

Restaurant Etiquette – How to create a favourable impression when eating out

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Good manners will open doors that the best education cannot.”

Etiquette is the science of living. It embraces everything. People all over the world are judged, liked, disliked, remembered or looked down with contempt based on their manners. [Good manners](#) speak a lot about your personality.



It is imperative that you display your best behaviour when you are in a public place especially when eating out. When you walk into a restaurant you don't want to look like a snob, right?



Here are a few things that will help you make an impression at a restaurant.

1. **Dress appropriately:** You are what you wear. Everyone knows that the way you dress makes an impact on people. Let your wardrobe make the first impression for you. When you dress up, you will feel more confident and 'the feel-good factor' will bring out the best in you.
2. **Raise your hand:** When you want to grab the attention of a server, raise your hand. This is the most simple and basic thing. Avoid shouting or waving at him, which would make you look rude. The use of "Excuse me, please" in [English](#) to grab the attention of a waiter, is highly recommended.

3. **Be polite:** It would be good if you could remember the server's name and address him by his name. Make use of the magic words- "Please" and "Thank you". For you they might sound simple, but for them it's a huge boost to their morale.
4. **Help with menu:** You can ask any pertinent question relating to the food that you wish to order. For example, questions like what the entrée consists of, whether the quantity is enough to be shared, how a particular dish is prepared (not the whole recipe, of course!), etc. Inform him of any food allergies or dietary preferences so that he/she can communicate those with the chef. It helps to engage with the waiter, with a question like, "What dish would you recommend?" or "Any special dish you would like us to try out?"
5. **Ordering:** Once you have made up your mind, keep your menu card down and wait for the server, in case he has moved to attend to other customers. Once ready with your order, don't make him stand and wait, while you start deliberating on the menu again. Order right away! Make eye contact with him while ordering. It also helps to ask, "Would that be too much? Will it be sufficient for all of us?"
6. **Be patient to wait:** Remember that you are not the only food connoisseur sitting at the table ready to pounce on the prey. Give sufficient time to the server and be willing to wait for your order, if the restaurant is crowded.
7. **Forgive if something goes wrong:** Your server is also a human being and we all make mistakes. Hence if there is any lapse on his or the chef's part, be willing to forgive. Don't take the opportunity to show your superiority. If you yell and scream and bring the roof down, you will be cutting a sorry figure in front of the others. So, pipe down! This does not mean that you do not give feedback at all, but instead give the feedback constructively. For example, if a particular dish was too spicy, you could say something like, "I think this one might have been better with a little less spice" or "I would have preferred a less spicy dish".



Finally, thank the waiter before leaving the restaurant. You could say a few words about the food and the service. "Thank you so much. We really enjoyed our meal and appreciate the service." If the restaurant accepts tip, feel free to add an amount as a tip --- 5-10% is considered the norm in India- when making the payment.

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-By Chander Madan

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