

E A T A L Y

CLEARING TABLES

RESTAURANT SERVICE STANDARDS

What are some things you keep in mind when clearing a table?

What are your best practices?

Clearing Tables - The Goal

The goal when clearing a table is to be as non-intrusive as possible.

- Be prepared before approaching the table
 - Have a strategy based on the table's particular situation
 - Do you need additional hands?
 - Do you need a tray?
- Be as discrete and quiet as possible
 - Avoid interrupting conversation
 - Follow the proper clearing method

Clearing Tables – The Approach

Scenario	The Rule	The Exception
Approaching the table	Clear to the right of the guest	Clear as best you can while not touching or bumping any guests if clearing from the right isn't possible. Use open body language and say "excuse me"
Guests have ordered individual meals	Wait to clear until all guests at the table have finished	A guest has stacked plates or pushed the plate away
Guests have ordered items to share	Clear as items are finished	--
Clearing the table	Maximum 4 guest plates per person clearing the table	You may add share plates or side dishes as long as it is not too unstable
Clearing dirty glasses	Use a tray to clear glasses	If there is 1 glass to remove, you may hold by hand

Clearing Tables - The Technique

1. Take one plate in your hand with the knuckle of the thumb resting on the outer edge of the plate.
 - Ideally, this is one of the larger, sturdier plates (pizza)
 - Your thumb does not touch the inside of the plate
2. Stack a second plate where the edge of the plate rests on your forearm and heel of your hand
 - Ideally, this is also one of the larger, sturdier plates
3. Stack up to 2 more plates on top of the plate on your forearm
4. Place silverware onto the plate in your hand
 - Place the handle of 1 knife on the edge of the plate under your thumb and have it extend across the plate - this is your “bridge”
 - Have all other silverware tucked underneath the “bridge” so the silverware does not slide around
5. Use your free hand to grab 1 additional plate
6. Use a towel and a plate from a side station to wipe off any extra food or liquid from the table
7. Glassware is cleared with a tray



Clearing Tables – What We Don’t Do

- DO NOT stack plates on the table
- DO NOT carry so many items that you risk dropping anything on the floor or on a guest
- DO NOT stack glassware
- DO NOT transfer liquid from glass to glass
- DO NOT grab glasses from the inside, only from the sides or bottom of the glass
- DO NOT transfer food from plate to plate
- DO NOT pass silverware around the table, take a plate, put the silverware on the plate in your hand
- DO NOT put trays on the table, it stays in your hand

Let's Practice!

Clearing Tables