

History of napkin

[History](#), [Ancient History](#)



History of Napkin Napkins have been in used from the times of ancient Roman Empire and prior to them, in ancient Greece. References to word napkin dates back to 1384 AD. Spartans from ancient Greece (around 4th century BC) are known to have used bread slices made from a lump of dough as napkins to wipe their hands and it is possible that they ate these bread napkins after use. The ancient Romans (first to 5th century AD) are known to have used cloth napkins (called Mappa) to protect from food spill and wipe mouth. The guests brought their own napkins and carried away left-over delicacies in their Mappa. With the fall of Roman Empire, napkins disappeared from the dining table. Napkins returned to adorn the dining table many centuries later and the classic painting Last Supper from 1464-1467 AD by Dieric Bouts depicts the use of Napkins on the dinner table. By 16th century, napkins were part of rich dining experience and came in many sizes, known by various names like diaper, serviette, touaille (for towel) depending on the size and intended use. 17th century saw the use of big sized napkins measuring 35 inches by 45 inches to help accommodate the needs of eating with bare hands instead of spoon/forks. The size reduced when forks and spoons were accepted as part of regular dining experience in major parts of Europe in the 18th century including Great Britain. The 17th century also saw French come up with elaborate rules for nobility class which included instructions on napkin usage, a predecessor to modern day napkin etiquette, including the one which instructs the guests to not use the napkin for wiping the face or clean teeth or worse, rub nose. Asians — Japanese, Thai, Chinese and Indians have not been using napkins during the meal. While Indians are known to use bare hands for meal and rely on water to

wash their hands before and after each meal, Chinese and Japanese use those magical chopsticks which seem to pick up everything they eat, keeping their hands clean and stain free. Types of Napkins Napkins are made of paper or cloth that is made of cotton or linen. Cloth napkins are quite popular in formal dining while fast foods and certain restaurants too tend to serve paper napkins. Big occasions like weddings often go for paper napkins since sheer number of guests attending the wedding makes cloth napkins less practical. In general, cloth napkins are usually the choice for those who care for ambience and the environment. To me, cloth napkins are environment friendly while exuding a feeling of luxury. Paper Napkin with Monograms It is often possible to have paper napkins ordered for marriages (and other special meal occasions) with names or initials of the bride and bridegroom embossed on the napkin. Customers are given the option of having custom colors, custom patterns, custom monograms imprinted on the napkin. The size of napkin provided at table varies from occasion and place of dining. Smaller size napkins of about 5 inches x 5 inches are used when serving drinks or starters/appetizers or snacks. For lunch, larger sized napkins measuring about 14 inches to 20 inches square size are provided. Napkins supplied for dinner are even bigger, often of size 20 inches to 22 inches square. The idea is to increase the size of the napkin as the quantity of food/drinks served/consumed increases. This helps take care of the increased risk of spillage with increasing quantity of food and drinks. As a host, when providing napkins to your guests or customers, you need to achieve a good balance of size and utility of the napkins. Napkins which are too big in size for the purpose can only increase laundry load for little or no

soil/spills on the napkins. Napkins are made of cotton or linen or linen-cotton mix, although it is possible that a few napkins are made of other materials like synthetic or silk. They come in variety of colors although white seems to be the most popular choice of color. I prefer white napkins over others since it is easy to detect stains early with white napkins. Restaurant set with White Napkins I often see white napkins being used in restaurants. White conveys cleanliness since it is easy for guests/customers to see the care you have taken to ensure the napkin is clean, fresh and washed. Often napkins and table cloths are sold together as a set to form one matching set of clothes adorning the dining table. Napkin Folding Aside from being conscious about color, size and texture of the napkin used for dining, discerning hosts who care for ambience often go for various napkin folds that help the guests feel very welcome, convey a feeling that you value their company, that you are willing to go the extra mile to make the occasion a happy one. A great napkin fold adds to the setting. Some of the folds can be so creative and nice that it is difficult for us to make up our mind to unfold them during the start of the meal. This site has a number of napkin folds which will provide for a warm, friendly environment at lunch/dinner time. A few are easy yet elegant while others could require a little more time and skill. Pyramid Napkin Fold Some are more formal while others are pretty casual ones. Some of the folds take just a few minutes of your time and even those who have never folded before can do them relatively quickly. Start with the easy ones and then move on to more difficult folds. Some of these folds require stiff clothing or starching while ironing or washing. Try out multiple folds to see which ones you like or prefer. Apart from the many popular napkin folds listed here, you

may find it useful to visit a resource dedicated to paper folding Origami for more ideas on how to fold napkins. If you plan to try out complicated Origami folds, be mindful of the fact that an elegant napkin fold on a lunch/dinner table is less about demonstrating your mind skills than it is about setting the mood for a hearty meal. In other words, do not overdo napkin folding. History

* Creative napkin folding may have started during the reign of Louis XIV, when people decided to present napkins as an art form. However, napkin folding really took off around the turn of the last century. Function *

* A creatively folded napkin can make the simplest meal classier, and dinner guests are always impressed by an artfully folded napkin resting at their table setting. * Straight Vinyl Skirting Vinyl with velcro hook designed to drape over the foam edge to floor. www.tiffinmats.com Significance *

* The art of napery folding has been compared to origami, and many different types of three-dimensional figures may be produced. Types * You can learn to fold napkins into pyramids, pockets for flatware, flowers, hats, fans, slippers and various animals. Considerations * The best type of cloth napkin to use for napkin folding is crisp linen, as it holds its shape better than other types of cloth