

# Lesson 4

## Cadet Etiquette Guide



### Key Terms

comradeship  
curtly  
dining-in  
dining-out  
etiquette  
martial  
monopolize  
palate  
place cards  
protocol  
receiving line  
repast  
sorbet  
stag  
stilted  
tines

### What You Will Learn to Do

- Learn proper etiquette for various events

### Linked Core Abilities

- Treat self and others with respect
- Apply critical thinking techniques

### Skills and Knowledge You Will Gain Along the Way

- Prepare invitations and thank-you notes
- Exhibit appropriate etiquette when making introductions
- Demonstrate proper dining etiquette
- Define the key words contained in this lesson

## Introduction

During your high school years, JROTC experience, and life after graduation, there will be occasions when you will be encouraged to interact with people on a social level. By knowing the rules of proper etiquette, you will not only make a good impression, but you will also be more relaxed and confident in these situations.

This lesson is designed to provide information on proper social conduct and behavior, an important element in your character development. Although the lesson concentrates on the etiquette and manners required at your Cadet Ball, this information carries over into other aspects of your life.

**Etiquette** is a code of behavior or courtesy based on rules of a polite society. Manners are socially correct ways of acting as shown in prevalent customs. Manners are based on kindness, respect, thoughtfulness, and consideration. Good manners are timeless, whereas the rules of etiquette may vary with the changing times.

As you read about the rules of proper etiquette and the practice of good manners, remember that social etiquette and good manners are nothing more than common courtesy, sincerity, and consideration for others. It is important to treat others in the same way that we want others to treat us. This is the very foundation on which a polite society is built.

## Making Introductions

Introductions should be simple, direct, and dignified, and the act of making them should be an occasion of formality. They should be made whenever people gather socially, even for a short period of time. Introductions should be made automatically and immediately when discovering that two people do not know each other. You may make these introductions or have someone else do it (as in a **receiving line**), but you cannot neglect an introduction without running the risk of being rude or negligent. There is nothing mysterious about making introductions, unless you do not know what to do.

### The Receiving Line

Introductions at a formal reception, such as the annual Cadet Ball, may often include a **receiving line**. It is customary, and often mandatory, that all cadets and their guests go through the receiving line after arrival. The people who might be in the receiving line are as follows:

- **The host (senior Army instructor or commander of the unit holding the reception)**
- **The spouse or guest of the senior Army instructor or unit commander**
- **The ranking honored guest and his or her spouse/guest**
- **Other dignitaries with their guests**

### Key Note Term

**etiquette** – a code of behavior based on rules of a polite society

### Key Note Term

**receiving line** – a group of people, including the host and honored guests, who stand in line and individually welcome guests attending a function, as at a formal reception

At a reception, such as the Cadet Ball, the lady precedes the gentleman through the receiving line. The gentleman, whether or not he is the ROTC cadet, introduces the lady first and then himself to the Cadet Adjutant, who often announces the names of all attendees to the host. A lady or gentleman attending **stag** should introduce him or herself to the adjutant. Even though the adjutant may be a friend of yours, do not shake his or her hand. The adjutant will announce your name to the host as you step in front of him or her. A simple, pleasant greeting and a cordial handshake are all that is necessary when moving through a receiving line. Save lengthy conversation for later. Should your name get lost in the line, repeat it for the benefit of the person doing the greeting.

In the absence of an adjutant, the lady still precedes the man through the receiving line. He introduces her first and then introduces himself directly to the host. After you have finished this line, you may proceed to the serving of refreshments or conversation with other guests and await the signal for the next event. If the receiving and dining rooms are separate, do not enter the dining room until that signal is given.

For the remainder of the event, you will be responsible for making introductions as you move around the room and during dinner. The following guidelines explain what you need to do.

## *Formality of Introductions*

When making an introduction, avoid the use of elaborate phrases. Recall that introductions should be simple and direct. The most generally accepted introductions are as follows: “Captain Smith, may I introduce . . .” or “Mrs. Foster, I would like you to meet. . .” You should not say “Meet Joe.”

It is a general rule that you introduce juniors to seniors (this applies to age and military rank), gentlemen to ladies, and so on. However, the degree of formality used when making the introduction depends on the position of the persons involved and/or the solemnity of the occasion.

## *Examples of Formal Introductions*

When introducing someone to a dignitary, mention the dignitary first to show respect for the office he or she holds. Ensure that you use the correct formal title or appellation for the dignitary when making the introduction.

- **Introduce a doctor, judge, or bishop by their titles.**
- **Introduce members of Congress by Senator or the Honorable.**
- **Introduce a Catholic priest by Father, and an archbishop by Your Grace. Some Protestant clergy use titles such as Reverend, Pastor, or Doctor, whereas others prefer to be addressed as Mr., Mrs., Miss, or Ms. It is best to ask the individual how he or she prefers to be introduced before the introduction is made.**
- **Introduce military personnel by their rank; for example, when introducing your guest to one of your JROTC instructors, you might say “First Sergeant Allen, I would like you to meet Miss Jones.”**

### *Key Note Term*

**stag** – unaccompanied by someone of the opposite sex; traditionally, a man who attends a social affair without escort of a woman

If the situation arose where you had to introduce a teacher to a parent, you would use the teacher's name first. For example, "Major Cooper, I would like you to meet my mother, Mrs. Eastern." If both of your parents were there, you would introduce the woman first and then the man, such as, "Major Cooper, I would like you to meet my parents, Mrs. Eastern and Mr. Eastern."

### ***Examples of Less-Formal Introductions***

When introducing two people who you know very well and who have heard you talk of the other, you may be more casual. For example, to introduce a squad buddy to your sister, you might simply say, "Susie, this is Pete." In this example, it is perfectly acceptable to make the introduction using the first names of both people; however, do not make an introduction to an adult, senior, and so on, using that person's first name.

In some cadet battalions or military academies, cadets have only one formal title as far as introductions are concerned—that of cadet. In those situations, the rank structure is not used when addressing cadets socially. For instance, you would say, "Doctor Jones, this is Cadet Draper," not "Doctor Jones, this is Cadet Lieutenant Draper." Furthermore, at some schools cadets may be addressed as "Mr. Draper" or "Ms. Draper" during conversations. For example, "Mr. Draper, I am pleased to meet you."

### ***Methods of Making Introductions***

When making an introduction, speak each name slowly and clearly so there can be no possibility of misunderstanding on the part of either person. When you are on the receiving end of an introduction, make a special point of listening to the other person's name. If you forget the name, or did not hear it, ask—with an apology—for the name to be restated; then, use the name several times in conversation. This will help you remember it.

When being introduced, it is proper to return a courtesy such as, "Nice to meet you," "Hello," "I am really glad to meet you," or "How do you do?" If you were the one making the introduction, it is not appropriate to walk off and leave the two people staring at each other. As the person who made the introduction, you should either say something about each person to get a conversation started or excuse yourself so that you and your guest can continue to move about the room or participate in some other event.

When starting a conversation, mention something of common interest to both parties. For example, "Captain Davis, I would like you to meet Michael Knight. Captain Davis is my senior Army instructor, Michael. Sir, Michael hopes to enroll in JROTC next year."

Before taking leave of the person whom you just introduced, your guest should respond with "Good-bye, I am very glad to have met you" or something to that effect.

**Note**

In taking leave of a group, it makes no difference if you were introduced or merely included in their conversation; you politely and quietly respond good-bye to anyone who happens to be looking at you, without attracting the attention of those who are unaware that you are leaving.

**When and How to Shake Hands**

When gentlemen are introduced to each other, they typically shake hands. Additionally, ladies who are JROTC cadets shake hands during introductions. However, as a more general rule, whenever a lady or gentleman extends their hand as a form of greeting, the receiving party should reciprocate the gesture. Nothing could be more ill-bred than to treat **curtly** any gesture made in spontaneous friendliness. At the end of the introduction and/or conversation, those who were drawn into it do not usually shake hands when parting.

A proper handshake is made briefly; but there should be a feeling of strength and warmth in the clasp. At the same time, maintain eye contact with the person whose hand one takes, as shown in Figure 10.4.1. Do not shake a hand violently, grasp the hand like a vise, keep the handshake going for a long period of time, or offer only your fingertips.

**Other Forms of Introductions**

If seated, one rises to acknowledge an introduction and remains standing while other members of the party are being introduced to one another. When being introduced to ladies or gentlemen who are seated, you need not rise if rising may inconvenience others at the table.

**Key Note Term**

**curtly** – rudely brief or abrupt, as in speech or manner



*Figure 10.4.1: An Army JROTC cadet shaking hands in a receiving line at the Cadet Ball.*

Courtesy of StockDisc/Fotosearch.

When being introduced to a lady out-of-doors, a gentleman in civilian clothes may remove his hat. In addition, a gentleman will ordinarily remove his glove to shake hands unless he is a member of a color or honor guard. If he is confronted with a sudden introduction when he has gloves on and it is awkward to remove a glove while the other person has their hand outstretched, it is better to shake hands with the glove on with no apology.

### Note

You would also use these rules as part of general public behavior, even in casual situations.

If you desire to introduce two people who are not near each other, you would typically take the junior to the senior, the young lady to the older person, the gentleman to the lady, and so on.

When in doubt whether two people have met, it is perfectly permissible to ask. Be sure to address the senior first, using a courtesy such as “Colonel Smith, have you met Miss Jones?” If they have not met, make the introduction. Usually, most people will consider your question as tantamount to an introduction, and will proceed with the how-do-you-dos. The important thing is not to assume that people know each other. There is no harm in introducing people who have already met; it is, however, quite inconsiderate to have strangers together without an introduction.

It may sometimes be an erroneous assumption that every cadet knows every other cadet. Do not hesitate to introduce cadets if you are not sure they know each other.

Some people have a difficult time remembering names. Not remembering a name is a common failing and can be easily forgiven. However, forgetting a name is not an excuse for not making an introduction. If necessary, ask for the person’s name—with appropriate apologies—before starting the introduction. For example, “I beg your pardon, sir (or ma’am), but I have forgotten your name. Thank-you, sir (ma’am). Colonel Smith, I would like you to meet Miss Jones.”

In certain situations, you may find it necessary to introduce yourself to another person. If you are next to someone you do not know and no one is around to make an introduction, it is perfectly acceptable to make your own introduction. Use a greeting such as “Hello, I am Tom Frazier,” while shaking that person’s hand. Do not say, “What’s your name?” A good reply to you would be “Ted Wentworth, nice to meet you.” It is then up to both people to start their own conversation.

### Dining Tips

Table manners are an important part of social conduct. Proper manners around the table are not just reserved for special occasions; you should use them whenever you dine. Relaxed politeness is the key to any dining situation. When you know what to do, you can relax and enjoy yourself. This section will help you learn the rules of the table.

## *Manners and Courtesies Before Eating*

A gentleman does not sit down until all the ladies at his table are seated. He can help with the seating by holding the chair, first for his guest, then for other ladies near him if the ladies outnumber the men. He does this by pulling out the lady's chair from the table far enough for her to move easily in front of it. Then, as the lady sits down, he gently pushes the chair under her until she is seated. When all ladies at the table are seated, he may then take his seat by going around the left side of his chair. Posture at the table should be straight but not stiff.

If a lady leaves the table at any time, the gentleman who seated her rises. When the lady returns to the table, her escort or the gentleman who seated her rises and the courtesies mentioned in the preceding paragraph are repeated.

The polite dinner guest will not touch anything on the table, not even the napkin, until after the blessing (or invocation) has been said or until it is obvious that there will be no blessing. Then you may pick up your napkin and partially unfold it on your lap. Do this inconspicuously; do not unfold a dinner napkin completely or above the table.

At a large dinner, there may be a vast array of silverware at the place setting, consisting of one or two knives, two or three forks, and two or three spoons. This is shown in Figure 10.4.2. If there is any doubt about the correct piece of silverware to use for a particular course, one generally starts with the outside piece of silverware and works inward. If you end up without a spoon or a fork, it is appropriate to ask for a replacement.

Specialized pieces of silverware, for which their function is self-explanatory, include the butter knife, soup spoon, dessert fork and spoon, iced tea spoon, oyster fork, and fish knife and fork. The number of pieces of silverware indicates the number of courses to expect. A six-course meal, for example, might include soup, fish, **sorbet** (a **palate** cleanser), salad, an entree, and dessert. The placement of the silverware indicates the order of these courses.

## *Methods, Manners, and Courtesies of Eating*

Different methods, manners, and courtesies of eating exist, depending on various situations. You should be familiar with the proper use of silverware, how to eat with your fingers as well as with a soup spoon, the differences between American and European styles of dining, and more.

### *American versus European Styles of Eating*

In the American style of eating, cutting food should be done, as shown in Figure 10.4.3, by holding the fork in your left hand, **tines** down with your index finger on the back of the fork, secure the food being cut with the knife, which is held in your right hand. Cut in front of the fork, not behind it. After cutting not more than two or three bites of food, place the knife on the plate and transfer the fork to your right hand. This is called the zigzag method.

### *Key Note Terms*

**sorbet** – a fruit-flavored ice served for dessert or in between courses as a palate refresher

**palate** – the sense of taste

### *Key Note Term*

**tines** – slender pointed parts of a fork; prongs

Figure 10.4.2: A place setting can be confusing if you're not familiar with it.

Courtesy of CACI and the U.S. Army.

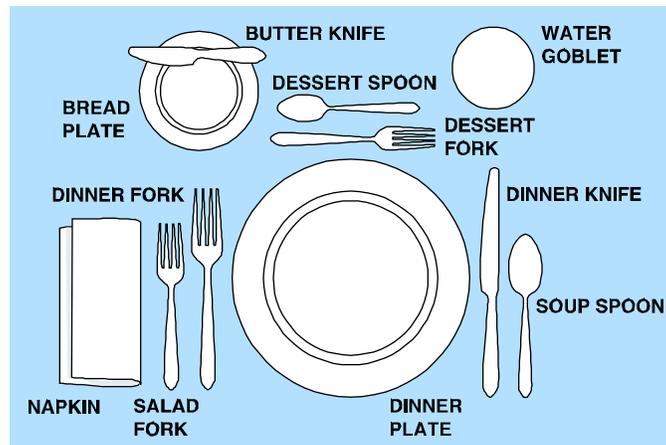
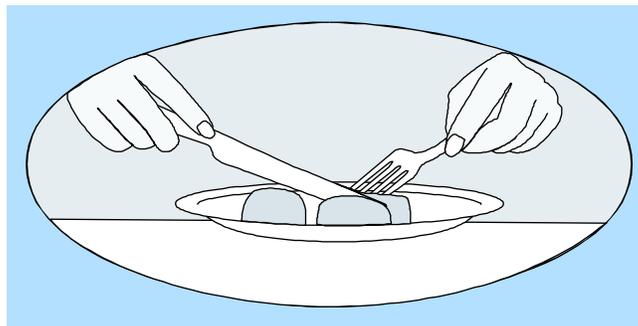


Figure 10.4.3: American style of eating.

Courtesy of CACI and the U.S. Army.

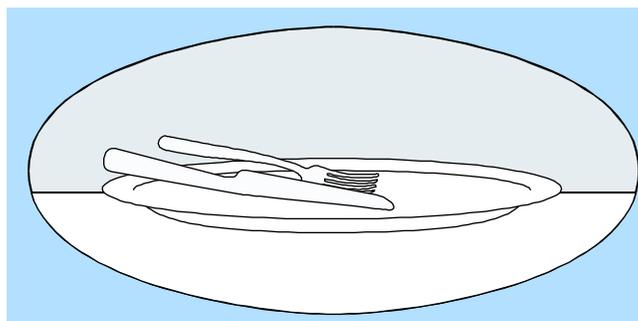


When not using your knife and fork, place them together across the top of your plate, as shown in Figure 10.4.4. This is the resting position. When you have finished the main course, place the knife and fork beside each other on the dinner plate diagonally from the upper left to lower right, or from the 10:00 to the 4:00 position. This is the finished position and indicates that your plate may be removed.

In the Continental or European style, hold the fork in your left hand and the knife in your right hand. Cut and eat with your fork, tines down, while still holding it in your left hand. The knife can remain in your right hand throughout the meal to cut food or to help push bits of food onto the fork. Only one bite of food is cut and eaten at a time.

Figure 10.4.4: Resting position, American style.

Courtesy of CACI and the U.S. Army.



When not using your fork, rest it diagonally on the left side of the plate with the tines down and close to the center of the plate. Rest the knife diagonally on the right side of the plate with its point toward the center of the plate. When finished, place them as described in the American style with the fork tines down.

### ***Proper Use of Silverware***

Various rules govern how to properly use silverware.

- **After you have used a piece of silverware, do not place it back on the table.**
- **Do not leave a used spoon in a cup; place it on the saucer.**
- **Do not leave a soup spoon in a soup bowl, although you may leave it on a soup plate if one is provided; otherwise, place it on the dinner plate when not in use.**
- **Do not lay a knife with the handle on the table and the tip of the blade on the edge of the plate. This also applies to the fork.**
- **Leave unused silverware on the table in its proper position.**

### ***Proper Way to Eat Soup and Finger Foods***

When eating soup, the motion of the spoon should be away from you while filling it. Sip from the side of the spoon; do not slurp. If it is necessary to tip your soup bowl, tip it away from you. If your soup is too hot to eat, let it sit until it cools; do not blow on it.

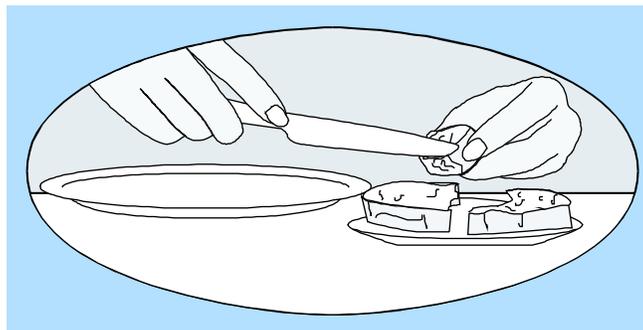
Bread, rolls, biscuits, nuts, fresh fruit, olives, celery, radishes, raw carrots, cookies, and small cakes may be eaten with your fingers. Place finger foods such as these on the bread plate, or in the absence of that plate, on the salad or dinner plates.

As seen in Figure 10.4.5, break your individual servings of bread, rolls, and large biscuits into small pieces before buttering and eating them, one piece at a time. Do not cut these items. Buttering and eating a whole roll or whole slice of bread is also not appropriate.

### ***Proper Use of a Napkin***

You should not tuck the napkin under your belt or wear it like a bib. Napkins are for dabbing lips, catching spills, and covering sneezes. Do not use a napkin to blow your nose. Never lick your fingers; always use your napkin.

Before taking a drink of water or any other beverage, wipe your lips with your napkin to avoid leaving smears on the glassware. One quick, light pass with the napkin should suffice.



*Figure 10.4.5: Break bread, rolls, and biscuits with your fingers before you butter them.*

Courtesy of CACI and the U.S. Army.

If you must leave the table during dinner, say, “Excuse me, please,” with no explanation, and place your napkin on your chair. When leaving the table after dinner, place the napkin on the table in loose folds to the right of your plate. Do not refold, crumple, or twist it. Also, push your chair to the table on every occasion.

### **Basic Table Manners**

The following are hints regarding table manners. Follow each one in any situation where you might be dining.

#### **Key Note Term**

**place cards** – a name card for a formal dinner

- If **place cards** are used, do not move or remove them. In addition to indicating the specific seating arrangement, place cards are used to make guests feel welcome and to help people get to know one another in large social settings.
- Take small bites. Large mouthfuls of food are unsightly. Do not chew with your mouth open or make loud noises when you eat. It is not polite to talk with food in your mouth.
- If you burp, say “Excuse me,” to no one in particular and continue eating. Do not make a big deal out of it.
- Hats, gloves, cameras, purses, sunglasses, and so on do not belong on the table. If it is not a part of the meal, do not put it on the table. Hats and gloves belong in the cloakroom. You may place cameras and purses under your chair.
- Your hands should go no farther over the table than is necessary to eat and to pass things. Between courses, place your hands in your lap or at your side. Do not place your elbows on the table.
- If you cannot easily reach something on the table, ask for it to be passed to you with a please and a thank-you. If you are the one passing something, place the items on the table for the person to pick them up. When passing salt and pepper, pass them together.
- If food spills off your plate, you may pick it up with a piece of your silverware and place it on the edge of your plate.
- If you drop something, leave it on the floor until the meal is over; then pick it up. If a piece of your silverware falls onto the floor, pick it up if you can reach it and let the server know you need a clean one. If you cannot reach it, tell the server you dropped a piece of your silverware and ask for a clean one.
- Do not season your food before you have tasted it.
- Hold a long-stemmed glass with the thumb and first two fingers of your right hand at the base of the bowl or on the stem.
- It is not appropriate to ask for a “doggy bag” during a formal occasion.
- Do not reprimand a server. Make any complaints to the person (cadet) in charge of the ballroom arrangements.
- If food gets caught between your teeth and you cannot remove it with your tongue without being too noticeable, leave the table and go to the restroom where you can remove the food in private.
- At the end of dinner, and after the host and honored guests have departed, make sure that you say good-bye to everyone at your table before departing.

### Table Talk

Conversation is an important part of social interaction around the table. It is perfect for the enjoyment of good companionship and a pleasant meal. A few important tips are as follows:

- Try not to talk too quickly or too slowly.
- Keep the conversation light. Small talk includes casual, unofficial, interesting things in everyday life such as the weather, music, upcoming events, movies, or sports. Keep topics of conversation safe and noncontroversial. Avoid discussions about religion, race, politics, or any controversial issue. Avoid health issues, off-color jokes, and gossip.
- Answer respectfully when addressed.
- Be mindful of engaging in conversation with a person who has just taken a bite of food. Remember, do not talk with food in your mouth.
- Loud voices/laughter can be disturbing to others. Do not yell; use a pleasant tone of voice that can be heard only at your table. Do not use profane, abusive or vulgar language.
- Be a good listener. Give others a chance to talk. Do not **monopolize** a conversation. Pay attention to the person speaking by giving eye contact; do not look at other people when someone is talking to you.
- Do not interrupt. Allow the other person to finish what he or she is saying before speaking. If you and another person start talking at the same time, give way quickly in a friendly manner with a simple, “Go ahead, please.”
- Do not ridicule or laugh at an unfortunate remark or someone’s mistake. Although a good conversationalist does not contradict someone in a social setting, it is okay to disagree. In those instances, start by saying, “I disagree with you because . . .”

#### Key Note Term

**monopolize** – to take exclusive ownership or control

## The Cadet as a Guest

When you are invited to attend a social event, which could be a short afternoon visit, a dinner party, or the annual Cadet Ball, you have certain obligations that you must observe as a guest.

### Invitations

You must understand the invitation: what you are invited for, where it will be held, when you should be there, and what you should wear. A written invitation will usually spell out most of these things quite clearly. Certain things are implicit in an invitation, as you shall see.

### The R.S.V.P.

R.S.V.P. comes from the French expression “Repondez s’il vous plait,” which means “please reply.” On many invitations, you will see the R.S.V.P. followed by a telephone number. In this case, the courtesy of a prompt reply by telephone is required to permit the host, hostess, or planning committee to properly plan the event. Call within two or three days to accept or decline the invitation and make your call between 9 a.m. and 6 p.m.

**Note**

R.S.V.P. means that you must reply to the host to let them know if you can or cannot attend the function to which you've been invited.

**Note**

More on telephone courtesies is covered in the section on "Other Courtesies."

If your plans for that day are unsettled or indefinite, do not pass this problem on to the prospective host or hostess. It would be much better to outright decline the invitation than to give a complicated account of your indefinite social activities. Even if the other arrangement or engagement is tentative; it is best to decline the invitation. After you have declined, however, do not call back if your plans change.

When declining, it is sufficient to say to the host or hostess that a conflicting duty or social engagement prevents you from accepting. You are at liberty to turn down an invitation because you do not wish to go; however, you should exercise good judgment on the invitations you refuse.

If, after you accepted an invitation, an illness or an absolute emergency prevents you from attending, call the host or hostess immediately with regrets and apologies.

You are not at liberty to invite someone else along unless the invitation clearly indicates the number and names of those invited.

There are several variations of the R.S.V.P. that are coming into widespread use, especially on informal invitations.

- **"R.S.V.P. Regrets Only."** This invitation means that the prospective host or hostess is expecting you unless you notify otherwise that you cannot come. If you can accept, you need not reply, just be there on time.
- **Invitations by phone.** When accepting an invitation by phone, it is a good idea to repeat back all of the essential information so that there is no misunderstanding. If you must first check your calendar before answering, get all the details and explain that you will call back as soon as you have done so. Thank the caller for the invitation, make sure you have the phone number, and promise to call right back; then make sure you do.

**Where**

Most written invitations will indicate exactly where the function is being held. Some invitations may include a small map for your convenience.

**When**

Invitations to dinners, receptions, and weddings will usually give a time. For dinners and receptions, this is the time at which you should arrive, no earlier and no later. You will need to plan your timing so that you can be punctual. The time on a wedding invitation is the time the ceremony begins; therefore, you should allow sufficient time to be punctual.

If you are invited to an open house from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m., you may arrive any time after 3:00 and depart before 6:00. You are not expected to stay the entire three hours. After a dinner party, you should stay at least an hour; otherwise, it hints of “eat-and-run” rudeness.

### ***What to Wear***

The invitation may specify what you should wear. For example, cadets would most likely wear their Class A uniform to the annual Cadet Ball. In this situation, male guests should wear a suit while female guests should wear either short or long evening attire.

Some invitations may simply indicate that the dress is formal, informal, or casual. Ensure that you understand what these terms mean. If you are in doubt, ask the host or hostess what to wear when you call to R.S.V.P. As a general rule, use the following guidelines:

- **Formal:** For gentlemen, a suit may be acceptable, although a tuxedo or uniform equivalent is preferred; for ladies, a short or long evening gown may be appropriate.
- **Informal:** For gentlemen, a sport coat and tie is appropriate; for ladies, a dress appropriate for daytime wear or a nice pantsuit is acceptable.
- **Casual:** For gentleman, nice slacks and a sport shirt is appropriate; for ladies, a sundress or nice pants and blouse is appropriate. In some situations, jeans or shorts and a nice shirt or blouse may be acceptable.

### ***Courtesies When a Guest at Smaller Functions***

When attending an open house or a small dinner party, seek out your host and/or hostess immediately upon arrival and greet them. A crowded room should not keep you from properly greeting your host and hostess. You should also delay getting any refreshments until after you have properly greeted them.

Because the host and hostess are in charge, let them run things. As a polite, unassuming guest, you should help by making conversation and joining wholeheartedly in whatever activities they have planned.

You should not sit when other guests are standing in your presence.

Prior to leaving, you must thank your host and hostess for a wonderful time. Even if there are still dozens of people present, you must seek them out to say thank you and good-bye.

### ***Thank-You Notes***

Thank-you notes should be written within two or three days, but no more than a week, after you have been a guest at someone’s home. A thank-you note should be handwritten in ink on quality writing paper. Stationary sets that provide matching paper and envelopes are recommended. Be conservative in the choice of color and design. Plain white is always acceptable. Some of the requirements for a thank-you note are as follows:

- **Spell out the month, the notation 3/9/05 is not used socially. This should be written as March 9, 2005. Place the date in the upper-right corner just below the fold line on the informal notepaper.**

- Ensure there are adequate margins on both sides of the paper; leave about one and one-fourth inch on the left side and about three-fourths inch on the right, depending on the size of the paper.
- Place the salutation, such as “Dear Mrs. Elliott,” at the left margin.
- Indent the first line of each paragraph; bring each subsequent line out to the left margin.
- Place the complimentary close approximately as far to the right as the date at the top of the page. “Sincerely,” or “Sincerely yours,” with your first and last names are acceptable complimentary closes. Do not use “Yours truly” and reserve the use of “Love,” for a family member or close friend followed by your first name only.
- Do not use “Cadet” or your cadet rank in your signature.
- Your return address belongs on the envelope, not under your signature.

There should be a minimum of three paragraphs in the thank-you note. The first expresses your thanks specifically and in detail for the occasion. The last briefly summarizes your thanks. There must be one or more paragraphs in the middle on any topic you choose about the occasion you attended. Do not invite yourself back in your thank-you note.

When expressing yourself, be yourself! If you do not normally speak a **stilted** or flowery language, do not sound that way in your note. Sincerity is far more important than eloquence. “I was overwhelmed by the sumptuousness of the **repast** in your exquisite domicile” is pretty silly from most people. “I enjoyed the dinner in your attractive home” sounds much more natural. If you particularly enjoyed the soup, or if the chocolate cream pie was out of this world, by all means say so in your note.

Sincerity is the first rule in social correspondence. Simplicity is the second rule. You can hardly go wrong with a few simple and direct statements of the things that pleased or amused you. Write just as you would say it to someone you know very well. Also, use correct grammar and spelling and keep it neat.

The thank-you note is an individual responsibility. If more than one of you enjoyed a dinner party at someone’s home, it is not proper to send one thank-you note. Each of you should write your own note.

To address an envelope, ensure that you use a block style; include the proper title with the name (such as Mr., Mrs., Miss, Dr., Colonel, SGM and so on); place the city, two-letter state abbreviation, and zip code on the same line.

Place your return address on the front top left-hand corner of the envelope. You may use an address label for this purpose. You may also include “Cadet” in your title but not your cadet rank: Cadet John C. Scott is acceptable, but Cadet Captain John C. Scott is not correct.

If you are on the planning committee for the Cadet Ball, you should also send thank-you notes to the special guests, the organizations that sponsored the event, and the organizations that provided services and entertainment.

### Key Note Terms

**stilted** – stiffly or artificially dignified or formal; pompous; lofty

**repast** – a supply of food and drink served as a meal

## *Other Courtesies*

Life is full of ways to show courteous behavior toward others. This section shows just a few ways you can act in a thoughtful and civilized manner.

### *Telephone Courtesies*

The telephone is a valuable time-saver and an effective means of communication. Here are some tips for proper telephone usage.

When calling a private residence to respond to an R.S.V.P., it is most proper to call between 9:00 in the morning and 6:00 at night. Avoid calling during meal hours. If you are in doubt, ask the person you are calling if this is a convenient time and offer to call back later if necessary. Let the phone ring at least six times to allow the person to reach the phone.

Identify yourself when placing a call. Unlike talking to someone face-to-face, the person on the other end of the phone may not recognize your voice until you identify yourself. While talking on the phone,

- **Be polite. This applies to any conversation.**
- **Speak slowly and clearly. Do not eat, drink, or chew gum.**
- **Do not sneeze or cough into the receiver. Turn your head or excuse yourself.**
- **Do not carry on a conversation with someone in the room.**
- **Call back immediately if you get disconnected and you placed the call.**
- **When answering a call for someone else, say, “May I ask who is calling?” This sounds better than “Who is this?”**

There is also proper etiquette to follow if you dial a wrong number. No matter how careful you are you may still dial a wrong number. When that happens, apologize to the person who answers. That person is not interested in hearing a story about how you misdialled, just tell him or her “I’m very sorry to have disturbed you,” hang up, ensure you have the correct number, and then try again. It is inexcusably rude to hang up without an apology.

When leaving a message on an answering machine, clearly state your name, the date and time of your call, and a brief message. Leave a phone number only if you need to be called back.

### *Cellular Phone Courtesies*

Because cell phones can be used virtually anywhere, their users need to remember commonsense courtesy. Results from a nationwide survey indicate that wireless users need to improve their phone etiquette and put people ahead of phone calls. A few tips are as follows:

- **Use of wireless phones is prohibited in most schools and at school functions.**
- **Use of wireless phones during social gatherings or appointments is not appropriate.**

- **Do not place a cell phone on the table during a meal. It is also considered impolite to make or receive cell phone calls during a meal.**
- **Do not drive and use a cell phone. If you need to have a conversation while driving, be sure to pull off the road while talking.**
- **Do not use a wireless phone when it will inconvenience or disturb others.**
- **Use should be limited in public places or gatherings to safety or emergency reasons.**

### *Helping Others*

If an older woman or an invalid gentleman wants some support, it is appropriate for you to offer your arm. The cadet does not offer his or her hand. Hand holding in public is not appropriate and is considered a public display of affection. Public displays of affection are improper when in uniform. A cadet may offer his or her hand only when it is not practical to offer the arm, for example, to help an elderly lady or gentleman out of a car. Offer your hand palm up but do not force it on the person to whom you are offering it. Withdraw your hand as soon as it is no longer needed.

When walking with a lady, a gentleman should walk on the curbside or on her left if there is no curb.

If a gentleman arrives at a door first, he should open it and allow others to pass through. If a lady arrives at the door first and opens it, the gentleman may hold the door for her to continue.

If you are driving or riding to the social in a privately owned vehicle, open the car door for your passenger first on the right side of the car, then go around it and take your seat, either behind the wheel or in the back seat beside your guest. When you reach your destination, walk around the car and open the door for your guest if he or she has not already exited the vehicle.

### *Being Responsible for Your Guest*

Depending on the nature of the social occasion, cadets should inform their guests about the traditions and courtesies of it before arriving. Using the Cadet Ball as an example, cadets should inform their guests about appropriate dress, conduct, the receiving line, traditions of the mess, and so on. Remember, if you invite a guest, you are responsible for your guest's behavior. If you have duties to perform after you arrive at the social, arrange for someone else to act as an escort for your guest until you are free. Introduce your friends and ensure that your guest's time is fulfilling.

### *Respect to Seniors*

By this time in JROTC, you should not have any difficulty in showing respect to military seniors; in fact, it should be automatic.

You should also show respect for elders, as well as parents, teachers, and others in a position of authority. In short, you should treat all persons with whom you have contact with the utmost respect.

Because it is unacceptable to use slang or poor grammar such as "yeah," "nope," or "un-huh" to a JROTC instructor, it is also socially rude to say these things to others.

You may also encounter situations when seniors address you by your first name. Although this may be flattering, under no circumstances should you address a senior by his or her first name unless that person specifically asks you to do so.

## ***Grooming***

Nothing less than scrupulous attention to all aspects of personal hygiene will make you socially acceptable. Be certain that you are well groomed every time you make an appearance socially. One dirty or untrimmed fingernail may seem like a small thing to you, but it may be the basis for a negative impression. You will not have a second chance to make a first impression. The following are just a few of the basics you should already be doing to ensure your appearance is up to standards.

- **Ensure your hair is clean, neatly trimmed or styled, and combed at all times.**
- **Shower daily and use a deodorant as part of your daily routine.**
- **Brush your teeth and floss daily. Try to brush after meals.**
- **For young men who already have to shave, if it is necessary for you to do so once or twice a day to be presentable, then do so.**

Good grooming is an individual responsibility. It should not be necessary for an instructor or a senior cadet to tell you to maintain proper personal hygiene. Additionally, for cadets, ensure that your uniform is clean, pressed, and presentable.

## ***Other Everyday Courtesies***

Use “please,” “thank you,” “you’re welcome,” “excuse me,” and “I’m sorry” naturally and sincerely in conversations. Say, “excuse me” if you accidentally brush against someone. You can also say “I beg your pardon” but do not use the phrase “pardon me.”

You may chew gum in public as long as you do it in a nonoffensive way—quietly and inconspicuously. Do not chew gum in formal situations, at work, if you are a host or hostess, or if you are around food.

In public places, do not make a lot of noise with friends that might upset other people.

Do not push ahead of anyone. Wait your turn in line to go through a door, into an elevator, or onto an escalator.

## ***Planning a Cadet Ball***

A major prerequisite for ensuring that the Cadet Ball (and for that matter, any social occasion) is successful is careful planning. The first important act is the appointment of a Cadet Ball chairperson by the senior Army instructor. This chairperson should have authority to make many of the required planning decisions, although some of these decisions may be subject to the approval of the senior Army instructor.

One of the first duties of the cadet chairperson should be to review the reports on file for previous Cadet Balls. These reports will acquaint the chairperson with his or her responsibilities, which include the following (this list is not all inclusive):

- **Establishing committees, appointing committee leaders, and providing them with the necessary people and other resources. He or she is also responsible for supervising these committees. At a minimum, the chairperson should establish committees for**
  - Advertising
  - Decorating
  - Entertainment
  - Food
  - Fund-raising
  - Invitations, including the special guests
  - Program and seating arrangements
- **Establishing short-and long-term goals, identifying the tasks necessary for the achievement of these goals, and delegating the tasks to committees for execution.**
- **Identifying problem areas and lessons learned from previous Cadet Balls and preventing them from reoccurring.**

The chairperson and all committee leaders should think through all of the details thoroughly and develop a plan to get everything done. You should be sure to establish alternative (or backup) plans where necessary. This way you can be sure of avoiding last minute embarrassment.

Send out invitations as early as possible. If some guests do not accept, you still have time to invite others without offending them with a last minute invitation. Ensure that the invitation clearly states the location, time, and dress requirements. Let your guests know exactly what is being planned and what is expected of them.

Helpful planning tips include the following:

- **Ensure that all arrangements are carefully made for the special guests.**
- **Select a band that plays an arrangement of music as well as music that does not offend anyone.**
- **Arrange to have a photographer.**
- **Arrange to have several nice door prizes if you can find sponsors to donate them.**
- **Give credit in the program to all sponsors as well as to individuals and organizations that assisted in putting the Cadet Ball together.**
- **Rehearse the Color Guard, the sequence of events, and any special activities at the designated location at least one day prior to the actual event.**
- **Coordinate with the designated location to ensure they prepare the correct number of meals, have the correct number of chairs and tables, and that seating is in accordance with the seating chart.**

### Key Note Terms

**dining-in** – a formal military dinner for military members only

**dining-out** – a formal military dinner to which non-military guests are invited

**protocol** – a code of precedence in rank and status and of correct procedure in ceremonies; a form of etiquette observed in ceremonies; a combination of good manners and common sense that allows for effective communication

## History of Military Dining-Ins

You should be familiar with the terms **dining-in** and **dining-out**. These terms refer to formal dinners, which are intended for military members only (dining-in) or to which guests are invited (dining-out). The **protocol** for these affairs often reflects long-standing traditions within a regiment or corps of the armed forces.

Dining-in has its roots in Europe and may extend all the way back to the Roman practice of holding great banquets to celebrate victory and parade the spoils of war. The customs and traditions of our contemporary dining-in come from those of the British Army regimental mess. The British mess provided a time for satire, solemn formality, and horseplay. It was an excuse for living beyond one's means and an occasion to observe long-standing customs and traditions of the regiment. The first recorded American dining-in occurred in September 1716 when Governor Spotswood of Virginia, along with a company of Rangers, celebrated after crossing the mountains and descending into the Shenandoah Valley.

Even today, there is still ample reason to observe the dining-in tradition. The intent of the dining-in is to promote cordiality, **comradeship**, and esprit de corps. In addition, it is hoped that participation in this worthy tradition will stimulate enthusiasm to prevent it from dying out.

The primary elements are a formal setting, posting of the Colors, invocation, traditional toasts (may be at the conclusion of dinner), a fine dinner, comradeship of cadets, benediction, retirement of the Colors, and **martial** music.

### **Toasting**

The custom of toasting is universal. It is a simple courtesy to the person being honored. It is not proper to drain the glass at the completion of each toast; therefore, know how many toasts are being given so that you will know how much to drink with each toast. It is also not proper to raise an empty glass to make a toast. Toasts are made standing up. One person will present the toast by saying, "Ladies and Gentlemen, the president of the United States" or "Ladies and Gentlemen, I propose a toast to the president of the United States." All will then raise their glasses and say "the president" or "to the president," respectively.

On the presentation and retirement of the Colors, face toward the Colors at attention until the ceremony is completed; then, remain standing for the toasts and the invocation at the beginning of the program. You are expected to rise again for the benediction at the end of the program.

#### **Key Note Terms**

**comradeship** – companionship

**martial** – of or relating to army or military life

## Conclusion

Learning proper social conduct is an important part of your growth and character development. Although there are many forms of etiquette that pertain to almost every social occasion that you will encounter in life, the intent of this lesson was to familiarize you with proper manners and etiquette for the single most important social event in JROTC—the Cadet Ball.

## Lesson Review

1. What is the difference between etiquette and manners?
2. Explain why it is important to present a good appearance at all times.
3. Compare American-style dining with European-style dining.
4. Give three examples of proper dinner conversation topics; give three examples of improper dinner table topics.