

Tablesetting

There is no one “right” way to set the table. The pattern of table service to be used, the menu to be served, and the size of the table, establish the plan for setting the table.

A cover consists of the dinnerware, beverage ware, flatware, and linens to be used by each person; it is the individual’s place at the table. Use only flatware and plates necessary for the meal!

Linens: Linens mean all of the table cloths, placemats, and other table cover and napkins used on the dining table.

1. Placemats should be placed an inch away from the table edge.
2. The preferred shape for the folded napkin is the rectangle, but the square is also good.
3. The napkin is usually placed to the left of the fork or forks. However, if covers are close together, it can be placed in the center of the cover between the knife and fork (on dinner plate).
4. The practice of placing the fork or forks on top of the napkin laid to the left in the cover has come into wide use. This practice necessitates sliding the napkin out from under the fork or forks, and presents an accident-prone situation to those accustomed to tradition.
5. The open edges of the napkin should face toward the plate when placed to the left of the forks.

Table Decorations (i.e. centerpiece)

1. Decorations need not always be placed in the center of the table. Small arrangements can be placed at diagonally opposite corners, at all four corners, at two ends of the table, or at one end of the table. Size of the arrangement should be determined by the placement of the decorations. (I.e. not so large that you cannot see over it).

Laying Flatware (I.e. knife, fork, spoons etc.)

1. Lay the dinner knife to the right of the plate with the cutting edge directed toward the plate.
2. Lay spoons with the bowls facing up at the right of the knife.

3. Always lay the fork or forks with the tines facing up at the left of the plate. Lay the salad fork nearest the plate and the dinner fork to the left of it if you intend that the salad be eaten with the main course or after it. Lay the dinner fork nearest the plate and the salad fork to the left of it if you intend that the salad be eaten before the main course.
4. It is not necessary to provide a salad fork when the salad accompanies the main course.
5. Laying the flatware for dessert is no problem unless the tool for dessert is a fork. When it is a fork, it must be laid so that there is no doubt about its intended use. Should a menu need a dessert fork, it should be placed to the right of the dinner fork. When the flatware for dessert is a spoon, lay it to the right of the knife.
6. If no spoon is necessary for eating either the meal or dessert, it is not included in the cover.

Placing Beverageware

1. Place the water glass at the tip of the knife.
2. Glasses of milk, when water also is served, are placed to the right and a little in front of the water glass – see figure below. If no water glass is placed, as is often true in families with children, place the glass of milk or other beverage in the position of the water glass.
3. Dinner plate should be placed at least 1" and not more than 2" from the table edge.

