

Table manners essay sample

[Food & Diet](#)



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United Kingdom

In the UK, the host or hostess takes the first bite unless he or she instructs otherwise. The host begins after all food is served and everyone is seated.[1]

Food should always be tasted before salt and pepper are added. Applying condiments or seasoning before the food is tasted is viewed as an insult to the cook, as it shows a lack of faith in his/her ability to prepare a meal.[2] In religious households, a family meal may commence with saying Grace, or at dinner parties the guests might begin the meal by offering some favourable comments on the food and thanks to the host. In a group dining situation it is considered impolite to begin eating before all the group have been served their food and are ready to start. When eating soup, the spoon is held in the right hand and the bowl tipped away from the diner, scooping the soup in outward movements. The soup spoon should never be put into the mouth, and soup should be sipped from the side of the spoon, not the end.[3] The knife should never enter the mouth or be licked.[1] Food should always be chewed with the mouth closed.[4] Talking with food in the mouth is seen as very rude.[1]

Licking ones fingers and eating quickly is also considered impolite. On formal dining occasions it is good manners to take some butter from the butter dish with your bread knife and put it on your side plate (for the roll). Then butter pieces of the roll using this butter. This prevents the butter in the dish getting full of bread crumbs as it is passed around. Knives should be used to butter bread rolls but not to cut them - tear off a mouthful at a time with your hands. White wine is held by the stem of the glass and red wine by

cupping the bowl.[5] Wines should be served in the sequence “ white before red, light before heavy, young before old”.[6]

Pouring your own drink when eating with other people is acceptable, but it is more polite to offer pouring drinks to the people sitting on either side of you.

[1] It is impolite to reach over someone to pick up food or other items. Diners should always ask for items to be passed along the table to them.[1] In the same vein, diners should pass those items directly to the person who asked.

[2] It is also rude to take photographs while eating,[7] slurp food, eat noisily or make noise with cutlery. When you have finished eating, and to let others know that you have, place your knife and fork together, with the prongs (tines) on the fork facing upwards, on your plate. Napkins should be placed unfolded on the table when the meal is finished.[1] At family meals, children are often expected to ask permission to leave the table at the end of the meal. [edit] North America

Modern etiquette provides the smallest numbers and types of utensils necessary for dining. Only utensils which are to be used for the planned meal should be set. Even if needed, hosts should not have more than three utensils on either side of the plate before a meal. If extra utensils are needed, they may be brought to the table along with later courses.[8] A table cloth extending 10–15 inches past the edge of the table should be used for formal dinners, while placemats may be used for breakfast, luncheon, and informal suppers.[9] Candlesticks, even if not lit, should not be on the table while dining during daylight hours.[10] Men’s and unisex hats should never be worn at the table. Ladies’ hats may be worn during the day if visiting others.[11] Phones and other distracting items should not be used at

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the dining table. Reading at a table is permitted only at breakfast, unless the diner is alone.[12] Urgent matters should be handled, after an apology, by stepping away from the table.

If food must be removed from the mouth for some reason, a diner should subtly bring the napkin to his/her mouth (as if to wipe his/her mouth) and quietly spit out the food into the napkin, which is then returned to the lap (while still concealing the partially chewed inedibles). The diner thus avoids insulting the cook/host since the process is nearly indistinguishable from merely wiping one's mouth. An exception is that fish bones may be removed from the mouth between the fingers. The fork may be used in the American style (in the left hand while cutting and in the right hand to pick up food) or the European Continental style (fork always in the left hand). (See Fork etiquette) The napkin should be left on the seat of a chair only when leaving temporarily.[13] Upon leaving the table at the end of a meal, the napkin is placed loosely on the table to the left of the plate.[14] [edit] India

Main article: Etiquette of Indian dining

In formal settings, it is important for diners to allow the host or the eldest person to begin eating first.[15] Similarly, one should not leave the table before the host or the eldest person finishes his or her food. It is also considered impolite to leave the table without asking for the host's or the elder's permission.[16] A cardinal rule of dining is to use the right hand when eating or receiving food.[17] Handwashing, both before sitting at a table and after eating, is important. Cleaning with cloth or paper tissue may be considered unhygienic.[18] Small amounts of food are taken, ensuring that food does not reach the palms. It is considered important to finish each item

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on the plate out of respect for the food served.[19] Traditionally, food should be eaten as it is served, without asking for salt or pepper. It is, however, now acceptable to ask for salt or pepper with a mention that you like more of it.

Distorting or playing with food is unacceptable. Eating at a medium pace is important, as eating too slowly may imply dislike of the food and eating too quickly is rude. Generally it is not acceptable to burp, slurp, or spit. Staring at another diner's plate is taken as being rude. It is inappropriate to make sounds while chewing. Certain Indian food items can create sounds, so it is important to close the mouth and chew at a medium pace. At the dining table, attention must be paid to specific behaviors that indicate distraction or rudeness. Answering phone calls, sending messages and using inappropriate language are considered rude while dining and while elders are present.

[edit] China

Main article: Customs and etiquette in Chinese dining

Seating and serving customs play important roles in Chinese dining etiquette. For example, the diners should not sit down or begin to eat before the host (or guest of honor) has done so. When everyone is seated, the host offers to pour tea, beginning with the cup of the eldest person. The youngest person is served last as a gesture of respect for the elders. Just as in Western cultures, communal utensils (chopsticks and spoons) are used to bring food from communal dishes to an individual's own bowl (or plate). It is considered rude and unhygienic for a diner to use his or her own chopsticks to pick up food from communal plates and bowls when such utensils are present. Other potentially rude behaviors with chopsticks include playing with them, separating them in any way (such as holding one in each hand), piercing <https://assignbuster.com/table-manners-essay-sample/>

food with them, or standing them vertically in a plate of food. (The latter is especially rude, evoking images of incense or 'joss' sticks used ceremoniously at funerals).[20]

A rice bowl may be lifted with one hand to scoop rice into the mouth with chopsticks. It is also considered rude to look for a piece one would prefer on the plate instead of picking up the piece that is closest to the diner as symbol of fairness and sharing to the others. The last piece of food on a communal dish is never served to oneself without asking for permission. When offered the last bit of food, it is considered rude to refuse the offer. It is considered virtuous for diners to not leave any bit of food on their plates or bowls. Condiments, such as soy sauce or duck sauce, may not be routinely provided at high-quality restaurants. The assumption is that perfectly prepared food needs no condiments and the quality of the food can be best appreciated. Slurping, burping or other form of noises are considered rude, and conversations are best avoided during meal as it is indecent for one to talk with food in the mouth and the effort of the cook is not appreciated wholeheartedly.[21] [edit] South Korea

In formal settings, a meal is commenced when the eldest/most senior diner at the table partakes of any of the foods on the table. Before partaking, intention to enjoy their meal should be expressed. Similarly, satisfaction or enjoyment of that meal should be expressed at its completion. On occasion, there are some dishes which require additional cooking or serving at the table. In this case, the youngest/lowest-ranked (non-child) diner should perform this task. When serving, diners are served the meal (including and beverages: water, tea, or alcohol) in descending order starting with the <https://assignbuster.com/table-manners-essay-sample/>

eldest/highest-ranked diner to the youngest/lowest-ranked. Usually, diners will have 1 bowl of soup on the right with 1 bowl of rice to its left.

Alternatively, soup may be served in 1 large communal pot to be consumed directly or ladled into individual bowls. Dining utensils will include 1 pair of chopsticks and 1 spoon. Common chopstick etiquette should be followed (See Chopstick Etiquette), but rice is generally eaten with the spoon instead of chopsticks (as eating rice with chopsticks is considered rude).

Often some form of protein (meat, poultry, fish) will be served as a main course and placed at the center of the table within reach of the diners. Banchan will also be distributed throughout the table. If eaten with spoon, banchan is placed on the spoonful of rice before entering the mouth. With chopsticks, however, it is fed to the mouth directly. The last piece of food on a communal dish should not be served to oneself without first asking for permission, but, if offered the last bit of food in the communal dish, it is considered rude to refuse the offer. Bowls (of rice or soup) should not be picked up off the table while dining, exception for large bowls of noodle soup (See Korean noodles). Slurping while eating noodles and soup is generally acceptable, is not uncommon to chew with mouths open.

If alcohol is served with the meal, it is common practice that when alcohol is first served for the eldest/highest-ranked diner to make a toast and for diners to clink their glasses together before drinking. The clinking of glasses together is often done throughout the meal. Never served alcohol to yourself. Likewise, it is considered rude to drink alone. Instead, keep pace with other diners and both serve & be served the alcohol. Alcohol should always be served to older/higher-ranked diners with 2 hands, and

younger/lower-ranked diners may turn their face away from elder/higher-ranked diners when drinking the alcohol. [edit] See also

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