

19 I can talk about manners

A Table manners

Dining **etiquette**



In the Philippines, it's **considered good manners** to eat all the food on your plate.

In Afghanistan, wasting food is **frowned upon**, and talking with your mouth full is **viewed as** being **discourteous**.

In China, it's **customary** and **respectful** to pass food to the elderly first. You should never stab **chopsticks**¹ into a bowl of rice and leave them pointing **upwards**: this is **regarded as** extremely **disrespectful**. It can also be **offensive** to remove rice from a bowl with a spoon.

Glossary

etiquette	the formal rules of correct or polite behaviour in society.
manners	(PL) behaviour that is considered polite in a particular society or culture.
frown on/upon sth/sb	(often passive) disapprove of sth/sb.
discourteous	FML having bad manners and not showing respect. OPP courteous. courtesy N.
customary	usually done in a particular place or situation. custom N.
respectful	showing polite behaviour towards sb/sth. OPP disrespectful.
upwards	moving or pointing towards a higher position. OPP downwards.
offensive	rude in a way that makes sb upset or annoyed. OPP inoffensive.

spotlight *consider, regard, view, perceive* FML

These verbs all mean to think about something in a particular way.

They are commonly used in passive constructions like this:

*It is **considered** (to be) the correct thing to do.*

*It is **regarded/viewed/perceived as** the correct thing to do.*

1 Correct the spelling mistakes.

- | | | |
|---------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| 1 inoffensive _____ | 3 etikette _____ | 5 downwords _____ |
| 2 curteous _____ | 4 percieve _____ | 6 chopstiks _____ |

2 Complete the sentences.

ABOUT YOUR COUNTRY

- It is c_____ to eat chicken with your fingers when you're at the table. _____
- Talking with your mouth full is usually f_____ upon. _____
- Parents think it's important for children to have good table m_____. _____
- Not eating food you are given is generally v_____ as discourteous. _____
- It is c_____ very bad manners to eat everything you are given. _____
- C_____ related to the serving of food are the same all over the country. _____
- It is r_____ as r_____ to offer food to the elderly first. _____
- As a guest, it would be o_____ to say the host's food was badly cooked. _____
- It is d_____ to start eating before others have been served. _____
- It is normal e_____ to put your knife and fork / chopsticks by the side of your plate/bowl when you have finished eating. _____

3 ABOUT YOUR COUNTRY Are the sentences in Exercise 2 true or false, or does it depend on different factors? Write your answers, or ask another student.

B Polite or impolite? 🎧

- DAN Felicity's manners are **impeccable**, aren't they?
 BETH Yes, **exemplary**, but that brother of hers is a bit **cheeky**.
 DAN I'd call him **insolent**, actually, or even **downright** rude.
 JO I don't think Julian will **be put out** if you leave the party early.
 JIM I just don't want to **put my foot in it**, you know. His family are very **upper class**.
 JO Well, you'll just have to **be on your best behaviour**, then!
 KAZ I really **took exception to** Arnold's **remarks**; I thought they were **disgraceful**.
 BEN Yes, I couldn't agree more. They really were **in poor taste**.

Glossary

impeccable	perfect (impeccable manners/behaviour/service).
exemplary	FML excellent, and done in a way that others should copy.
cheeky	INF rude, often in an amusing way (often used by adults about children). cheek N (What a cheek! = How rude!).
insolent	extremely rude and disrespectful. insolence N.
downright	used to emphasize sth negative (downright rude/offensive).
be put out	be upset or offended. SYN take offence .
put your foot in it	INF say sth that offends or upsets sb.
upper class	considered to have the highest social status (also middle class , lower class , working class).
be on your best behaviour	behave in the most polite way you can.
take exception to sth	object strongly to sth and be angry about it.
remark	a few words that give your opinion about sth. SYN comment .
disgraceful	very bad or unacceptable. disgrace N (What a disgrace!).
be in poor/bad taste	be offensive and not at all appropriate.

4 Cross out any words in italics which are not possible. All three may be possible.

- He was *put out* / *put his foot in it* / *on his best behaviour*.
- She made a *rude* / *an insolent* / *a cheeky* remark.
- What she said was in *poor* / *bad* / *cheek* taste.
- Unfortunately she took *exception* / *offence* / *her foot in it*.
- His behaviour is *impeccable* / *disgraceful* / *exemplary*.
- I thought they were *downright rude* / *comments* / *disgrace*.
- Is he *upper* / *working* / *middle class*?
- What a *cheek* / *a disgrace* / *an insolence*!

5 Complete the texts.

I have a very unusual friend called Erwin who considers himself to be very upper (1) _____. He is incredibly polite and has exemplary (2) _____, and I always feel rather uncomfortable with him, because I feel I have to be on my best (3) _____ all the time. I'm very nervous about putting my (4) _____ in it, especially if I go to his place for dinner. If I get there even five minutes late, he seems to be quite (5) _____ out.

I've taken a strong dislike to one of the guys who work for me. He's quite insolent; in fact, I'd say he's (6) _____ rude, actually. The other day he made an offensive (7) _____ about my appearance, which frankly is none of his business, and I really took (8) _____ to it. Calling me 'carrot top' because of my red hair was in very poor (9) _____, I felt.