



Dining Etiquette 101, Part 1

The holiday season is upon us — parties, banquets, formal dinners, dining out at restaurants more frequently in groups with family, friends, colleagues and clients. Wherever you may be consuming your meal, having the knowledge of what to do, how to do it and when to do it will put you at ease and allow you to enjoy the food and camaraderie.

Oscar Wilde once said, “The world was my oyster, but I used the wrong fork.” How many of us can tell stories of our dining etiquette blunders? I have certainly made a faux pas or two over the years. To discover how much on target you are with dining etiquette guidelines, take a moment and complete the Dining Etiquette 101 quiz.

1. In a formal place setting, the dessert spoon and fork are usually placed above your plate. True or False.

2. When you have finished your meal, place your napkin in the center of your plate. True or False.

3. Your bread plate is located to the left of your plate. True or False.

4. You should always pass both the salt and pepper even if only one is asked for. True or False.

5. Your water/wine glasses and coffee cup are located to the right of your plate. True or False.

6. In the American style of dining, it is proper, after cutting your food, to switch the fork to your right hand to bring the food to your mouth. True or False.

7. To remove food caught in your teeth, you should excuse yourself and go to the restroom to take care of the problem. True or False.

8. Always hold a glass of white wine by the “bowl.” True or False.

9. When eating soup, you should scoop the soup away from you and then sip it from the side of the spoon. True or False.

10. To signal to the waiter you have finished your meal, place the fork and knife back on the table where they were before. True or False.

How did you do? So, what’s your grade?

10–9 — You deserve a star.

8–7 — You’re on your way.

6–5 — Still a little unsure.

4–3 — Dining etiquette is a challenge for you.

2–0 — Consider the use of “please” and “thank you” as a start.

In this article, I will give you the answers to the quiz, and in “Dining Etiquette 101, Part 2” which will appear in the December 2013/January 2014 issue, there will be additional dining tips to master.

Answers

1. *True.* The dessert spoon and fork are usually placed above your plate. Select the appropriate utensil based on the dessert you order.

2. *False.* After you have finished your meal, fold the napkin slightly and place on the table to the left of your plate.

3. *True.* The bread plate is located to the left of your plate. When eating your piece of bread, break off a small piece, butter it and eat. Do not bite into the whole roll or tear off more than one piece at a time.

4. *True.* Always pass the salt and

pepper together. Place both on the table, and not directly into another person’s hand unless the movement is awkward. Be sure to taste your food before you add salt, pepper or other seasoning. Doing otherwise may be insulting to the chef, host or hostess.

5. *True.* Your water, wine glasses and coffee cup are located on the right of your plate.

6. *True.* The European style is to cut and eat the food item without switching the fork.

7. *True.* You should take care of removing the food from your teeth in privacy.

8. *False.* Always hold your glass or flute by the stem. Holding by the “bowl” warms your drink and both white and sparkling wine taste best when chilled.

9. *True.* Scoop the soup away from you starting at the center of the bowl. Bring the spoon to your mouth and tilt it while sipping from the edge. Do not slurp, and if the soup is too hot, stir it, don’t blow.

10. *False.* Your fork and knife should be placed parallel to each other in the 10 and four o’clock position (as on the face of a clock) with handles at four o’clock and tops of the utensils at 10 o’clock. The fork is placed nearest to you with the knife placed just behind it with the blade pointing in. Never place or rest any portion of the used utensils on the table.

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