank you!*

Your cousin is having a formal dinner following his wedding. You and your sister attend. The guests may select from two different entrees -- chicken marsala or beef wellington. You and your sister decide to get one of each and share the meals.

It's one thing to share appetizers at O'Charleys on any random Saturday night. But sharing food is considered inappropriate at a wedding or any formal dinner.

*Please move back two spaces.  
Thank you!*

The banquet hall is going to be full. There are so many people at this event. In formal dress, you run to snag a table for you and all of your friends. You immediately plop down and make yourself comfortable.

No! No! No!  
Stand behind your chair until all the guests at your table have arrived. Shake hands with all of the guests and greet them as they arrive. Then you may be seated.

*Please move back one space.  
Thank you!*

After taking your seat at the banquet table, you reach for your napkin, but then stop. Your placecard is lying on top of the napkin. Not for sure what to do with this, you discreetly pick up the placecard and slip it into your pocket.

While discretion is much appreciated, the proper thing to do is to place your place card above the dessert utensils.

*Please move back three spaces.  
Thank you!*

You have just taken your seat at the banquet table. Thanks to your 4-H Dining Etiquette class, you know how to handle this next situation -- what to do with the napkin. You immediately place it on your lap - folded in half with the opening edges away from you.

Nice move!  
The only exception to this rule is if you are in someone's home. Then you wait for the host or hostess. When they pick up their napkin ... you follow suite.

*Please move forward to a fork.  
Thank you!*

Whew!  
You should not have had those two soft drinks before you arrived to the banquet! You politely excuse yourself from the banquet table and lay your napkin to the right of your plate.

Laying a napkin to the right of your plate signals that you are finished with dinner. To denote that you are temporarily leaving the table, place the napkin to the left of your plate.

*Please move back two spaces.  
Thank you!*

To rest between bites of food, cross your knife and fork as shown to indicate to the wait staff that you are simply resting. Remember to point the knife blade toward you and tines up (American) or down (European).



Indicates rest with either the American or European styles of dining. Resting, using the American style, may also be indicated by placing your knife at 1:00 and your fork at 4:00.

*Please move forward one space.  
Thank you!*

The invitation to your friend's birthday party says to R.S.V.P. What does that mean?! Since you don't know ... you don't do anything.

R.S.V.P. is the French phrase, "répondez, s'il vous plaît," which means "please reply." You are indicating if you plan to attend or not. You should respond promptly.

*Please move back to a spoon.  
Thank you!*

When using the American - or Zig Zag - style, the fork and knife lay beside each other with a significant gap between the two utensils to indicate to the wait staff that you are simply resting between bites.



You may also cross your knife at 5:00 and fork at 7:00. When using the American style, the tines on your fork point up.

*Please move forward to a knife.  
Thank you!*

When using the American or European style, lay your knife and fork parallel at 4:00 to indicate to the wait staff that you have completely finished your meal. Remember -- knife blade is toward you!



Don't forget ... with American style the fork tines are up; with European style the tines are down. Which ever style you start with ... is the style you finish with ... **NO CHANGING!**

*Please move forward two spaces.  
Thank you!*

A fish course will be served. You know this because there is a fish knife -- different looking from a dinner or salad knife. When it is time to use the fish knife, you pick it up and hold it like a pencil.



Notice the difference in shape (fish on the left). Fish knives are held the same way you hold a pencil. They are used to pick and remove skin, bones and cut down the back of the fish.

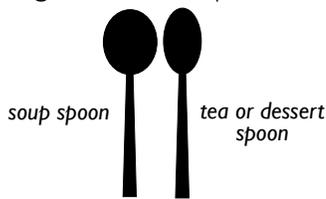
*Please move forward three spaces.  
Thank you!*

Mmmm!  
Your favorite soup is served! You grab your spoon and begin shoveling it into your mouth! It is so, so good!

A spoon is an utensil ... not a farm or garden implement. Soup spoons, in particular, should be held like a pencil. Soup should be scooped **AWAY** from you ... not towards you!

*Please move back one space.  
Thank you!*

A soup spoon is different from a tea or dessert spoon. It is usually larger with a deeper well.



Soup should be scooped away from you. Do **NOT** put the entire spoon into your mouth. Silently sip from the opposite side of the spoon from which you scooped.

*Please move forward to a fork.  
Thank you!*

If a soup course is offered, it may be served in one of two ways: (1) if served in a soup plate (shallow bowl), it will be placed directly on your service plate or charger; (2) if served in a soup cup or bowl, it will be served on a liner (small plate) which sits on the charger.

Don't forget about the spoon! With a soup plate, the soup spoon may rest in the bowl. With a soup cup/bowl, the spoon should rest on the liner.

*Please move forward to a spoon.  
Thank you!*

During dessert service at the 4-H Congress banquet, the wait staff brings around coffee. You flip your coffee mug upside down in the saucer to indicate that you do not want coffee.

This is acceptable. It is also proper to simply pass your hand over the top of your coffee cup and tell the wait staff, "No, thank you."

*Please move forward to a knife.  
Thank you!*

You have been asked to present a toast at your big brother's college graduation. To get everyone's attention, you pick up your glass and gently tap the side of it with your dinner knife.

In making a toast, never tap a glass with a utensil. Instead, use your voice! Simply clear your throat or call everyone's attention.

*Please move back one space.  
Thank you!*

"Manners are a sensitive awareness of the feelings of others. If you have that awareness, you have good manners, no matter what fork you use."

This quote by etiquette guru, Emily Post, suggests that best efforts are much appreciated. You don't have to be an expert ... simply be aware and do your best!

*Please move forward two spaces.  
Thank you!*

Oh, the confusion! You sit down at a round, banquet table with 11 other people. Is your glass on the right or left? Is that your bread plate or the person next to you? You guess -- and assume the bread is on the left and the drink is on the right.

Correct guess! To remember this ... make an "okay" sign with both hands -- it looks like a "b" with your left hand and a "d" with your right. This way you will always remember!

*Please move forward three spaces.  
Thank you!*

Amy is sitting two-people away from you at the banquet table. She has asked you to pass the salt. You pick up both the salt and pepper shakers and pass them to her.

Nice job! The salt and pepper shakers are "married" -- they always travel together -- even if only one of them is requested.

*Please move forward to a fork.  
Thank you!*

Your delicious banquet meal includes homemade rolls and a caesar salad. As soon as you sit down, you grab the butter and salad dressing and help yourself. You will pass these items if and when requested.

All condiments - with the exception of salt and pepper - should begin their journey around the table the moment you sit down.

*Please move back two spaces.  
Thank you!*

Oh, good grief! Passing food at a banquet table is so confusing. Your tablemates get into a heated debate over whether to pass things to the right or to the left. You take a wild guess and go left.

Incorrect! Food items should be passed to the right.

*Please move back three spaces.  
Thank you!*

Oh my goodness! The rolls at your lunch banquet are hard as a rock! Maybe butter will soften them up?! You break your bread in half and slather butter on both sides. You take a bite out of one side and hope that you don't break a tooth!

Bread should be broken into bite-sized pieces -- one at a time. Likewise, butter should be applied to each bite before eating.

*Please move back to a fork.  
Thank you!*

One of your tablemates -- half way around the table -- has requested the bread basket. Hmmmm! Bread? That sounds great! You reach in and grab a roll as the basket comes around.

Called "short stopping" -- this is an dining etiquette "no-no!" Pass the item to whomever requested it. If you want something, request it yourself.

*Please move back one space.  
Thank you!*

Decisions! Decisions! You have been served a delicious Cobb salad. You have both a salad fork and a salad knife. You opt to just use the salad fork knowing that you can cut with it just as well as the knife.

It is appropriate to use just the fork and cut with the side of the fork when eating salad.

*Please move forward one space.  
Thank you!*

Your banquet meal consist of a salad, pork chop, mashed potatoes and green beans.

You know that you are going to need to add salt and pepper to the mashed potatoes ... but you don't. You taste them first.

Good for you!

You always taste the food before adding any kind of seasoning to avoid offending the chef.

*Please move forward one space.  
Thank you!*

Oh, yay! It's a fabulous T-bone steak!  
One of your favorites!  
But wait ... you need steak sauce!  
You politely make your request to the wait staff.

It is impolite to ask for special sauces -- especially in a fancy restaurant.

Typically, the wait staff will ask if you want steak sauce. If they don't offer ... you don't ask!

*Please move back one space.  
Thank you!*

Oh, geez!  
Meats are so difficult to cut!  
You are afraid that you will either shake the table or that your food will go flying off your plate.  
You ask your friend next to you to cut all of your meat for you.

Uh ... no!

Unless you are three-years-old, you should cut your own meat. Besides, you should not cut all your meat at once - one or two bites at a time.

*Please move back two spaces.  
Thank you!*

Your dinner date is a bit too animated in his conversation. He is waving his arms every which direction!  
The wait staff is having a difficult time serving his food and refilling his glass.

Pay attention!

Your food will be served from the left and cleared from the right. Your beverage glass will be both filled and refilled from the right.

*Please move back to a knife.  
Thank you!*

The chocolate ice cream was simply delicious! So good, in fact, you licked your spoon clean. You lay your spoon next to your plate ... hey ... you can just use the spoon for your coffee. No sense in dirtying up a bunch of dishes!

This is okay at home ...

**BUT** in a formal setting, once you pick up a utensil from the table, it never goes back on the table. There are specific utensils for each course.

*Please move back to a fork.  
Thank you!*

Ryan has requested cream to go with his coffee.  
You pick up the creamer and point the handle towards Ryan as you pass it to him.

Nice job!

Remember, if it is possible, you should also pick up the creamer by its handle -- this goes for any object with a handle.

*Please move forward to a fork.  
Thank you!*

My! My! My! Look at you!  
You are sitting up straight in your chair, quietly stirring your coffee and taking silent sips.  
This is so much better than your tablemates who are clanging their spoons in the cups and slurping.

No slouching. No clanging.  
No slurping. It's rude!

And don't forget -- never leave your spoon in your tea or coffee cup. Place it on the liner (plate).

*Please move forward to a spoon.  
Thank you!*

It's tea time!  
You have added steaming water to your cup along with a tea bag of your favorite flavor. After steeping, you dip your spoon in, remove the tea bag and wind the tea bag string around the bag in the spoon.

No ... you do not wind the tea bag string around the spoon. Simply use the spoon to remove the tea bag from the cup and place in on the liner (saucer).

*Please move back to a spoon.  
Thank you!*

The cherries on top of your ice cream dessert have pits. You descretely spit them into your napkin and lay your napkin back into your lap.

The utensil you use to put the food in your mouth (fork, spoon fingers), should be the same one you use to remove the object. Place it on the side of your plate ... not in your napkin.

*Please move back to a knife.  
Thank you!*

You've just gotta have a little sugar to go in your iced tea. Once served, you reach for the spoon at the top of your plate to stir in the sugar.

**STOP!**

The fork and spoon at the top of your service or dinner plate are reserved for dessert! Your tea spoon should be the one closest to your plate.

*Please move back one space.  
Thank you!*

You are headed to a formal dinner party with two other couples. You notice that the gentlemen assists the ladies in taking their seats. You giggle ... thinking how old-fashioned that is!  
Or is it?!

**Thumbs up**

to your gentlemen friends!  
If you are a gentleman, it is proper etiquette to help a lady to her seat in a formal dinner setting. Business event? Forget it!

*Please move forward one space.  
Thank you!*

You have been served an appetizer of jumbo shrimp cocktail. Six beautiful shrimp with the tails already removed. And there's a cocktail fork. Whew! Less work!  
You pour your sauce into the center of the cocktail glass, pick up a shrimp and enjoy!

**Tails on? Use your fingers.**

But if the shell fish have the tails removed, you need to use a cocktail fork. You may take two bites and can leave the fish on the fork while you rest.

*Please move forward two spaces.  
Thank you!*

Oh good grief, Derrick just made a pig of himself! He crammed an entire jumbo shrimp in his mouth. Shrimp cocktail sauce is going everywhere! Gross!  
I sure hope he doesn't choke!

It's a diner's worst nightmare -- corn on the cob!  
You can't put it on a fork. You can't cut it into small bites. So, you decide to just go for it ... picking up with your fingers.

You are at a very, nice dinner. All of the sudden, a huge sneeze comes on. You grab your napkin to sneeze and blow your nose.

Shrimp this size require the use of a cocktail fork. You can take more than one bite. You may put the shrimp on the plate and cut to make smaller bites.

This is correct etiquette. You should just take two or three bites at the most. And don't forget to wipe your hands! It is also correct to cut the corn off the cob. You pick!

Excuse yourself from the table. A napkin is for blotting your mouth only ... not for blowing your nose or any other grooming task.

*Please move back to a knife.  
Thank you!*

*Please move forward to a knife.  
Thank you!*

*Please move back one space.  
Thank you!*

You were served a funny-looking dish during a dinner party. The appetizer is a food you have never seen. Through all the whispers, you learn that it is escargo. You have no idea what that is ... or how to eat it. So, you pick up your fork, dig in and go for it!

Spaghetti is a very messy food. There is just no way to eat this without slurping up the noodles. But ... you make a best effort by cutting your spaghetti with a fork. Is this okay to do?

You have just been seated at the dinner party table. Oh my!  
There are so many pieces of silverware -- three forks and knives, two spoons, etc.  
You have no idea which utensil goes with which course. You select the biggest fork to begin.

**Sorry!**  
This is not how to eat escargo. Some foods can be very difficult to eat -- especially in a social setting. Take cues from those around you and/or your host/hostess.

Emily Post says, "No!"  
Roll two or three (max) strands onto your fork using the side of your plate as a barrier or use a spaghetti spoon.

**Try again!**  
Work from the outside in with your utensils for each course. Remember to take your dining cues from others who may have more knowledge/experience.

*Please move back two spaces.  
Thank you!*

*Please move back to a fork.  
Thank you!*

*Please move back to a knife.  
Thank you!*

Etiquette dictates that you should follow your host.

But you are at a banquet table with your 4-H leader and nine other 4-H members ... so there is not really a host. You just follow your leader since she is the oldest.

**Correct!**

The person at the table with the highest position or who is the oldest will be the table host in a banquet setting. If you are all the same age, follow each other.

*Please move forward to a spoon.  
Thank you!*

Uh Oh!

You dropped your fork and it bounced across the room. You indicate to the wait staff that you have had a mishap with your fork.

The wait staff will bring you another fork. Do not attempt to retrieve the fork yourself. The exception to this is if it falls right beside you.

*Please move forward one space.  
Thank you!*

You stopped for a Starbucks hot mocha latte drink on the way to a formal dinner party. You still have coffee left in your cup, but throw it away before entering the banquet hall.

Do not bring drinks or food in from the outside to a banquet setting. If your favorite beverage is not being served, you can get one after the event has ended.

*Please move forward to a fork.  
Thank you!*

You are allergic to eggs. At the annual county 4-H Awards Banquet, you are served foods that you know are made with eggs. You can't eat this! You go tell your agent and request a special plate.

When you have a food allergy, it is your responsibility to make the host aware when you R.S.V.P. so that they can make proper adjustments. If you don't, then prepare to not eat.

*Please move back three spaces.  
Thank you!*

You are served Pecan Pie for dessert. You have a fork and a spoon as your dessert utensils. You pick up the fork only to eat your pie.

This is fine. It is also acceptable to eat your pie with your spoon or both utensils. Hold the pie with your fork. Cut and eat the pie with the spoon.

*Please move forward two spaces.  
Thank you!*

You receive an invitation to a Christmas party. The invitation is address to you only ... not to you and a guest. You ask your best friend to go with you. What's one more person?!

No! No! No! Unless the invitation indicates that you may bring a guest, you do not. Nor do you call your host and ask if you can bring a guest. This is RUDE!

*Please move back to a spoon.  
Thank you!*

Oh my goodness! The lady at your table who was eating European style rested her wrist on the table all the way thru the meal! What was she thinking?! Everyone knows that your elbows never go on the table.

It is permissible to rest your wrist on the table with utensils in hand if eating European style. If using American style, your hands go in your lap.

*Please move forward three spaces.  
Thank you!*

The gentleman sitting beside you asked you a question ... just about the time you take a bite of food. You take a moment to chew and swallow your food before responding.

Thank you! Please take your time to chew and swallow your food carefully before attempting to talk. Your manners will be appreciated and you won't choke!

*Please move forward to a spoon.  
Thank you!*

During a meal at a friend's house, you are passed brussel sprouts. You really dislike brussel sprouts! You turn up your nose and say, "Eeewww!" loudly as you pass them on to the next person.

If you don't want or don't like a food, just pass it on. If you are asked if you would like a particular food that you do not care for ... simply respond with "No, thank you."

*Please move back two spaces.  
Thank you!*