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Do You Have Terrible Table Manners? Signs You Need to Clean Up Your Act

Don't make these social blunders anymore!



Don't make these faux pas.

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We've certainly evolved since the days of finishing schools and tightened corsets. The change in our culture has been slow but necessary, and it can definitely be marked as "progress." There are many things we don't miss about strict Victorian table etiquette, But we aren't as great at manners and poise as we once were.

Are You Being Rude?

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In many ways, the relaxation of etiquette has made life better. These days, dinner with friends doesn't require starchy clothes or perfect behavior. But, boy, can your inexperience with certain social rules become a problem when your boss invites you over for dinner or an important client wants to chat over lunch.

Even if you think that **you are behaving well** [7], there are subtle things you may be doing at the table that can be quite off-putting. For instance, did you know that placing your napkin in your lap as soon as you sit down is a no-no?

To help you brush up on your **table manners** [8], we asked some of the world's most knowledgeable etiquette experts what common table faux pas you may be committing.

Assuming Everyone is a “Sharer”



Slideshow: [Do You Have Terrible Table Manners? Signs You Need to Clean Up Your Act](#) [6]

[6]



You might not think twice about doing dinner “family style,” but others at the table may not appreciate it.

“There are loads of folks who grow up sharing food **from each other’s plates** [9],” says etiquette expert and relationship author April Masini of **AskApril** [10], an advice website. “Don’t assume the person next to you is one of them. Having someone steal food from your plate with his or her fork (or worse, fingers) while you’re eating is boundary-crossing. If you’d like some of what’s on your dinner companion’s plate, simply ask — or better yet, offer something from your plate first, and see if she or he responds in kind.”

Buttering Your Bread by the Slice



This is definitely an old-school tip, but if you are at a **formal table** [11], it will come in handy.

"The *only* correct way to butter and eat bread is to put the butter on the side of your bread plate first," stresses Maggie Oldham of **Modern Etiquette Coach** [12], "then tear off one bite-sized piece of bread at a time and put butter on that piece only, right before putting it into your mouth. More sophisticated dining companions will silently call you out if you butter the whole piece of bread."

Don't make these etiquette mistakes!

[13]

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