

Chapter 1 Script

Dining Tutorial

Welcome to your first lesson on the **Entertainment & Dining course**

Today's lesson is a dining tutorial where you will learn how to identify and use the cutlery that you find laid on the table in front of you.

So let's jump right in.

First of all, many of us seem to have fallen prey to the very same event. As bread rolls are passed around and people begin to claim their side plate by placing their bread roll on their plate, often there has been some confusion as to whose plate belongs to who, leaving you or someone else without a side plate. This is often followed by a confusion as to whose glass belongs to who.

So let us begin with understanding how to identify whose plate and glass belongs to who.

So to help you remember, just think of the beautiful german made car, the BMW.

This will always ensure you identify your crockery correctly.

'B' stands for 'bread plate'. And the 'B' is to the left. Therefore your side plate that holds your bread roll will be to the left of your setting.

'M' stands for 'Main' or 'Meal,' this will obviously be the plate in the centre of the setting.

And 'W' stands for 'water' or 'wine' which is to the right of your meal plate.

It's as simple as that, you'll never get this wrong again.

'BMW'

Now that we know where our side plate and wine/water glasses are placed.

Let's start understanding the intricacies of the set up.

Since most formal British style and continental dinners begin with the bread rolls being passed, let us begin there.

The host is the 'captain' of the meal, they control the speed of the meal.

Therefore it is the host's duty to pick up the bread basket and pass it to his/her right hand side.

If you are the host remember that you never serve yourself first. Instead you will pick up the basket without taking a roll and send it around the whole table first and only then will you help yourself.

You will pick up the bread with your hands or tongs if they have been provided and place the bread roll on the side plate. If a waiter/server is serving the bread to each person individually, you allow them to place it down on the plate. You do not pick up the plate to receive the bread, you simply allow them to place it down. Should you not want any bread, you can simply place your hand at the bottom of your plate to indicate 'no'. You will then scoop some butter out of the butter dish or the plastic wrapping and place the butter on your side plate. You will then pick up your bread roll and break off a bite size piece. You will butter each piece of bread individually, eating your bite size piece before breaking off and buttering another piece.

Things you should avoid doing with your bread roll is, slicing the bread roll open and buttering the whole roll all at once.

Also avoid using your bread roll to dip/drop into your soup or clean any excess liquid from your soup bowl.

Remember that when you rest your bread knife between bites, your knife's blade should always face the centre of your side plate. Essentially your knife's blade should always face leftwards.

Soup Course

Let's move on to the soup course.

There are two types of spoons that you may see at a dining meal.

This one is used for your soup course since it has a bigger bowl to hold more liquid. This shaped one is used for dessert since desserts are usually more firm and you place the front of the spoon in your mouth.

Here's an example of how you hold and use the two spoons. Remember that you always hold your spoon in the right hand irrespective of whether it is a soup spoon or dessert spoon.

This is how you hold your soup spoon, similar to how most people hold a pen. You will hold your dessert spoon exactly the same way.

The difference comes when you are bringing the spoon to your mouth.

When spooning and conveying soup to your mouth you will always spoon away from yourself so as not to spill any soup onto your lap should you have a lapse of concentration. You then bring the spoon to your mouth, being sure to sip off the side of the spoon. Should you wish to get rid of any excess liquid at the bottom of your spoon, you would simply take your spoon as follows and touch it along the top of your soup to get rid of any excess droplets.

Now that we have gone over the basic dining etiquette for the bread and soup course. Let's look at some points to remember. If you wish to rest your spoon during the meal, you simply place the spoon at the 4 o'clock position shown above. When your soup is almost finished, you may pick up one side of the bowl and tilt it away from you to retrieve the excess liquid.

When you wish to indicate that you are finished you will place the spoon in the 6 o'clock position.

Lastly we would like to go over some things to avoid at the table:

Firstly, never scrape the spoon along the side of your bowl to clear the excess liquid.

Next, you should never take your bread and dip it in your soup while eating. If the chef wanted you to mix the two together, he/she would have served them together. And the same rule applies for mopping up your soup with your bread once you are finished.

When you are eating soup out of a bouillon cup where the sides of the bowl are much higher and angled, the bouillon cup is usually placed on a small plate. Your rest position and 'I am Finished' position is placing your spoon on the small plate underneath the bouillon cup.

Identifying & Holding Cutlery

We are now moving onto how to identify which knife and fork is used for each meal and how to hold your cutlery.

Let's begin with holding your fork, open your left hand and place the fork in your hand with your index finger touching the neck of the fork. Now close your hands around the handle of the fork, your fingers should never touch the head of the fork, usually a finger's width from the head of the fork to your finger is suitable enough. If you need to adjust your grip slightly to make it feel more comfortable you can. Remember that when you are dining in a british or continental style, your fork tines always remain facing down. You will never flip your fork and shovel food into your mouth, this is done in american style dining.

Let's learn how to hold the knife. Open your right hand and place the knife in the centre of your hand with your index finger on the neck approximately 1cm below the beginning of the blade, with the blade facing away from your index finger. Close your hand around

the knife and adjust your grip so that your fingers only remain on the handle. This is how you hold your knife.

These variations that you see on the screen are incorrect variations of how you hold your cutlery.

American style dining differs slightly. The knife is held in the right hand to cut your food as follows, then before eating you should rest your knife on the plate as follows and swap your fork to your right hand to eat. When resting your fork, simply place it as follows. Once finished with the meal you would simply place your knife and fork in the 6 o'clock position.

Fish Knife and Fork

Let's talk about the fish knife and fork.

Your fish fork will usually have some decorative aspect to it whether it has a dropped tine or indentations on the sides of it. These will usually indicate that this is the fish fork. We are however beginning to see the fish fork disappear from many restaurants as we see a decline in formal dining.

Your fish knife looks like an oddly shaped sword and is held like this, with the blade of the knife facing down. The reason for this shape is that when a whole fish is served to you on your plate, you would use the sharp side to slice down the spine of the fish as well as the face. You then adjust the grip of your knife and glide the flat side of the knife between the fish fillet and the bone, this removes the fillet from the bone making it easier for you to eat.

As far as sizes of the knives and forks go. The biggest set on your table is reserved for your main course, while your smaller knives and forks are reserved for your earlier courses, like your salad or starters meal depending. We will get more into this in your other chapter.

Remember that you always hold your knife in your right hand and your fork in your left hand irrespective of whether you are right handed or left handed. If however you really struggle to do this, you discreetly change them to the other hand however you do not adjust your table setting.

Dessert Course

Let's talk about the dessert course cutlery. It is usually a fork and spoon placed in this position at the top of your table setting. You will hold your spoon as per usual in your right hand and your fork as per usual in your left hand. Hence why when you set the table, the fork handle will face left and the spoon's handle will face right. Remember that

the spoon is always on the top of the castle, as I like to call it, since you eat your dessert predominantly with your spoon.

The reason it is called dessert course is because the table is usually deserted of all excess items leaving only the cutlery necessary to enjoy your dessert. This means the salt and pepper, side plates, excess glasses and condiments are all removed from the table hence the name, 'dessert course'.

Amuse Bouche

When attending a fine dining meal, you may often receive something called an 'Amuse Bouche', this is a complimentary taster from the chef. Amuse means 'tickle' or 'amuse' and 'bouche' means 'mouth' in french. In other words it is meant to tickle your taste buds. The cutlery necessary for an amuse bouche will be provided unless you are meant to eat with your hands.

Finally in a fine dining restaurant you may be served a palette cleanser between certain meals, particularly between the meat and fish. This may be things like sorbet, bread or even fruits. Again any cutlery required for this will be brought with the palette cleanser.

Setting the Table

When it comes to setting the table, remember these few rules:

1. You always hold your spoon in your right hand therefore your soup spoon will go to the right hand side of your main plate.

You always hold your fork with your left hand therefore your forks will always be set on the left hand side of your plate and your knives are always held in the right therefore your knives will always go to the right hand side of your plate.

Your only exception is your dessert fork and spoon which are set at the top of your plate with your fork handle facing left because you hold your fork with your left hand and your spoon handle facing right because of course, you hold your spoon with your right hand. Remember that your spoon is often your most important cutlery for dessert therefore it sits above the fork.

2. You always eat from the outside in. This means that when you set the table your first course's cutlery will always be furthest from the main plate and the main course cutlery will always be closest to your plate.

Let's come up with a menu and then set the table accordingly.

Soup, salad, fish, meat, dessert.

Right so our first course is a soup, notice that our side plate and bread knife is already set up on the left hand side since bread rolls are not considered a course. We will then place our soup spoon down on the right hand side with space to allow for the next courses.

Next we will have a salad therefore we choose a smaller knife and fork since we know that the biggest knife and fork are reserved for the main course unless you are having fish for main course, in which case you would use your fish knife and fork.

Next you are having a fish course moving in closer to your plate, your next and main course is a meat, your knife and fork will be closest to your main plate. Remember that the blade of your knife always faces left. The way I remember it is that the knife and fork are in love and so the knife always faces the fork.

Finally you will end the meal with your dessert fork and spoon, remembering that your fork handle faces left and your spoon handle faces right.

We have just set a table setting for a five course meal.

And in fact this would most likely be a six course meal, why do you think? Well a palate cleanser would most likely have been served between the fish and meat course and a palette cleanser actually counts as a course while an amuse bouche does not..

Let's practise another example:

You are having the following meals:

Salad, soup, meat, fish, dessert

Of course we would have already set our side plate and butter knife down with the knife blade facing left.

Next we shall have a salad course, therefore we would pick out a small knife and fork and place them in the most outer position from the plate with the fork on the left and the knife on the right. Remember that your knife's blade should always be facing inwards/leftwards towards the fork that it is in love with.

Next we are having a soup course. Remember we only need a soup spoon for this course so there is no need to add another piece of cutlery. The spoon would go closer to the plate, and nothing on the fork side of the plate. Remember we are moving from outside in.

Your next course is a meat course, you would use your biggest knife and fork for this meal unless there was a second meat course after this. Your meat knife goes to the inside of the soup spoon still allowing space for your final course to fit in.

Next you are having a fish course, therefore you would place your fish knife closest to the main plate. You would also place your fish fork closest to the plate. Remember each course moves closer to the centre plate or centre of your setting.

Finally your dessert spoon and fork go to the top of your setting with the spoon placed at the top of your setting.

As a last point to remember, always make sure you keep the distance from the bottom of the table equal when arranging all your cutlery pieces.

Again, we have just set up a six course meal considering that there would have been a palate cleanser between meat and fish.

To summarise, when you are setting your table, your 1st course's cutlery goes to the most outer position on both sides of the plate and then with each course you move closer to the centre of the setting.

Now when you are placed with an array of cutlery in front of you, you no longer need to panic, just remember you start with the cutlery on the outer edges and then move your way in with each meal. It's as simple as that. Remember 'outside in', 'outside in'.