



4-H CAREER EDUCATION HANDOUT

Good Manners – Etiquette

Good manners put others before you and are a sign of respect and courtesy. They are practical guidelines to help you interact positively with other people and can add to your future success in the world of work. Manners are what is customary for the time and may differ by culture, environment and generation. You are encouraged to pay attention and observe what others do to determine socially appropriate response.

Manners 101 (or getting started)

Manners acknowledge differences in people and show respect for others:

- Hold doors for adults, friends or anyone that looks like they need help.
- Let others go before you.
- Give up your seat on the bus or train to an adult or someone that looks like they need one.
- Let guests go first.
- Respect your elders.

Greeting Adults

Today, more adults invite youth to call them by their first name. It is good to pay attention and follow a person's preferences. These guidelines vary in different cultures and in some southern U.S. states "sir" and "ma'am" are the preferred way to show respect.

- If invited to do so, you may call an adult by their first name.
- If not, here are the guidelines to follow:
 - A man is "Mr."
 - A married woman is "Mrs."
 - A married or unmarried woman is "Ms."
 - A couple with different last names would be "Mr. and Ms."
 - A couple with the same last name is "Mr. & Mrs."
 - A girl or unmarried woman is "Miss."



- In more formal settings, do not hesitate to extend your hand to an adult when saying hello, using a firm grip and a quick handshake.
- When visiting at a friend's house, say hello and goodbye to their parent(s) or guardian(s) when you arrive and depart.
- If you are visiting a dignitary, politician, university professor, royalty or military personnel, work with the adult in charge to learn the proper protocol for addressing those individuals.

Making Introductions

- Make introductions to the older person first.
- Make introductions to the woman before the man.
- Introduce names they will use for each other (i.e. - do not introduce your Mom to a friend as "Mom", introduce her as "Mrs. Smith.")

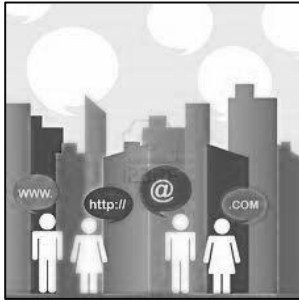
Making Conversation

- Make "please" and "thank you" part of your daily conversation.
- When someone says "thank you," say "you're welcome" in response.
- Try to avoid awkward words such as um, huh, hmm, nah, and yeah. Instead pause and think before speaking to prevent this from happening.
- Keep your tone of voice pleasant.
- Take care with "friendly put-downs" that actually tend to hurt and are not really funny like you intend, i.e. "shut-up" or "so what."
- Try not to be shy, break the ice by asking questions such as "Who is your teacher?"
- Take turns talking and avoid telling really long stories or giving too many details.
- If you are on a cell phone in a public place, try to find a quiet place you can continue the conversation or keep your voice down so that the entire area does not have to hear your conversation.
- When leaving a message on answering machine or voice mail, always indicate your name, who you are calling for and why you are calling.
- Be a good listener by:
 - Getting others involved by asking them questions.
 - Nodding your head.
 - Make eye contact.
 - Commenting on what the other person has said.

- Not switching the topic back to yourself.
- Not interrupting while someone else is talking.
- Not walking away when someone gets boring, but by trying to change the subject instead.
- Depending on the generation you are communicating with; consider not emailing, texting or talking on electronic devices while conversing with someone. For many, this is interpreted as disrespectful.

Guidelines for Communicating On-line

- Spell and grammar check messages. Do not send messages that are filled with mistakes
- Typing messages in all caps is interpreted as yelling.
- You do not have to respond to every e-mail message you receive, but please do so to those with specific questions.
- When someone overwhelms you with e-mails that keep you from important jobs, tasks or work, let the sender know you have to cut back on e-mail so you can get other things done – keep this in mind when you are sending e-mails to others as well.
- Do not forward another person’s personal e-mail or e-mail address without his or her permission.
- Do not misrepresent yourself, lie or engage in pretend conversation.
- Be cautious with internet chatting and tell a trusted adult, your parent(s) or guardian(s) if anything makes you uncomfortable.
- Re-read messages before clicking the send button – why? Computer messages are different than face-to-face conversations. They are instant and a form of written communication. Think about how your message is going to sound and be interpreted by the other person before you send the message. If you would not say something in person, do not write it online.



Tips for Being a Host or Guest

When you are the host:

- Clean your home before guests arrive.
- Greet your guests as they arrive.
- Thank guest for coming as they enter/exit.
- Let guests go first getting in line, at a buffet, going out the door, etc.
- Show guests around the main living area of your home if they have never been there before.
- Introduce new friends to everyone to ensure that no one is left out.
- Mingle with everyone.
- Be flexible when it comes to different activities.
- When eating a meal and a friend calls, tell them you will call back after you have finished eating.

When you are the guest:

- Be friendly and polite to the host, their elders and other guests.
- Do not help yourself to something unless you are told that you may do so.
- Offer to help clean up after a meal or if a mess happens.
- Say thank you when leaving.

Table Manners and Eating

Do...

- Ask if there is anything you can do to help before and after the meal.
- Sit up straight with your chair pushed in and your elbows off the table.
- Pass dishes of food to the right.
- Cut food into small bites and avoid putting large portions in your mouth.
- Chew with your mouth closed and avoid making loud chewing or smacking noises.
- Cut your food with the knife in your right hand and fork in your left. Once cut and ready to eat, transfer your fork to your right hand and set the knife down on your plate.
- Carry your plate, utensils and glass to the kitchen when the meal is finished.
- Thank the cook for an excellent meal.
- Fold your fabric napkin and leave it alongside your plate – if it is paper, toss it in the trash when you help clear the table.
- Pass the salt and pepper together even if they only asked for the salt.
- Ask permission to get up when you are finished with your food - “May I be excused?”



Do not...

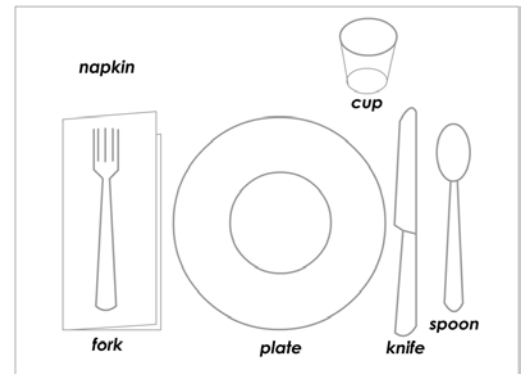
- Begin eating until everyone is seated and let your host be the lead.
- If the meal is being served individually, do not start eating until everyone at your table has been served.
- Reach across the table or in front of someone else; ask for items to be passed to you.
- Talk with food in your mouth.



- At home, or in a casual setting, set the table as follows:
 - Set the plate down first
 - On the right of the plate, set the knife down next to the plate with the sharp edge facing the plate.
 - Next, place the spoon to the right of the knife.
 - On the left of the plate, set the fork down with the napkin to the left of the fork.
 - Finally, set the glass in the upper right corner of the plate.

Table Settings

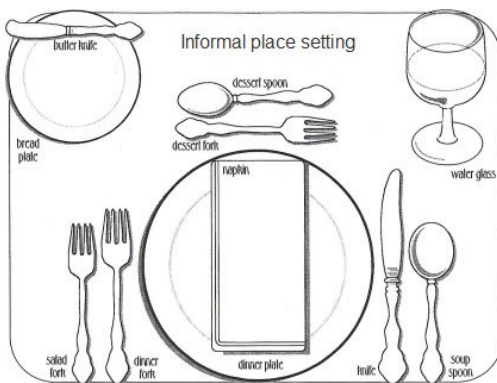
- Make sure to eat with the proper silverware. The food you eat first has the silverware farthest from the plate so that you work your way inward. Most special occasions and restaurants, set the table similarly to this:
 - On the right of the plate from the outside in, is the soup spoon, followed by the salad knife and finally the dinner knife.
 - On the left side of the plate from the outside in, is the salad fork and then the dinner fork.
 - The bread plate is the small plate in the upper left corner with a butter knife placed on top.
 - Silverware above the plate is for dessert.
 - For soup and/or salad served before the main course, place those dishes on top of the dinner plate.



<http://www.gomommygo.com/images/placesetting72.gif>

Tips for Dining Out

- Arrive just prior to the reservation time.
- Follow the host to the table.
- After being seated, look at the menu and make your selection.
- Say please and thank you as you order.
- After orders have been taken, place your napkin in your lap and use it when needed.
- Say thank you to servers when they arrive with your food or refill your beverage.
- Laying your fork and knife down on the plate, point-to-point, tells the wait staff that you are still eating. When they are placed parallel together that signals that you are done with your meal.
- If you think you have spinach stuck in your teeth, excuse yourself and place your napkin in your chair and push the chair back in towards the table.
- When dining out, tipping is appropriate. Some restaurants already calculate in the tip so check your bill prior to leaving a 15-20% tip.



<http://www.cliseetiquette.com/2009/10/21/b-d-success/>

Tips for Being Interviewed During a Meal

In addition to Tips for Dining Out, consider:

Do...

- Dress as you would for a traditional interview held in an office.
- Make an effort to arrive first. Wait in the lobby.
- No matter what time you arrive, check to see if your party is already there.
- Wait for everyone to be seated and let the interviewer take the lead. Open your menu after s/he has done so.
- Sit up straight.
- Use a napkin. Place the napkin in your lap after the orders have been taken.
- First hurdle: Beverages. Your interviewer is likely to let you order first. Consider water. Depending on where you live, iced tea is also a good choice.
- Second hurdle: Entrées. Do not order the most expensive or the cheapest item. Do not order anything that is huge, smelly or crunchy.
- Order a dish that you can easily and gracefully eat with a knife and fork. (Avoid spaghetti, spareribs, fried chicken, tacos, lobster, and sloppy sandwiches.)
- Order quickly and with no fuss or interrogation of the server. Minimize comments regarding personal nutrition/ dietary issues.
- Eat your dinner roll by breaking off a small piece at a time.
- If you have brought a portfolio or other papers, mention that you have them and let the interviewer choose when to bring them out. After the plates have been cleared is usually a good time.
- Be polite to the servers. The way you treat them says a lot about your character.
- If something is a little wrong with your order, let it slide. This is one meal that is really not about the food.
- Eat something. If you do not, you'll look nervous. Try to finish at least half.
- Be graceful about letting the interviewer pick up the tab. You were invited!
- Here is an advantage of a meal interview: You can ponder your answer to a difficult question while chewing!
- Only order dessert if the interviewer does.



Do not...

- Drink straight from a bottle or through a straw.
- Eat too fast, or as if you're ravenous. Do not wipe your plate with your bread.
- Eat extremely slowly either, though you will probably be eating less quickly than your interviewer. (This is a good reason to order something small).
- Talk with your mouth full.
- Put your elbows on the table.
- Wad up your napkin. Fold it loosely and lay it on the table next to your plate.
- Ask for a doggie bag or box.
- Forget to mention the meal in your thank-you note.

Adapted from 25 Tips for Acing the Lunch Interview at: <http://money.usnews.com/money/blogs/outside-voices-careers/2010/04/21/25-tips-for-acing-the-lunch-interview>, retrieved 2/20/2103.

Recommended Resources

- A Smart Girl's Guide to Manners, Nancy Holyoke.
- Essential Manners for Men: What to Do, When to Do It, and Why, Peter Post.
- The Guide to Good Manners for Kids, Peggy Post and Cindy Post Senning.
- How Rude! The Teenager's Guide to Good Manners, Proper Behavior, and Not Grossing People Out, Alex J. Packer.
- The Etiquette Advantage in Business: Personal Skills for Professional Success, Second Edition, Peggy Post.
- Manners for the Real World Curriculum by University of Florida at <http://nwdistrict.ifas.ufl.edu/4H/Manners/manners.htm>
- Utah State University Extension FAQ at http://extension.usu.edu/htm/faq/faq_q=182

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(Updated by Debra Barrett and Janice Zerbe, April, 2013)