

The Essential Table Setting Guide

Proper table setting is an art form. Whether casual or formal, traditional or modern, presentation is everything. When properly set, tableware arrangements enhance the dining experience. Make a lasting impression using our flatware, dinnerware and drinkware setting tips. This guide gives a quick summary of the proper use of china, flatware and glassware and how much to keep on hand. Happy setting!

Table Settings by Meal

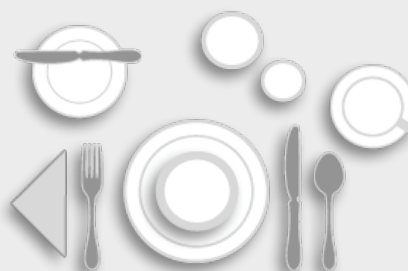
Breakfast

Flatware: [Dinner Fork](#), [Dinner Knife](#), [Teaspoon](#), [Butter Knife](#)

Dinnerware: [Dinner Plate](#), [Cereal Bowl](#), [B&B Plate](#), [Coffee/Tea Cup & Saucer](#)

Drinkware: [Water Tumbler](#) or [Juice Glass](#)

Accessories: [Napkin](#)



Quick Tip

The first meal of the day typically has a more relaxed, casual feel. Keep the number of utensils at a minimum.

Lunch

Flatware: [Salad Fork](#), [Dinner Fork](#), [Dinner Knife](#), [Teaspoon](#)

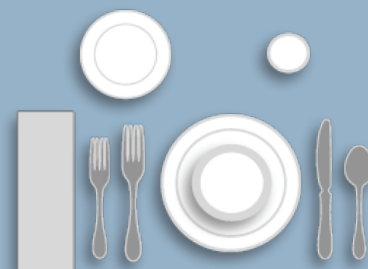
Dinnerware: [Dinner Plate](#), [Soup Bowl](#), [B&B Plate](#)

Drinkware: [Water Tumbler](#)

Accessories: [Napkin](#)

Quick Tip

Lunch can be a casual or upscale affair. Pare down your presentation for informal settings.



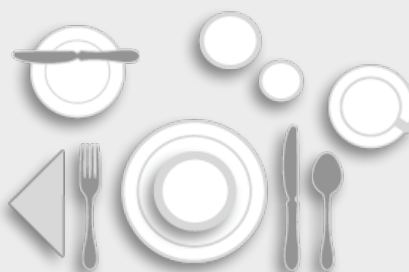
Dinner

Flatware: [Salad Fork](#), [Dinner Fork](#), [Butter Knife](#), [Dinner Knife](#), [Teaspoon](#)

Dinnerware: [Dinner Plate](#), [Salad Plate](#), [Soup Bowl](#), [B&B Plate](#)

Drinkware: [Water Tumbler](#), [Wine Glass](#)

Accessories: [Napkin](#)



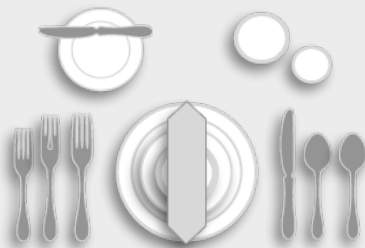
Quick Tip

How you dress the table depends entirely on how sophisticated your dining room feels. To enhance the look of your tables at dinner, add a tablecloth or placemats, and consider candle lighting and other accents.

Table Setting Guide information courtesy of Oneida and Churchill

Quick Tip

Formal dining room settings require more flatware and glassware pieces than casual settings. When using this display, utensils should be placed in order of the courses offered, allowing guests to work from the outside in, toward the plate.



Formal Dinner

Flatware: [Salad Fork](#), [Fish Fork](#), [Dinner Fork](#), [Butter Knife](#), [Dinner Knife](#), [Soup/Bouillon Spoon](#), [Teaspoon](#)

Dinnerware: [Dinner Plate](#), [Salad Plate](#), [Soup Bowl](#), [B&B Plate](#)

Drinkware: [Wine Glass](#), [Water Goblet](#), [Champagne Flute](#)

Accessories: [Napkin](#)

European Dinner

Flatware: [Cocktail Fork](#), [Salad Fork](#), [Fish Fork](#), [European Dinner Fork](#), [Butter Knife](#), [European Dinner Knife](#), [Soup/Bouillon Spoon](#), [Teaspoon](#), [Dessert Spoon](#)

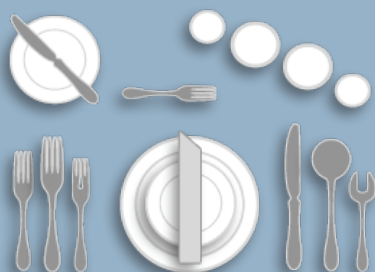
Dinnerware: [Dinner Plate](#), [Salad Plate](#), [B&B Plate](#)

Drinkware: [Red Wine Glass](#), [White Wine Glass](#), [Sherry Glass](#)

Accessories: [Napkin](#)

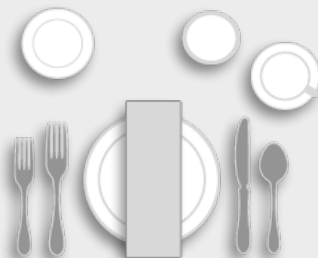
Quick Tip

This tabletop configuration is intended for the most opulent occasions and typically includes a fish course.



Quick Tip

This type of table display is ideal for events and buffet-style service. Forgo the dinner plate when they are stacked at the initial serving station.



Banquet / Brunch

Flatware: [Salad Fork](#), [Dinner Fork](#), [Dinner Knife](#)

Dinnerware: [Dinner Plate](#), [B&B Plate](#), [Coffee/Tea Cup & Saucer](#)

Drinkware: [Water Goblet](#)

Accessories: [Napkin](#)

For more tips on table setting, view these resources:

The Emily Post Institute – [Table Setting Guides](#)

Etiquette Scholar – [Table Setting](#)

Oneida – [Table Setting Guide](#)

Insights and Best Practices for Setting an Unforgettable Table

- ◆ Infuse different shapes and sizes to bring appeal and excitement to your table presentation
- ◆ Consider table size and portions when planning your settings
- ◆ Choose colors, textures and styles that complement the overall look of your dining room

- ◆ Functionality is more important than accents – make the dining experience your primary focus
- ◆ Train staff on the proper handling and care of tabletop products to reduce breakage and control costs
- ◆ Allow at least 24 inches for each place setting
- ◆ Keep all tableware approximately one inch from the edge of the table
- ◆ Place all knives with the cutting edge toward the plate
- ◆ Arrange flatware in order of use, working from the outside toward the plate for each course served
- ◆ If salad is served after entrée, place salad fork next to plate
- ◆ Glass placement: from right to left, white wine, red wine, and water/iced beverage. Champagne may be placed behind red and white wine glasses.
- ◆ A seafood/cocktail fork is always placed to the right of the soup spoon, unless served with a seafood cocktail. It may be placed on the cocktail plate.
- ◆ Make it neat and straight, with all pieces generally equidistant from each other



Table Setting Benefits

Maximize Your Investment

The number of place settings should match daily usage and the types of specialty pieces should match the menu. Too many items are unnecessary, too few means extra warewashing.

Control Sanitation Costs

The correct place settings for each meal during the day will eliminate warewashing of unnecessary pieces, saving you money.

Create the Proper Ambience/Atmosphere

A customer's first impression is their lasting impression. Make the atmosphere of your establishment unforgettable with a table setting presentation that inspires your guests, and complements the menu and decor.

Importance of Proper Care, Handling & Ordering

Tableware is an invaluable investment for your restaurant. Though durable, commercial china, glass and flatware experience high-volume and rigorous use. Extend the life of your tabletop supplies with our tips for proper handling, cleaning and storage.

In addition to proper handling, maintain correct supply levels to ensure smooth service and lessen warewashing demands for dinnerware, flatware and glassware in your restaurant. Follow the ordering guidelines included here to calculate the quantities needed for your dining room.

China

The most severe test of chinaware quality and cost effectiveness is its ability to maintain appearance and resist damage and breakage under the demanding conditions of bussing, scraping, racking, warewashing, and storage.

Washing

Unattractive stains and discolorations can be caused by inattention to cleaning procedures such as allowing china to remain unwashed after use, pre-soaking in water over 160°F, improper detergent concentrations, hard water or iron content, lime content in old equipment, and clogged or eroded spray nozzles. The above can be avoided with these easy to follow tips.

- ◆ Wash all china at least once before its first use.
- ◆ Do not put detergent directly onto china. An excessive concentration of alkaline detergent can cause permanent damage to decorations, especially those with gold and platinum.
- ◆ A wash temperature of 60° C (140° F) is recognized as the most effective. Excessively high water temperature will reduce the washing efficiency and may damage decorations.
- ◆ Use **racks and baskets** made from plastic or ones that are plastic coated so items do not vibrate against each other.
- ◆ In hard water areas, deposits may form on your china in time if the water is allowed to dry on the china. These soluble deposits can easily be removed with a diluted acid such as vinegar.

Metal Markings

Metal markings are the appearance of small black marks on the surface of a ceramic product and are caused if two hard substances are rubbed together. These marks are also known as "pencil marks" and can be caused by mineral deposits of metal from certain types of flatware.

Lower grade flatware is softer and is more prone to leaving marks. Markings can also be caused by metal surfaces such as dishwashers and drainers and can usually be successfully removed by rubbing with vinegar, a mild bleach solution, lemon juice and proprietary cleaners.



USE OUR BUYING GUIDE TO ORGANIZE YOUR NEXT TABLETOP ORDER >>



Remember to:

- Stack china to the proper level
- Sort all items in bus tray
- Have an adequate supply of china for rush periods
- Carry dishes carefully
- Place cups in racks
- Keep receiving area neat and clean
- Remove scraps carefully with rubber scraper or water spray
- Load like items in each dish rack

Avoid:

- Stacking cups
- Carrying more dishes than you can safely handle
- Overloading bus trays
- Allowing dirty dishes to pile up
- Using abrasive pads or other dishes to remove scraps
- Loading loose, mixed items into the dishwasher
- Stacking dishes more than 16 inches high



China Ordering Guide • [Bowls](#)

To determine the needed quantity of each item, multiply the number of seats times the ordering factor for each item.

ITEMS	SUGGESTED USE	FAST FOOD	DINING	BANQUET	CATERING
Bouillon, Handled or Unhandled	Soup, Packaged Sugar, Custard, Egg Cup, Crackers, Condiments, Gelatin	1	1 1/2	1 1/2	1 1/2
4 1/4" – 5" Fruit Bowl	"Monkey" Dish for Vegetables, Fruits, Puddings, Desserts, Bake & Serve	2	3	6	2 1/2
8 7/8" – 9 1/4" Rim Deep Soup	A La Carte Soup, Salad, Pasta, Chili, Oyster Stew, Bouillabaisse	1/2	1/2	-	1/2
11" – 12 1/2" Pasta Bowl	Entrée Pastas, Salads	1/2	1/2	-	1/2

Care, Handling & Order Guide information courtesy of Churchill, Libbey and Royal Doulton.

China Ordering Guide • Plates

To determine the quantity of each item, multiply the number of seats times the ordering factor shown for each item. Then, order the closest dozen quantity.

ITEMS	SUGGESTED USE	FAST FOOD	DINING	BANQUET	CATERING
5 1/2" – 6 1/8" Plate	Bread & Butter, Desserts, Bouillon Underliner	1 1/2	2	6	2
7 1/2" – 7 1/8" Plate	Sandwiches, Salads, Desserts, Underliner for Grapefruit, Salad Bowls	1 1/2	2	-	2
8 1/2" – 9 1/8" Plate	Luncheon, Entrée, Dinner Plate, Pastries, Underliner for Salad Plate	1 1/2	2	2	2
9 3/4" – 10" Plate	Dinner, Breakfast, Luncheon, Steaks, Underliner for Salad	1 1/2	3	2	1 1/2
10 1/4" – 10 3/8" Plate	Entrée, Steaks, Prime Rib, Fish, Mexican Dishes, Service Plate, Poultry	2	2	-	1
7 1/4" – 9 7/8" Oval Plate/Bowl	Baked Potato, Asparagus, Salad, Cold Seafood	1	1 1/2	-	1
11" – 15" Large Platter	Steaks, Fish, Soup & Sandwich, Lobster, Prime Rib, Surf N' Turf, Sandwich Underliner	1	1 1/2	1/2	1
Service Plate 12" – 13"	Tabletop Decoration, Place Plate, Serving Plate, Special Presentations	1 1/2	1 1/2	-	1 1/2

China Ordering Guide • Pitchers & Mugs

To determine the quantity of each item, multiply the number of seats times the ordering factor shown for each item. Then, order the closest dozen quantity.

ITEMS	SUGGESTED USE	FAST FOOD	DINING	BANQUET	CATERING
Coffee/Tea Cup	Coffee, Tea, Hot Chocolate, Soup	3	3	2	2
Mug	Hot & Cold Beverages	3	3	2	2
Coffee/Tea Saucer	Underliner for Cups, Bouillon, Fruit	3	3	2	2
Coffee/Teapot	Hot & Cold Beverages	1/3	1/3	-	1/3
Creamer, 3.50 oz	Cream for Beverages, Syrup, Melted Butter	1/2	1/2	-	1/2

Glassware

Remember to:

- Keep adequate supplies of glassware on hand in order to prevent recently washed items from going directly into service
- Check dishwasher temperature twice daily
- Replace worn [glass washer brushes](#)
- Bus glassware directly into racks, or use divided bus trays with flatware baskets
- Pre-heat glasses with hot water when pouring hot drinks
- Handle glassware gently; remove abraded, cracked, or chipped glassware from service
- Dump ice and let glassware reach room temperature before washing
- Remove glasses from bus pans one at a time
- Clean (scrape) glassware, flatware and then china
- Store glasses in their properly sized [glass racks](#)

Avoid:

- Putting cold water or ice into a warm or hot glass
- Picking up glasses in bouquets
- Stacking glasses
- Scooping ice with glasses
- Glass-to-glass contact in overhead racks and anywhere else
- Contacting glasses with the beer tap
- Putting flatware into glasses

Restaurant glassware is varied with numerous uses and styles. For information on different glassware types, proper care and optimal storage, view our comprehensive [Glassware Guide](#).



Care, Handling & Ordering Guide information courtesy of Churchill, Libbey and Royal Doulton.

Glass Ordering Guide • [Restaurants](#)

ITEMS	100 SEATS (in dozens)	200 SEATS (in dozens)	300 SEATS (in dozens)
5 oz Juice Glass	12	24	36
12 oz Iced Tea Glass	12	24	36
10 oz Water Glass	24	48	72
6 oz Sherbet	12	24	36
6 oz Flute	12	24	36
Sugar Packet Holder	10	20	30

Glass Ordering Guide • [Banquets](#)

ITEMS	100 SEATS (in dozens)	200 SEATS (in dozens)	300 SEATS (in dozens)
5 oz Juice Glass	12	24	36
12 oz Iced Tea Glass	12	24	36
10 oz Water Goblet	24	48	72
5.50 oz Sherbet	12	24	36
6 oz Flute	12	24	36
8.50 oz Wine Glass	12	24	36
Sugar Packet Holder	10	20	30

Glass Ordering Guide • Room Service

ITEMS	
8 oz Tumbler Glassware	Minimum 2 to a room
Ashtray	Minimum 2 to a room
Floral Accessories	Minimum 1 to a room

Upgrade Your
Room Service Program

[Helpful Tips >>](#)

Care, Handling & Ordering Guide information courtesy of Libbey.

Flatware

Presoaking Tips

Presoaking is recommended, after which utensils should be immediately washed in high temperatures — low temperatures or chlorine baths will attack silver and metal. To prevent corrosion and film build-up, flatware must be rinsed thoroughly and dried immediately after rinsing.

Remember To:

- Load flatware into presoak containers immediately after use
- Change presoak solution frequently
- Store flatware in a dry area away from cooking fumes and corrosive materials
- Wash flatware in a vertical position in temperatures above 135°F, and rinse in clean water at 180°F
- Use a nonabrasive, noncorrosive cleaning agent and a water softener or wetting agent



Avoid:

- Presoaking flatware for longer than 15 minutes
- Loading flatware into aluminum, copper, or copper alloy containers for presoaking; use only plastic or stainless steel
- Putting flatware into glasses or cups
- Leaving flatware soiled overnight

Flatware Ordering Guide

This chart is based on standard restaurant settings. Your specific need may vary according to individual operation. Multiply your number of seats by the ordering factors listed below for an approximation. Your reserve stock should be at least 25% of that in active service. **Accessory items to be considered separately, depending on type of service and menu.*

ITEMS	DELUXE	SEMI-FORMAL	STANDARD
Teaspoon	5	3	3
Dessert Spoon	2	2	2
Tablespoon	1/4	1/4	-
Iced Tea Spoon	1 1/2	1 1/2	1 1/2
Demitasse Spoon	2	-	-
Bouillon Spoon	2	2	2
Utility/Dessert Fork	3	3	3
Dinner Fork	2	-	-
Salad or Fish Fork	*	*	*
Cocktail Fork	1 1/2	1 1/2	1 1/2
Dinner Knife	2	1 1/2	1 1/2
Utility/Dessert Knife	2	1 1/2	*
B&B Knife or Butter Spreader	2	-	-
Steak Knife	*	*	-
Fish Knife	*	*	-

Care, Handling & Ordering Guide information courtesy of Libbey.