

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)

Serving Ware and Utensil Placement Procedures

This SOP details **serving ware and utensil placement procedures** to ensure proper table setting standards, enhance dining aesthetics, and maintain hygiene. It covers the correct arrangement of plates, glasses, cutlery, and napkins according to service style, timing for setting and clearing, and guidelines for handling serving ware to prevent contamination and ensure guest satisfaction.

1. Purpose

To provide standardized steps for the placement and handling of serving ware and utensils, ensuring consistent table settings, presentation, and hygiene across the dining venue.

2. Scope

This procedure applies to all front-of-house staff responsible for table setup, resetting, and clearing in dining areas.

3. Responsibilities

- Service Staff: Follow procedures for setting and clearing tables and handling serving ware.
- Supervisors/Managers: Monitor compliance and provide training as required.

4. Table Setting Standards

4.1 General Guidelines

- All serving ware and utensils must be clean, undamaged, and polished before placement.
- Avoid touching the eating surfaces of plates, cutlery, and glasses with hands.
- Use a clean service cloth or tray for carrying and placing items.

4.2 Basic Table Setting Arrangement

Item	Placement
Plates	Center of place setting, 1 inch from the table edge
Main Fork	Left of the plate
Main Knife	Right of the plate, cutting edge facing inward
Spoon (if applicable)	Right of the knife
Bread Plate	Above forks, upper left side
Butter Knife	Laid diagonally across bread plate
Glassware	Above knives, aligning with plate center
Napkin	Folded, placed on the plate or to the left of forks

4.3 Special Service Styles

- **Formal:** Multiple glasses (water, wine), additional utensils per course, charger plate.
- **Buffet/Casual:** Minimal setting (plate, napkin, cutlery rolled or placed together).

5. Timing for Setting and Clearing

- Set tables 30-60 minutes before service begins.
- Remove unused settings if guests are fewer than places set.
- Clear used items promptly after each course, starting from the right side of the guest.
- Never clear plates or utensils before all guests at a table have finished a course, unless specifically requested.

6. Hygiene and Handling Guidelines

- Wash hands before handling any serving ware or utensils.
- Carry glasses by the stem/base, cutlery by the handle, and plates by the edge.
- Replace any item dropped or visibly soiled immediately.
- Use a tray for carrying multiple items to avoid direct contact with eating surfaces.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces before placing any items.

7. Monitoring and Compliance

- Supervisors to perform spot checks during service setup.
- Non-compliance to be addressed with refresher training or disciplinary action as appropriate.

8. Documentation

- Training records for all staff must be maintained.
- Updated procedures to be reviewed annually or as needed.

9. Revision History

Date	Revision	Description
2024-06-20	1.0	Initial release