

Setting the Table

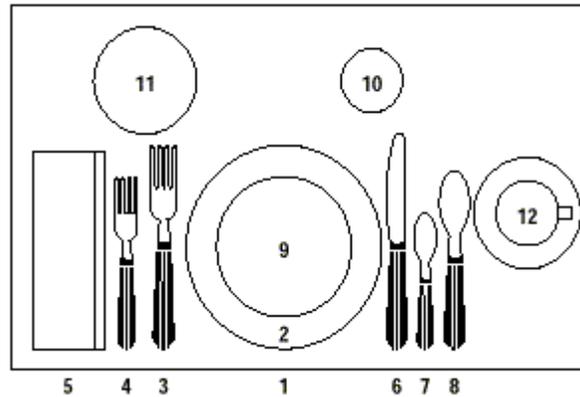
Table settings include the table covering, centerpiece, dinnerware, flatware and glassware. Space for each person including dishes, glasses, flatware and napkin is called a place setting or a "cover." Coordinating the colors, designs and styles is the key to making the table setting an attractive background for food. A table that has been set correctly helps to make meals more enjoyable. An imaginative setting seems to make food taste better.

Tablecloths should be large enough to cover the table with an overhang of 16-24 inches for a formal setting; and 10-14 inches for an informal setting. When the shape of the placemat allows, lay the edge of the mat even with the edge of the table.

Allow plenty of room for each person at the table. A comfortable cover allows 24-30 inches from center to center.

1. The flatware, plate and napkin should be one inch from the edge of the table.
2. The plate is always in the center of the place setting.
3. The dinner fork is placed at the left of the plate.
4. If a salad fork is used, it is placed to the left of the dinner fork.
5. The napkin is placed to the left of the fork, with the fold on the left (unless a decorative/creative fold is used). The napkin may also go under a fork or on top of the plate.
6. The knife is placed to the right of the plate with the sharp blade facing in towards the plate.
7. The teaspoon is placed to the right of the knife.
8. If a soup spoon is needed, it is placed to the right of the teaspoon.
9. The soup bowl may be placed on the dinner plate.
10. The drinking glass is placed at the tip of the knife.
11. If salad, bread and/or dessert plate(s) - or bowl(s) - is used, place at the top of the fork(s).
12. The cup or mug is placed to the top right of the spoons.

Note: Only the utensils needed are placed on the table.



Centerpieces

While flowers or fruit are frequently used as a centerpiece, the choice is limited only by your imagination. The chief rule to remember is to keep the size in scale with the table, and low enough so that guests can talk "over it." Candles, usually used in the evening, should always be lit before the guests are seated. (During the Meal Appeal Contest, candles should NOT be lit!)

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