

# Menu Planning

When planning a menu include the following points.

1. **Color:** Mix colors. We eat with our eyes. Create a selection of foods on the menu that are pleasing to the eye, and provide nice color and contrast to each other.
2. **Flavor:** Combine flavors. Contrast is always good. Compliment bland flavors with tang and zip. Mild flavors are best served first, stronger ones later, and sweets as a final taste.
3. **Texture:** Contrast in texture is always good. It adds interest to the meal. Consider having crisp, chewy, hard or soft textures in your menu.
4. **Shapes and Sizes:** Include a combination of different shapes and sizes in your menu. A meal is more appealing with variety of shapes, sizes and portions.
5. **Temperature:** Always serve cold foods cold and hot foods hot. A good menu will include a least on hot food. Crisp salads, chilled juices and ice cream make good contrast for hot food.
6. **Variety:** Variety is the spice of life, so avoid repetition of color, flavor, texture, shape and temperature. Meals are most interesting when a variety of foods and flavors are offered, both within the meal and within the same day.
7. **Nutrition:** Meals should include servings from four or five of the five food groups.  
Grains            Dairy            Protein            Fruits            Vegetables

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## Menu Writing

Here are some guidelines on how to write a menu

1. Capitalize all words except articles and prepositions.
2. The items in the menu should be grouped by courses, beginning with the first. The items would be listed in order served.

Appetizer
Main Course
Fruit&/of Vegetable
Bread
Dessert
Beverage

- When two or more items accompany an item, center the main item and space the accompanying items on the same line to the right and left, or on the line below.

Example:

Pineapple	Fruit Dip	Apple Slice
	Or	
Melon Balls	Pineapple Chunks	Apple Slices
	Fruit Dip	

- Beverages appear as the last item in the course with which it is served.
- Such items as butter, cream, sugar or salad dressing are not written on menus unless they are particularly interesting or different. For example: Honey Butter, Poppy Seed Dressing, Red Currant Jelly, or Fresh Herb Dressing.
- Use descriptive terms that communicate temperature, texture, color, or other special characteristics of the food or method of preparation. For example: Chilled Apple Cider, Fresh Garden Strawberries, Smokey Grilled Vegetables, Crusty Rolls.
- Plan the spacing and arrangement of the items on the menu so that the written menu is symmetrical. Allow extra spacing between courses.

Example

Melon Balls	Fruit Dip	Apple
	Slices	
	Whole Wheat Wafers	
	Grilled Sirloin Steak	
Baked Potato	Sour Cream	
	Mixed Green Salad	
	Hot Rolls	
	Lemon Ice	
Coffee	Milk	



## Place Setting

The purpose of a place setting is to make the act of eating easier. A properly set table helps guests feel more at ease.

A table setting depends on:

- What food will be served
- How many persons will be seated
- What the table covering will be

Common sense tells us that a proper place setting provides the necessary utensils for eating a meal, and that they will be placed in convenient positions for use. Only set the utensil needed for the meal.

A *cover* is another name for a place setting. It consists of a combination of flatware, dishes, glasses, and linens that are appropriate for the foods served. A cover is approximately 20 to 24 inches long by 15 inches deep. It is the individual's place at the table. Table linens may be napkins, place mats, tablecloths or runners.

### Table covering

- A placemat is placed even with the edge of the table.
- A tablecloth should have an 8-12-inch drop. Table runners should be wide enough to hold an individual place setting and should also have an 8-12-inch drop.
- If the placemat is oval. Follow the curve of the mat.
- The napkin is placed to the left of the forks. It can be placed in the center of the plate. Napkins can also be rolled and placed in a napkin ring (position it as you would a folded napkin). The open corner of the folded napkin should be in the lower right hand corner.
- Nothing should be placed on top of the napkin.
- If the glass will only fit on half of the placemat, it is better to set it on the table to keep it level.

### Table setting Placement

Only use the utensils you need according to the menu.

- The dinner plate is positioned in the center of the place setting and everything else is place around it.
- The flatware or silverware is arranged around the plate in the order in which it will be used. Flatware or silverware consist of fork, knife and spoon.
  - Fork is placed to the left of the dinner plate.
  - Knife is placed to the right of the dinner plate with the sharp edge toward the dinner plate.
  - Spoon is place to the right of the knife.
  - Place all flatware/silverware and tableware 1” from the edge of the table.

- When placing flatware/silverware on the table, place as many of each item as is needed to eat the meal. The general rule is to use the flatware/silverware from the outside in. In other words, if you had three forks, you would use the furthest to the left first. The last one used would be closest to the plate.
- The salad fork has shorter or fewer tines, and is placed to the left of the dinner fork if the salad is served before the main dish. The salad fork is placed to the right of the dinner fork if the salad is served with the main dish. Eliminate the salad fork if no salad is served.
- Dessert fork is placed to the left and next to the plate or above the dinner plate.
- Bread and butter plate should be placed above the forks with the butter spreader placed across the plate.
- Salad plate is placed above and to the left of the forks or on the dinner plate.
- Be sure everything you use to set the table is clean and free of water spots or finger prints.
- Be sure the texture and color of the dinnerware, flatware, glassware, centerpieces, napkin, placemat/tablecloth, all coordinate.
- Let your menu influence the table setting you use.

## **Beverage Ware**

- At least one piece of beverage ware should be included in your place setting.
- Water glass is placed above the tip of the knife.
- If you list more than one beverage on your menu (for example: milk and fruit juice) then two appropriate glasses should be provided at the setting. If only one beverage is listed on the menu, or none at all (water is assumed to be served if nothing is listed on the menu for a beverage) then one piece of beverage ware should be included in the table setting.
- A water glass may or may not be included in addition to other beverages, such as tea, listed on the menu.
- Coffee cup and saucer is placed to the right of the spoon with the handle toward the right. If you don't list coffee on the menu, you do not need to put a cup and saucer at your place setting.

## **Centerpieces**

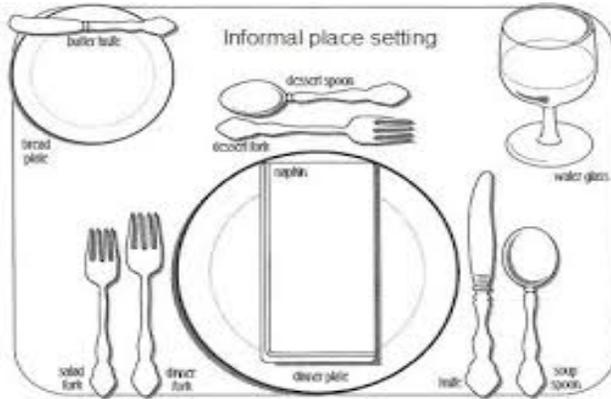
- Use good color combinations. The centerpiece can help to draw the whole place setting together. You can also use your center piece to accent another color in the rest of your place setting.
- Examples of centerpieces: candles, flowers, pinecones, fruits and vegetables, books, small ceramics. Express your personality.
- Keep the centerpiece in proportion to the size of the table. If it is too large it will overpower the table; too small and it will seem lost.
- Keep the height of the centerpiece in mind. Keep the view and conversation zones open. Every guest should be able to see the other guests near him or her.
- A centerpiece can consist of more than one item. Be careful, though, when combining items to watch the sizes, textures, colors and themes.

# Examples of Table setting

## Basic Table setting



## Informal Table setting



## Formal Table setting

