

*Social & Professional*  
ETIQUETTE  
*Guide*



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# *Introduction*

When it comes to success at work, school and the social world, you are in greater control than you may realize. Etiquette, and your embracing of it, is paramount to building, gaining and displaying respect. A firm handshake, or appropriate “thank you,” coupled with the proper attire can and will turn your ideas into accepted practice. This guide is a compilation of tried and true tips and tricks your Brothers have gained over the years. Learn from our misfortunes and missed opportunities, and together, we can exemplify yet another professional aspect of Alpha Rho Chi.

The lessons in this guide are applicable in nearly every situation you’ll encounter, be it the boardroom or the ballroom. What is appropriate for a business meeting is also appropriate for a chapter meeting; and, by example, the same goes for attire in the office and attire in the classroom.

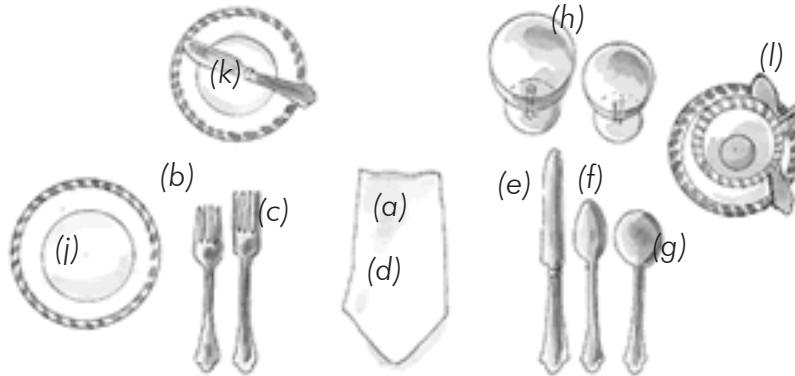
Employ these strategies and strengthen your image and success. It’s vital we hold ourselves to the highest standard and in doing so, truly exhibit our skills and talents, which ultimately lead to the respect we each deserve.

Now, please unfold your napkin, place it atop your lap, and let us begin...

# Table Manners

## Setting the Table

The table setting for a dinner party can be an immediate indicator for the amount of care and formality a host expects. Typically, the level of formality increases with the amount of utensils at each place setting. The diagram below shows the place setting for a three course meal. As a general rule, forks are placed to the left of the dinner plate while knives and spoons are placed to the right.



- (a) dinner plate (below napkin)
- (b) salad fork
- (c) entree fork
- (d) napkin
- (e) dinner knife
- (f) table spoon
- (g) soup spoon
- (h) glasses
- (i) salad plate
- (k) bread plate & butter knife
- (l) coffee cup & saucer

Equally as important to setting the table is knowing which utensil to use when. Utensils are placed in the order they are used, from the outside in. Also, your drinks are to the right of your plate, while your bread plate is to the left. This can be remembered by using a simple trick: with your palm facing down, touch your left thumb to your left index finger, leaving the rest of your fingers sticking straight up. Do the same with your right hand. You'll notice that you've formed the letters 'b' (for bread) and 'd' (for drink), which correlates to which side your bread and drink are set in front of you.

For more detailed table setting information, visit [http://www.emilypost.com/everyday/table\\_settings.htm](http://www.emilypost.com/everyday/table_settings.htm).

## Common Mistakes

You've been told to do these things for years. And for good reason, too. Redundant as this list may seem, these are some of the most common elements of dining etiquette. Follow these simple rules, and you'll impress even your grandmother.

- Place your napkin in your lap immediately upon sitting down.
- Keep your elbows off the table.
- Don't talk with your mouth full.
- Medical procedures and bodily functions do not make appropriate dinner conversation.
- Butter your bread one bite at a time.
- Ladies always order first.
- If you must leave the table during the meal, place your napkin on your chair if you plan to resume eating; place your napkin on the table if you are finished.
- Do not blow your nose at the table.
- When sneezing, turn your head and bury your mouth in your arm.
- Never reach across another guest; ask him or her to pass. The salt and pepper are always passed together.
- Sip your drinks, never chug.
- When in doubt, follow the example set forth by your host, or highest ranking guest.

## The Bill & Tipping

- Always factor in tip and tax when splitting a check.
- If you've invited someone to a meal, it's assumed that you're picking up the bill.
- If you've been invited to a meal, it's never inappropriate to offer to help pay.

### Tipping

Service	Amount
Waitstaff - average service	15% - 20%
Waitstaff - exceptional service	20% and up
Bartenders	\$1 per drink
Valet Car Park	\$1
Coat Check	\$1 per coat, \$2 if you have additional items
Taxi Cab Driver	20% (50 cent minimum)
Hotel Maid Service	\$5 per night (\$7 - \$9 for stays over a week)
Retail Loading Assistance	\$5

Except where noted, the above amounts are for average service. There is nothing wrong with rewarding exceptional service with a large tip, especially if you are a repeat customer; good tippers are usually rewarded with better service the next time around.

For more tipping tips, visit [www.tipping.org](http://www.tipping.org).

# Correspondence

## RSVP & Weddings

“RSVP” is a French acronym for “Repondez S’il Vous Plait” (Please Reply), NOT “Response Shall Verify Presence.” Always respond to your host in the manner requested. If no form is specified, reply in the same manner that you were invited.

Weddings are one of the most common events to which a formal invitation and RSVP are expected. Entire books have been written about wedding etiquette, and many of the rules summarized below have application in nearly all formal situations.

- If you accept an invitation, you are expected to attend, as a meal has already been purchased on your behalf.
- If you decline an invitation, it is still customary to send a gift (within one year of the wedding date).
- Bringing a date to a wedding is only appropriate if the invitation specifies that one is invited (“James Smith and Guest”).
- Remember to bring the invitation to the wedding; it may contain important information you may not have thought you needed (such as directions from the ceremony to the reception).
- Tailgating in between the ceremony and the reception is always welcome, regardless of what the bride says.
- Complementing the bride’s mother on the occasion will go a long way in mitigating any damage caused by overuse of an open bar.

## Thank You Notes

While they do not need to be literary masterpieces, a sincere and timely thank you note is a necessity that applies to a wide variety of social and professional situations.

### For Overnight Visits

Dear Ruth,

You and Don are such wonderful hosts. Once again, Frances and I can only tell you that there is no other house where we have such a good time and which we hate to leave so much. We especially enjoyed the party Saturday evening. Thank you very, very much for including us. Frances joins me in sending much love,

Brian

### For An Interview

Dear Mr. Fisher,

It was very enjoyable speaking with you about the staff designer position at Rhodeside & Harwell. The job, as you presented it, seems to be a very good match for my skills and interests. The creative approach to landscape architecture that you described confirmed my desire to work with you.

In addition to my enthusiasm, I will bring to the position strong writing skills, assertiveness and the ability to communicate with others. My artistic background will help me to work with artists on staff and provide me with an understanding of the visual aspects of our work.

I appreciate the time you took to interview me. I am very interested in working for you and look forward to hearing from you about this position.

Sincerely,

Rose Kaufman

## For Charitable Donations

Dear Mr. Carlson,

On behalf of Alpha Rho Chi, I would like to thank you for your generous gift of \$50. Your commitment to academic excellence is sincerely appreciated. Each year, Alpha Rho Chi continues to advance its mission of improving education in architecture and the allied arts. Through our chapters, alumni associations and the national fraternity, we have seen many lives changed for the better. The goal of Alpha Rho Chi is to continue to make a difference in the education of students of architecture and the allied arts. With the help of donations from supporters such as you we will continue to see improvements. Thanks again for your generous support of our efforts.

Sincerely,

Julie Latterner

Worthy Architect, Alpha Rho Chi Fraternity

## For A Birthday present

Dear Sue,

Thank you so much for the birthday present. I've had my eye on the Nike Air Max Solas for a while. I run every morning before I head to class, and my old running shoes were worn. The gift is greatly appreciated, and you can believe me when I say it's going to be used often. Thanks once again for being so thoughtful and considerate.

Sincerely,

Jeff

## Additional Resources

<http://jobsearch.about.com/ad/thankyouletters/a/samplethankyou.htm>

<http://stepbystepfundraising.comthank-you-template/>

[http://www.goffice.com/sampletext\\_thankyou.aspx](http://www.goffice.com/sampletext_thankyou.aspx)

# Dress Code

## Social Situations

### Formal/Black Tie

- Fundraising or Charity Dinners
- The Opera
- Any event where “black tie optional” or “formal” are specified in the invitation
- Note: Canadian tuxedos (blue jeans, flannel shirt and denim jacket) need not apply.



Rita Hayworth (1946) & Fred Astaire (1935)

## Social Situations

### Semi Formal

- Weddings
- Chapter "formal" event (White Rose)
- Cocktail Party
- Office holiday party



Audrey Hepburn (1953) & Frank Sinatra (1965)

## Social Situations

### Smart Casual

- Theater
- Active/alumni events
- Brunch
- Dinner parties



Beyonce Knowles (2007) & Usher (2007)

## Social Situations

### Casual

- House parties
- Grocery shopping
- Class
- Note: if you regularly sleep (not pass out) in it, it's not appropriate to wear outside.



Claire Danes (2007) & Brad Pitt (2006)

## Professional Situations

### Business Professional

- Interviews
- Job fairs
- Important meetings
- Convention banquet
- Anywhere you are representing a larger organization



Segolene Royal (2006) & John F. Kennedy (1964)



## Professional Situations

### Business Casual

- Small meetings
- Critiques/presentations (business casual is a minimum)
- Air or train travel
- Chapter meetings

Jacqueline Onassis (1975) & Kanye West (2007)

## Professional Situations

### Workplaces

- Generally acceptable dress code varies widely from office to office.
- Always dress to expect a surprise visit from a client.
- Workplace dress should be considered a minimum.



Kate Middleton (2007) & Matt Damon (2004)

# *Greetings & Salutations*

## Introductions

First impressions really are as important as the commercials say they are. A firm handshake (see the next page) followed by the proper greeting can go a long way toward impressing a superior, potential employer or future in-law. When introducing yourself or being introduced, always be sure to maintain eye contact as a sign of both respect and self confidence.

### When Introducing Strangers to One Another

- It is up to the older or higher ranking person to permit the use of a first name. Unless told otherwise, always assume an elder is "Mr." or "Ms."
- Never call one of the people you are introducing "my friend." this implies the other person is not your friend. You may use more specific titles, such as "my boss" or "my uncle."
- When introducing groups of people to one another, introduce the highest ranking person in the room first.
- Allow introductions to develop into a few minutes of cordial conversation by revealing a piece of information the two strangers have in common.
- When bringing guests to a party who are unknown to the host or hostess, always introduce the guest immediately upon arrival.
- When seated at a formal dinner, people must accept the obligation of talking to their neighbors. Introduce yourself at the earliest convenient moment to avoid awkward moments later.
- Announce the names of those already present before introducing a new arrival to a group.
- Repeat the names of the people you've introduced to one another as often as comfortably possible to ensure the two new acquaintances remember one another's name.

## Handshakes

"The proper handshake is brief, but there should be firmness and warmth in the clasp. It should always be accompanied by a direct look into the eyes of the person whose one hand is going to." (Emily Post)  
This applies to both men and women.

When introducing yourself or being introduced, always be sure to maintain eye contact. Repeating the name of the person you've just met helps when recalling it later.

### Handshakes and Greetings to Avoid

The Dead Fish	Limp wrist with a weak grip
The Pauly Shore	"Buuuuuuuudy!"
The High Five	Only appropriate at sporting events
The Used Car Salesman	Overly firm with aggressive shaking
Shooters	Pointing and nodding
Slapping or Snapping	Secret handshakes are reserved for the twelve-and-under crowd
The North Jersey	Head nod, followed by "How you doin'?"
The Finger Tickle	Middle finger stroked against a palm

Public Displays of Affection: "In this country, holding hands, affectionate greetings accompanied by a kiss on the cheek or a quick hug are perfectly acceptable in public. Passion is not." (Emily Post)