

SOP: Correct Positioning of Cutlery and Utensils

This SOP details the **correct positioning of cutlery and utensils**, focusing on optimal table setting, proper utensil placement for functional use, hygiene standards, and etiquette to enhance dining experience and ensure safety. It covers guidelines for arranging forks, knives, spoons, and other utensils according to meal courses and cultural dining practices, promoting consistency and professionalism in food service environments.

1. Purpose

To ensure standardized, hygienic, and aesthetically pleasing arrangement of cutlery and utensils, aligned with service protocols for various meal types and cultural dining settings.

2. Scope

This SOP applies to all staff responsible for table setting and service in the dining areas across the establishment.

3. Responsibilities

- **Service Staff:** Responsible for correct and hygienic placement of cutlery and utensils on tables.
- **Supervisors:** Ensure compliance with SOP standards and provide training as needed.
- **Managers:** Oversee implementation and address any deviations or feedback.

4. Equipment and Materials

- Forks (dinner, salad, dessert, fish)
- Knives (dinner, butter, fish, steak)
- Spoons (soup, dessert, teaspoon)
- Appetizer/Cocktail utensils
- Napkins, charger plates, bread plates, glassware
- Tablecloths (clean and pressed)
- Gloves or napkins for hygienic handling

5. Table Setting Guidelines

Utensil	Position	Notes/Exceptions
Dinner Fork	Left of the dinner plate	Placed outside salad fork if more than one course
Salad Fork	Leftmost of forks (if present)	If salad is served after main course, place closest to plate
Dinner Knife	Right of the dinner plate, blade facing plate	
Soup Spoon	Right of knives	Only if soup is served
Dessert Spoon/Fork	Horizontally above the plate	Brought with dessert or preset
Bread Knife	On bread plate (top left of main plate)	
Appetizer Utensils	Outer-most on the appropriate side	Removed if course not served

6. Step-by-Step Procedure

1. Ensure clean hands or wear gloves before handling cutlery.
2. Place tablecloth and ensure surface is clean and wrinkle-free.
3. Arrange charger plate at the center.
4. Position cutlery as outlined in the guidelines table, working from the outside in as courses progress.
5. Place napkin either to the left of the forks or on the plate.

- 6. Glassware is placed above knives (right side), bread plate and butter knife above forks (left side).
- 7. Check for alignment and consistency between place settings.
- 8. Remove any damaged or dirty utensils promptly and replace as necessary.

7. Hygiene and Safety Standards

- Always handle utensils by the handle, never the eating end.
- Sterilize cutlery before use and if dropped or contaminated during setting.
- Use clean, pressed napkins to polish and wipe utensils.
- Store cutlery in covered, designated storage prior to setting tables.

8. Etiquette and Cultural Considerations

- Adhere to regional or cultural dining customs for utensil order and placement.
- Adjust settings for left-handed guests as required (upon request).
- Align all cutlery uniformly: handles at the same height, edges parallel to table edge.

9. Documentation & Compliance

- Supervisors to conduct regular spot checks and record compliance in daily logs.
- Report deviations and corrective measures to management for review.

10. Revision History

Version	Date	Changes	Approved By
1.0	2024-06-12	Initial Draft	[Manager Name]