

Table Etiquette

Getting started

- Always try to be a little early to the meal.
- Leave cell phones, purses, wallets, keys, books, Ipods, etc off the table and put away.
- Sit up straight in your chair.
- When you are seated place your napkin in your lap.
- Wait to eat until everyone else at your table has been served.

At the table

- Pass the food to the right.
- Take a portion of the food closest to you.
- Utensils are used starting with the ones on the outside and moving inward. The dessert utensils are found separately above your plate.
- Cutting the main course:
 - American Style: Hold the fork in the left hand to secure food and the knife in the right hand to cut. After a couple of bites have been cut, place the knife on the edge of the plate with the blade facing inward and switch the fork to your right hand to eat.
 - Continental Style: Hold the fork in the left hand and the knife in the right. These utensils remain in these hands throughout the entire eating process.
- Ask for the food to be passed.
- If someone asks for either the salt or pepper, pass both.
- Chew with your mouth closed. Also, do not speak with food in your mouth.
- Keep elbows off of the table.
- If you need to leave the table, excuse yourself, and place your napkin in your chair.

After the meal

- When the meal is finished and everyone is prepared to leave, place your napkin to the side of your plate.
- Always thank hostesses for their work.

