

Brock University

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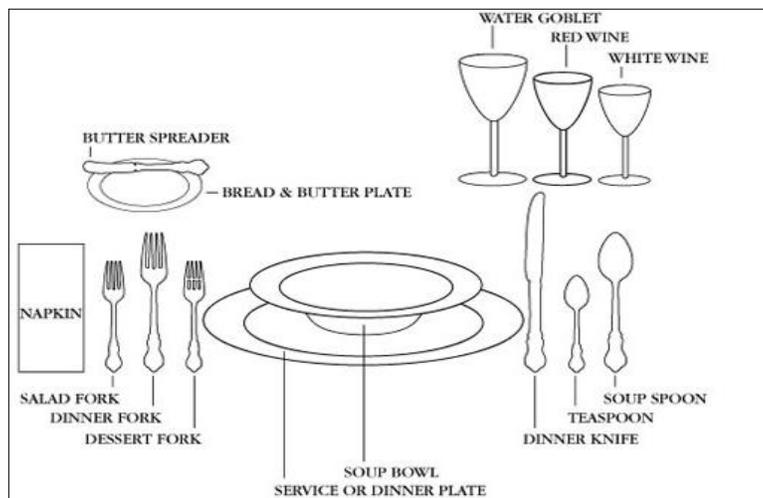
The point of etiquette rules is to make you feel comfortable, not uncomfortable.

What is Etiquette?

Etiquette can be defined as 'behaviour that is deemed appropriate in certain cultural, social, and/or professional situations'. Your ability to behave appropriately in various situations will demonstrate a sense of competence, and will likely create credibility.

Dining Etiquette

Today's employers are incorporating food and beverage into many of their recruiting activities, including employer information sessions, on-site visits and orientations, and off-site interviews. Employers are interested in assessing your ability to conduct yourself appropriately in a dining situation. This is of interest to employers because many employment situations will involve food and beverage with clients and colleagues.



American Style: Knife in right hand, fork in left hand holding food. After a few bite-sized pieces of food are cut, place knife on edge of plate with blades facing in. Eat food by switching fork to right hand (unless you are left handed).

Continental/European Style: Knife in right hand, fork in left hand. Eat food with fork still in left hand. The difference is that you don't switch hands-you eat with your fork in your left hand, with the prongs curving downward.

Basic Rules

- Eat to your left, drink to your right. Any food dish to the left is yours, and any glass to the right is yours.
- Starting with the knife, fork, or spoon that is farthest from your plate, work your way in, using one utensil for each course.
- Tear off a small piece of bread to butter (a portion size that you can reasonably fit in your mouth). Never butter the whole slice.
- Pass food from the left to the right.
- Taste your food before seasoning it.
- Try a little of everything on your plate.
- The napkin rests on the lap until the end of the meal.
- Wait until all are served before beginning to eat.
- Unless you are cutting something that requires both hands, your idle hand should be in your lap.
- Thank your host(s) for a wonderful meal.

Dietary Concerns

If you have specific dietary requirements (such as vegetarian or food allergies), it is best to advise your host(s) in advance. However, if you are not provided with the opportunity, here are a few suggestions for appropriate ways to handle this situation in the moment.

- Find a server or attendant prior to taking a seat at your table and inquire about alternative meal options. Have your table number ready if possible. Most functions at larger establishments have an alternative option available or can provide an appropriate meal upon request.
- If the meal is served “family style” (i.e. large platters of food are passed around the table) choose your food appropriate to your dietary needs.
- If you cannot find an attendant prior to the meal being served, discretely ask the server for an alternative meal if possible.
- Should a meal be served to you, try to eat the parts that suit your diet and leave the rest aside or tell your server a meal is not required.
- Be prepared to answer questions about your diet in a non-political or confronting manner. The other guests at your table may ask about your choices. This is not the time to get involved in a political debate about animal rights or religious beliefs, nor is it appropriate to divulge personal details about any health conditions. A simple, discrete response is appropriate. Redirect the conversation if needed.
- Consider the rules of etiquette when traveling abroad or participating on international exchanges. Business etiquette is based around cultural values and norms. Do your research in advance to know what is appropriate and what to expect.

Communication Etiquette

Telephone	Email	In Person
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Return all phone calls. Even if you don't have the answer, let the person know you're working on getting the answer. - Identify yourself after you say "Hello". - Respect other people's time. Ask them "Do you have a minute?" or "Is this a good time to reach you?" - Ask rather than just place someone on hold. - If you reach an answering machine, leave a message. Always leave your name and number. - Use proper language - avoid slang! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Avoid using shorthand language (for example: You = U, Please = Plz, etc). - Ensure proper spelling and grammar is used (including appropriate punctuation). - Save emoticons for people with whom you have built personal relationships. - Address and sign your emails. - DON'T TYPE IN ALL CAPS LOCK! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stand when being approached. - Make sure to read a person's business card before putting it away. - Engage in a few minutes of non-business related small-talk. - Your body language speaks volumes about your interest - maintain good posture and eye contact during conversation. - Listen attentively. - Be sure to let your voice convey energy, enthusiasm, and interest as you speak.

Did You Know...

The BCDO hosts an Etiquette Dinner event every year in partnership with CMA Ontario. This event provides students with practical tips for dining situations through a facilitated workshop with a three course meal. Additional information about this event along with other helpful material on the subject of Business Etiquette can be found on the BCDO website.