

SOCIAL ETIQUETTE

Handling Yourself Correctly.

By Anisia Mwaniki

BACKGROUND

“We are often Faced with, and Exposed to Situations and Things that we are Expected to Know, But were Never Taught...”

It can be Overwhelming and Intimidating!

Let us Take Time to Learn...

Like a Foreign Language!”

INTRODUCTION:

WHAT IS SOCIAL ETIQUETTE?

- Social Etiquette is **the Art of Handling Yourself Correctly in Different Social Settings; Having Good Manners**, e.g. at meals; social gatherings; meetings; entertainment, etc.
- The **Opposite** is usually described in unpleasant words such as:
 - Bad manners
 - Uncultured
 - Uncouth
 - Village pumpkin
 - Ignorant
 - Uncivilized

Importance of Learning Social Skills

In this **Globalized and Fast Moving World**, many people find themselves thrown into a **world they are not too familiar with, e.g.**

- at or after School; or
- being in the Job Market; or
- because of Having Acquired some Money or
- having Climbed their Social Ladder; or
- Relocating from Rural to Urban areas; or
- Moving to a Different Country, etc. ...

Social and Soft Skills are a Necessity...

- It is a **Competitive and Globalised world.**
- **Lost opportunities** for a job, or a business deal, **for lack of soft skills.**
- A good part of **Interviews and Business Deals**, especially in the high end competitive areas are often **done in a social setting**, e.g. over a meal... to see how one handles himself/herself!

Social Etiquette Instills Confidence

- What is accepted as the correct social behaviour of course **varies** from country to country, from culture to culture, in some aspects... We **highlight** a more global sphere; what we call **Continental (European) and American...** in fact it covers most of the **Commonwealth countries.**
- With these general guidelines that follow, we can **face the world with confidence... AND ENJOY LIFE!**

PART 1

MEALS – TABLE ETIQUETTE

- Skills and Guidelines surrounding meals cannot be overemphasized!
- For most Africans, we are used to eating **with the Hands** or with **just a Spoon**; from **One Plate**; and drinking from a **cup** or mug. If we go back a little, there were no plates, cups and spoons even!
- Therefore the first time we are ***faced with a whole array*** of ***Plates, Knives, Spoons, Folks, Glasses, of all Shapes and Sizes..*** Plus so many other implements at table, **IT IS VERY OVERWHELMING, INTIMIDATING !!!** Just as foreigners to Africa, Asia.. get confused about eating with their hands...

Meal Courses

- For most Africans, this is a new concept: we generally just refer to the **main course**. E.g. We had ugali; rice; chapati; matoke; maize and beans, etc. then they might mention the accompanying sauce, stew or vegetables.
- A Meal Course simply refers to the **Different Steps and the Order** in which we are served or eat **Specific Things/ Items/ Drinks**.
- It is important to understand this since it will help us understand why the table is laid in a particular way, and why different plates, knives, forks, spoons, etc are arranged in a specific way.

A Basic 3-Course Meal

- We shall highlight on what we would generally encounter on a day to day basis, say, in an ordinary meal at a restaurant, a buffet, a luncheon or dinner.
- This is made up of these broad Parts or Steps or Order.
 1. **STARTER OR APPETIZER** – e.g. soup or salad
 2. **MAIN COURSE** – usually comprises of three things (which we normally refer to as a balanced diet) - A ***Protein*** like beef, fish, chicken, etc; ***Carbohydrates/ Starch*** like rice, potatoes, pasta, ugali/polenta, etc. and ***Vegetables***. For Vegetarians the meal does not include animal protein.
 3. **DESSERT**: Sometimes referred to as “the Sweet” or “the Pudding”. It can be a baked item or fruits/ fruit salad.
 4. **(COFFEE/TEA)** – Will be served or offered after the Dessert in a 4-course

BUFFET SETTING



BUFFET SETTING

- The Meal Courses are laid out one after the other,
- With the **Correct Crockery and Cutlery** next to the right course. Sometimes the cutlery is set on the table.
- **Please DO NOT serve everything on the SAME PLATE. Use the correct and separate plate for Starter, Main Course and Dessert.**

Table Setting ...

- The table is normally set **according to the order** in which the items, i.e. the crockery (flatware or plates) and the cutlery (silverware or knives, forks and spoons) **will be used for various courses.**

- **PLATES**

- **Dinner Plate** (big/ large and flat) at the bottom - *for Main Course*
- **Soup Plate** (deep) **or a Soup Bowl** on top of the dinner plate. Or a smaller flat plate *for* a different **starter**, that is not liquid.
- **Side Plate** (small and flat) on the left hand side where the Table Napkin will normally be placed. Used *for bread*.



Learn these, and more, in practice.

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Social Etiquette - Handling Yourself Correctly

SOCIAL ETIQUETTE

Handling Yourself Correctly

✓ Do you know the Name and Use of Each of These Specific Items? Their different Shapes and Sizes? Handling them?

✓ Do you know why they are Set in a specific way?

Basic Setting

How to Set a Table

Basic, Casual and Formal Table Settings

Basic



Casual Setting



Formal

butter knife

bread plate



napkin



salad fork

dinner fork

salt shaker



place card



pepper shaker



dessert spoon



water glass



red wine glass



white wine glass



dinner knife



soup spoon



soup bowl



charger

SHOULD NOT DO AT TABLE 1...

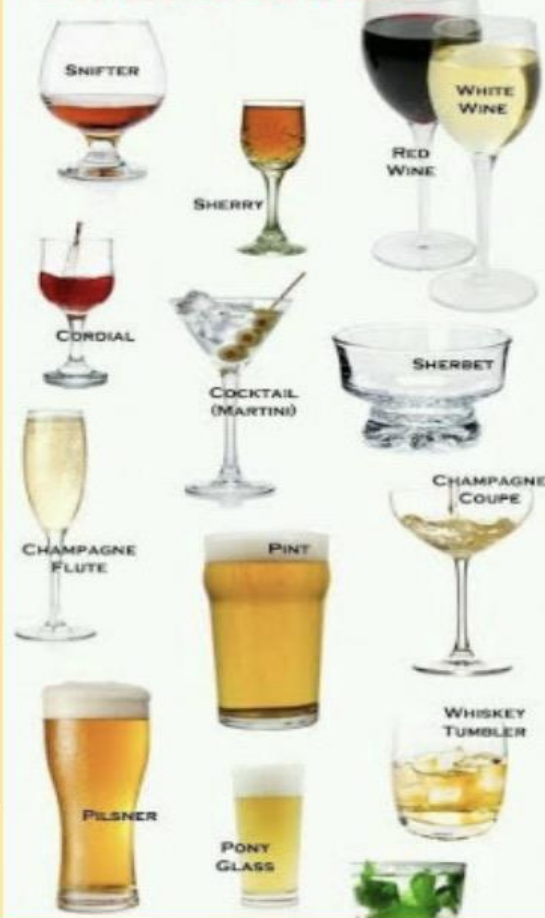
- No matter what culture you come from, there are always “Dos” and “Don’ts” about meal etiquette that we are taught from childhood.
- Here we shall only highlight a few, as a follow up of what we have set out:
 - **No Phone** on the table. **Do not attend to the phone** while in the company of others at table. If you must. excuse yourself and move...
 - Do not use your “**neighbour’s**” set of cutlery, glass, etc
 - Do not **point out or shake your cutlery** towards others at table. Place your cutlery on the plate when not in use.
 - Meals are social occasions, so **holding a conversation** while at meals is the courteous thing to do, but do not **show the food in your mouth** while you talk.

SHOULD NOT DO AT TABLE 2...

- The **table napkin** should be placed on your lap while at meals, not on your chest. Use the table napkin to only gently wipe any food off your lips or corners of your mouth; and not for anything else.
- Do not **stretch** out for things, e.g. salt, water jug, etc. if it is far from you. Kindly ask someone to pass it to you.
- Serve only **what you will eat and finish**. You can have a second helping if need be, but serving too much or heaping your plate, and leaving food on the plate is not correct. Etc.

Now a peep into PART 2...

DRINKING GLASS TYPES & STYLES



SOCIAL ETIQUETTE

Handling Yourself Correctly

Entertainment and Socialising: Drinks

- ✓ Is It Any Drink, Any Time?
No. Which Ones Are For Before, During or After Meals?
- ✓ Is It Any Glass, Any Cup?
No. Which Are The Correct Ones, For Which Drink?

Learn these and more, in practice

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Thank You!



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