

# International Etiquette





# International Etiquette

## **1. Preface**

- 1.1 Significance of international etiquette .. 01
- 1.2 Importance of international etiquette ... 01

## **2. Dining**

- 2.1 Hosting banquets ..... 04
- 2.2 Seating arrangements..... 12
- 2.3 Tableware setting..... 32
- 2.4 Table manners..... 40
- 2.5 Types of banquets or parties ..... 48
- 2.6 Buffet etiquette ..... 50

## **3. Dress**

- 3.1 Importance of appropriate dress ..... 53
- 3.2 For men..... 53
- 3.3 For women ..... 58

## **4. Accommodation**

4.1 At home .....	66
4.2 As a house guest .....	67
4.3 At a hotel.....	68

## **5. Travel**

5.1 On foot.....	74
5.2 By car.....	77
5.3 In an elevator .....	84
5.4 On stairs.....	84
5.5 By airplane.....	86
5.6 By public transport .....	87

## **6. Interaction**

6.1 Introduction .....	90
6.2 Handshakes.....	95
6.3 Visits .....	99
6.4 Gifts .....	99



6.5 Flags .....	102
6.6 Seating arrangements for meetings ....	106
6.7 Small talk.....	109
6.8 Mobile phones .....	109
6.9 Email.....	110
6.10 Social media .....	111

## **7. Entertainment**

7.1 Reception, tea or garden party .....	114
7.2 Concert .....	115
7.3 Dance .....	117
7.4 Golf .....	119

## **Preface**

### **1.1 Significance of international etiquette**

International etiquette provides a set of rules or norms for semiformal and formal social gatherings. It can help avoid unnecessary misunderstandings and awkward situations that could make one look bad personally and, in the worst-case scenario, tarnish the reputation of one's nation. With the ever-increasing ease of travel, one's chance of needing to understand and use international etiquette will continue to grow.

### **1.2 Importance of international etiquette**

Although international etiquette is based on traditional Western norms, it is perfectly acceptable to incorporate the traditional customs of a non-Western host or guest of honor. For this reason, included are some acceptable ways to accommodate a host or guest of honor from

Taiwan. One should keep in mind the famous Western proverb, "When in Rome, do as the Romans do." Similarly, the Chinese classic Book of Rites (*Liji* 禮記 ) says, "When entering a border, ask about matters forbidden; when entering a country, ask about its customs; before entering a home, ask about taboos to be avoided."



**Dining**

## **2. Dining**

### **2.1 Hosting banquets**

Banquets offer good opportunities for socializing and can help foster new friendships or enhance old ones. Improper arrangements may upset guests or even lead to friction between countries, so great care should be taken on such occasions.

- Guest list

To host a successful banquet, one should carefully plan the guest list in advance. The number and rank of guests must be considered first, as no one present should have a higher rank than the guest of honor.

- Timing

Invitations should be sent out two weeks in advance. Official banquets should not be held on weekends or public holidays, whenever possible.



- Venue

Hosting a banquet at one's residence shows sincerity and warmth. If another venue is used, one should take into consideration its facilities, suitability, and convenience.

- Invitations

Examples of invitations can be found on figures 1-4. The RSVP in the lower left corner of a Western-style invitation comes from the French expression of *répondez s'il vous plaît* which means "please reply" in English.

- Menu and guest list

Menu design and selection should keep in mind the guests' preferences and religious or dietary restrictions. For example, Buddhist guests might wish to avoid all meat products, while Muslim and Jewish guests will want to avoid pork, and Hindu guests beef. In the West, dessert should be served after the main course.

For a more formal occasion, the menu and guest list may be provided to guests for their convenience.

- Important matters for hosts

- Once invitations have been sent, a banquet should not be rescheduled or cancelled unless there is a very good reason.
- The time, place, and dress code should be clearly written on the invitation.
- For an important banquet, the host should remind the guests who will be attending beforehand.

- Important matters for guests

- Guests should arrive on time. (Please see figure 5)
- When attending a banquet abroad held at the host's residence, guests may present the host with a token gift representative of their country to show appreciation.



- Guests should not take uninvited guests to the banquet.
- Guests should dress appropriately as stated on the invitation. When in doubt, ask the host for clarification.



Figure 1: Invitation in Chinese (vertical).

<p>帖      回</p> <p>□   □</p> <p>謝   陪</p> <p>聯絡人：      電話：      回帖：      (請列宴會主人地址)</p> <p>月      日      宴</p> <p>啟</p> <p>月      日</p>		<p>敬謹訂於中華民國 恭候菲酌</p> <p>年      月      日(星期 )</p> <p>台      光</p> <p>王大明 謹訂</p> <p>時間：      午      時      分</p> <p>地點：</p> <p>服裝：</p>	
-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--



Figure 2: Invitation in Chinese (horizontal).

為歡迎美國聯邦參議員訪問團謹訂於中華民國九十七年  
八月二十八日（星期四）敬備菲酌 恭候

台 光

王大明 謹訂

時 間：中午十二時正

地 點：台北圓山大飯店二樓金龍廳

服 裝：男士：西服

女士：套裝或洋裝

Figure 3: Invitation in English.

Mr. & Mrs. John Smith

Request the pleasure of your company at a luncheon

In honor of the U.S. Senators

On Thursday, August 28th, 2008

At 12:00 P.M.

At the Golden Dragon Restaurant of the Grand Hotel

No.1, Zhongshan N. Rd., Sec. 4, Taipei

R.S.V.P.

Return card enclosed

Dress code: Business attire



#### Figure 4: Reply card in English.

Reply cards and invitations may be printed separately.

<u>RETURN CARD</u>	
Luncheon hosted by Mr. & Mrs. John Smith on August 28th, 2008.	
Name : _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> will attend	<input type="checkbox"/> will not attend
Tel : (02)2348-2597 Fax: (02)2375-2157	
Please fax response or mail it to No. 2, Ketagalan Blvd., Taipei.	

## 2.2 Seating arrangements

### 1. Western style

There are three principles regarding seating arrangements.

- Place of honor to the right
    - When a couple hosts another couple and they are seated next to each other, each woman should be seated to the right of her husband.
    - When the host and hostess are seated across from each other, the male guest of honor is seated to right of the hostess, and the female guest of honor is seated to right of the host. The next most important guest should be seated to the left of the hostess, and so on.
  - Special considerations
    - Rank and precedence
- Seat order is determined by the official



positions of the guests. The seating of a guest's wife shall be determined by her husband's official position. However, if a wife's official position is higher than that of her husband, she is seated according to her rank.

- Political considerations

Political considerations may alter a guest's position in the order of precedence. For example, at a diplomatic event, a foreign minister takes precedence over other ministerial-level guests.

- Personal relationships

Friendships, subordinate relationships among guests, and language abilities should also be taken into account when making seating arrangements.

- Alternating seating

It is recommended that men/women, husbands/wives, and nationals/foreigners should be seated alternately around the table.

## **2.Taiwan context**

The first two principles are also applied in seating arrangements when the host or guest of honor is from Taiwan. If this is the case, the husband and wife may be seated next to each other. The practice to alternate the seating of men/women and nationals/foreigners around the table still applies.

## **3.Other important considerations**

- On Western-style occasions, the host and hostess are treated as focal points, and guests higher in precedence are seated closer to them. It is recommended that the last seat not be occupied by a female



guest and that the host be seated with his back to the door.

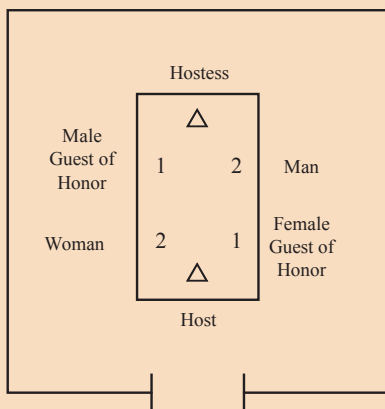
- Ideally, there should be 6, 10, or 14 people with an equal number of men and women so that the female and male guests can be seated alternately, with the host and hostess being seated across the table from each other.
- One should avoid having 13 people total (including the guests, host, and hostess) seated at a table.
- Should there be neither clear differences in rank nor special political considerations, seating arrangements can be planned based on the guests' professional and personal backgrounds, and convenience for conversation.



#### 4. Seating arrangements illustrated: See figures 6 to 19

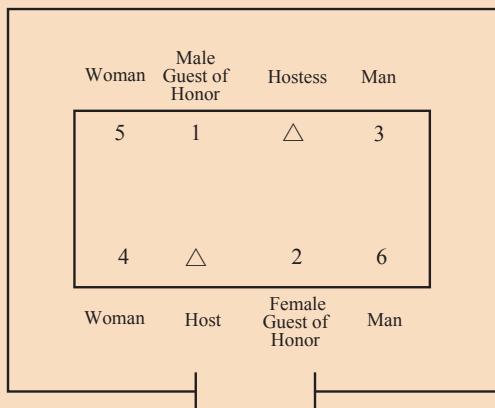


**Figure 5: Guests should arrive on time.**



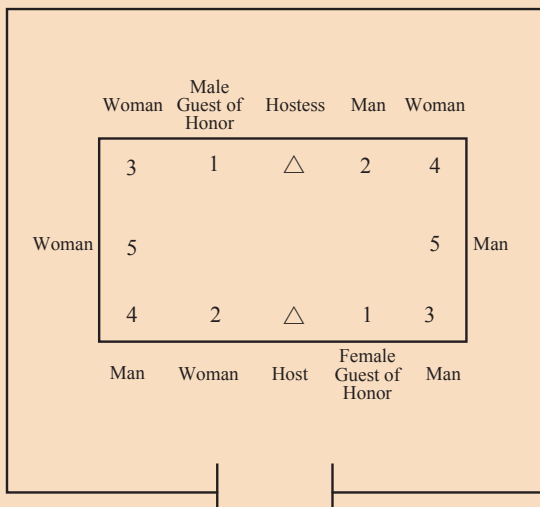
### Figure 6: Long table seating—1.

When there are six people total, the host and hostess are seated at opposite sides of the table.

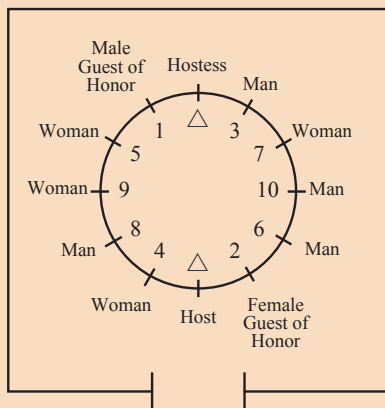


**Figure 7: Long table seating—2.**

When there are eight people total, male and female guests are seated alternately, with members of the same sex facing each other. Seats next to the host and hostess are reserved for guests with the highest precedence.

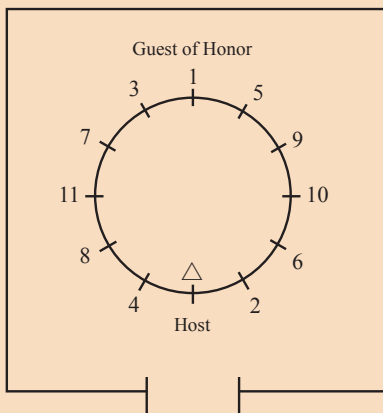
**Figure 8: Long-table seating—3.**

When there are 12 people total, the host and hostess are seated at the middle of the longer sides of the table, with the lowest-ranking guests seated at the ends.



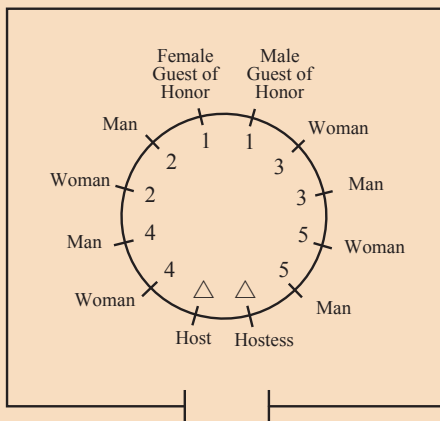
**Figure 9: Western-style round table seating—1.**

The host and hostess are seated facing each other, with the male guest of honor seated to the right of the hostess.



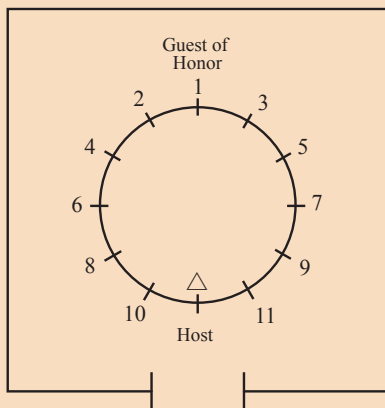
**Figure 10: Western-style round table seating—2.**

The host and guest of honor are seated facing each other, with the other guests seated in accordance of rank starting from the right side of the host.



**Figure 11: Round table seating in the Taiwan context—1.**

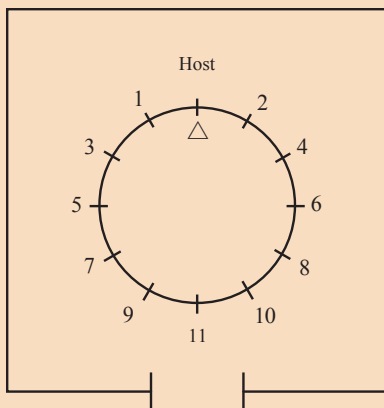
The host and hostess are seated next to each other, with the guests of honor sitting across from them (men on the left, women on the right). The other couples are arranged by precedence as in the figure.



**Figure 12: Round table seating in the Taiwan context—2.**

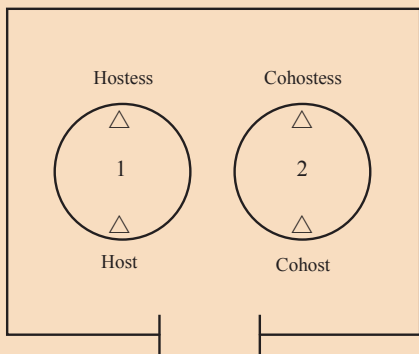
The host and the guest of honor are seated across from each other, and the other guests are seated alternately in order of precedence on the right and left sides of the guest of honor.





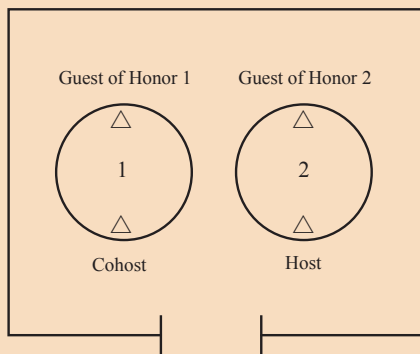
**Figure 13: Round table seating in the Taiwan context—3.**

If the rank of the host is higher than that of the guests and there is no guest of honor, the host is seated facing the entrance with the guests seated on the host's right and left alternately in accordance with rank.



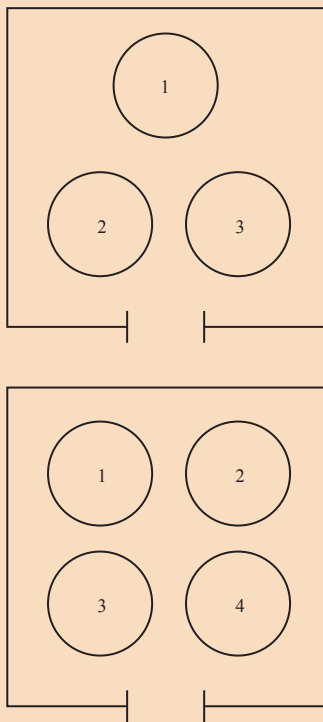
**Figure 14: Seating at two round tables.**

In this case, Western-style seating arrangements seat the host and hostess across from each other at one table, and likewise with a cohost and cohostess at the other table.

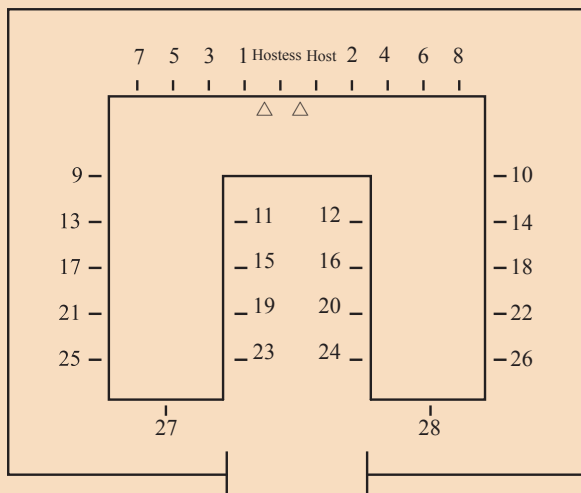


**Figure 15: Seating at two round tables—2.**

The host and hostess sit across from the guests of honor at different tables.

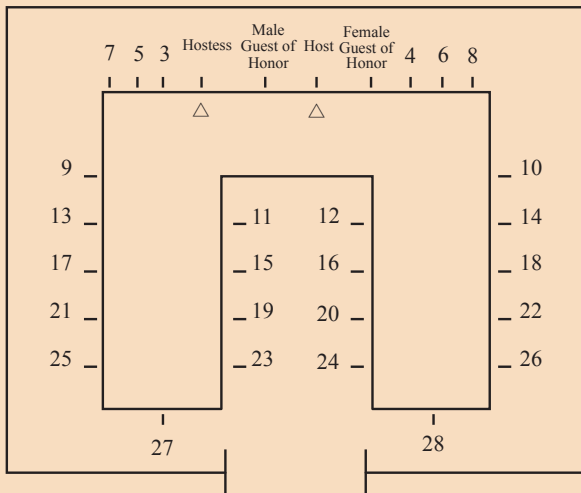


**Figure 16: Arrangement for three or four tables.**



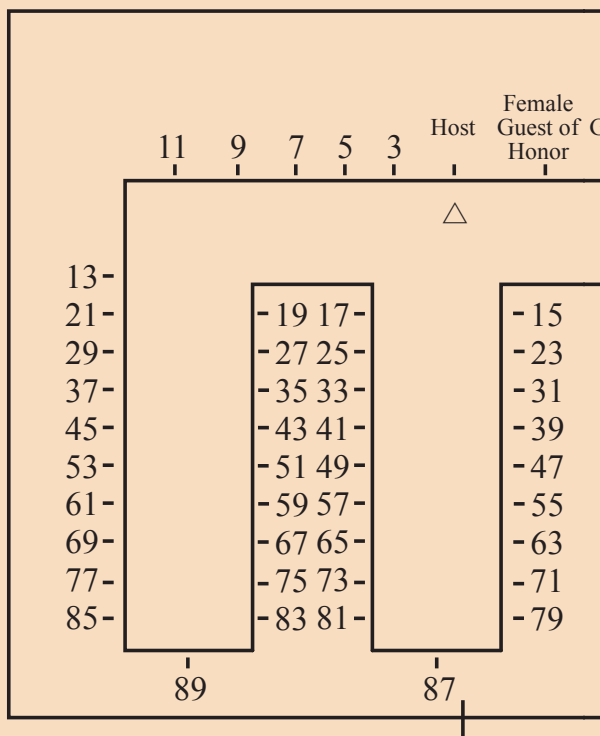
**Figure 17: Horseshoe-style seating—1.**

When the rank of the host and hostess is higher than those of the guests, the host and hostess are seated at the middle of the top, with the guests seated to the right of the hostess and then the left of the host in order of precedence.



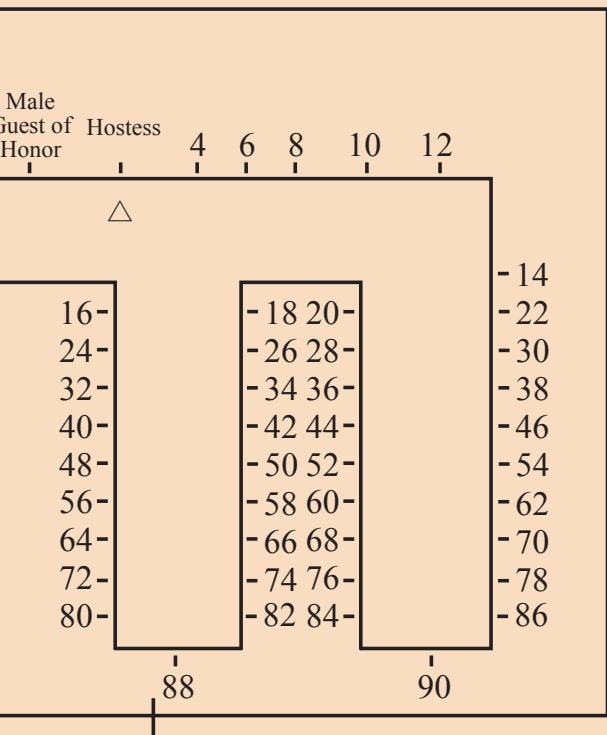
**Figure 18: Horseshoe-style seating—2.**

When host and hostess and guests of honor are of equal rank, they are seated alternately at the middle of the top side to show equal respect, such as when a Minister of Foreign Affairs and spouse host a banquet for another country's Minister of Foreign Affairs and spouse.



**Figure 19: Double horseshoe seating.**

If the rank of the guests of honor is higher than that of the host and hostess, a seating chart can be arranged like



this, such as when a Premier and spouse host a banquet for another country's President and spouse.



## **2.3 Tableware Setting**

### **Cutlery and Glassware:**

Wine and water glasses are placed above and to the right of the service plate, and a small bread plate is placed above and to the left of the service plate. The outermost cutlery is used first, with the fork held in the left hand and the knife in the right (opposite for those who are left-handed). When leaving the table during a meal, the fork and knife should be placed on opposite sides of the plate as in figure 23. After finishing the course, used cutlery and used soup spoons should be left side by side on the right side of the plate as in figure 24, with the fork on the inside, tines pointing up, and the knife on the outside, blade facing in.

### **Napkin:**

It is customary to wait for the hostess to open her napkin first before putting your own on your lap. Use the corners of the napkin to wipe your mouth, but do not use it to clean the cutlery



or to wipe your face. When leaving the table during the meal, lay the napkin over the back of the chair or on its armrest, as in figure 29. After the meal is finished, loosely fold the napkin and place it to the left of the plate, as in figure 30.



**Figure 20: Western-Style Tableware Arrangement**

- |                 |                      |
|-----------------|----------------------|
| 1. Salad knife  | 9. Dessert spoon     |
| 2. Salad fork   | 10. Dessert fork     |
| 3. Soup spoon   | 11. White wine glass |
| 4. Fish knife   | 12. Red wine glass   |
| 5. Fish fork    | 13. Water glass      |
| 6. Dinner knife | 14. Bread plate      |
| 7. Dinner fork  | 15. Butter knife     |
| 8. Napkin       |                      |

## How to Use a Knife and Fork:



**Figure 21:**

Hold the fork in your left hand and the knife in your right hand.



**Figure 22:**

When cutting, stick the tines of the fork into one side of the cut of meat, then cut off a bite-sized portion with the knife.



**Figure 23:**

Resting position for the fork and knife when taking a break during a meal. (The fork and knife should be placed on the plate itself, without their handles touching the table)



**Figure 24:**

Position for the fork and knife after finishing a meal.

## How to Use a Napkin:



**Figure 25:**

Place the napkin on your lap with its fold facing towards you.



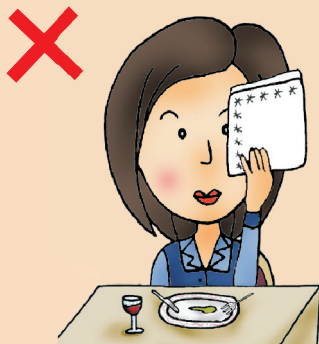
**Figure 26:**

Refrain from using the napkin as a bib.



**Figure 27:**

Gently use the corners of the napkin to wipe your mouth.



**Figure 28:**

Refrain from using the napkin to wipe your face.



**Figure 29:**

When leaving the table during a meal, lay the napkin over the back of your chair or on its armrest.



**Figure 30:**

After the meal is done, fold the napkin loosely and place it on the table.



## 2.4 Table Manners

- Don't leave purses, cellphones or other personal belongings on the table.
- Bring your food up to your mouth, rather than lean over towards your food.
- Chew with your mouth closed, and don't speak too loudly.
- Finish the food on your plate if possible, but if not, don't force yourself to do so.
- Refer to figures 31-32 for the proper way of eating soup, and remember never to make slurping noises.
- When removing a bone or fruit seed from your mouth, cover your mouth with your hand or napkin and spit it gently into your hand before placing it on your plate. Don't spit it directly onto the plate or table, as in figure 33.
- When you want to use a condiment or other item on the table not immediately in front of you, ask those near you to pass it to you, rather



than reach across them, as in figure 34.

- When eating bread, break off small pieces and eat them one bite at a time. Other food should be cut into bite-sized pieces and chewed and swallowed before putting more food into your mouth. You should not, however, cut an entire piece of meat into small pieces all at once.
- During the meal, refrain as much as possible from sneezing, coughing, yawning, or blowing your nose. If you must do so, use your handkerchief or napkin to cover your mouth.
- Compliment your host/hostess on the food, especially if he/she personally cooked the food.
- In most Western cultures, toasts can be proposed, but it is not common to drink the contents of your glass all at once, so please don't ask your guests to do so.
- If you drop and break a piece of tableware, remain calm and wait for assistance from the

service staff. If you need to summon a member of the service staff, signal with your hand, palm facing inward, instead of calling them for help, as in figure 35.

- It is inappropriate to apply makeup or use a toothpick while at the dining table.
- In most Western cultures, the host will generally deliver a speech before the dessert course. In Scandinavian countries and at banquets hosted by Taiwanese, however, the host will more commonly give a speech before the start of the meal.



## Proper Way to Eat Soup:

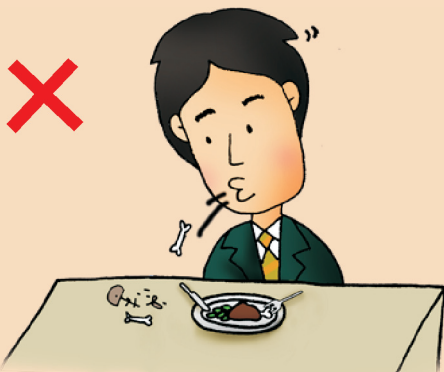


**Figure 31:**

Bring the soup spoon up to your mouth, and eat from the side of the spoon without slurping.

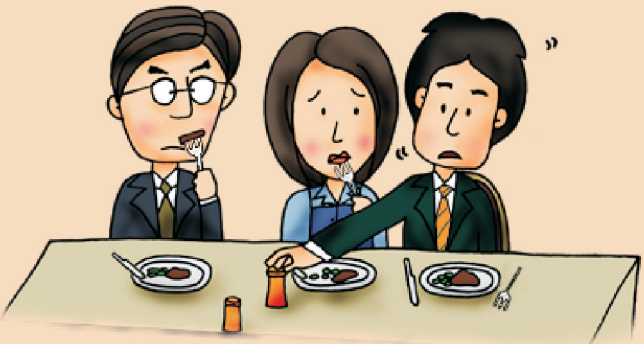
**Figure 32:**

To finish your soup, tilt the soup bowl away from you in order to scoop it up with your spoon. Do not pick up the soup bowl to drink directly from it.



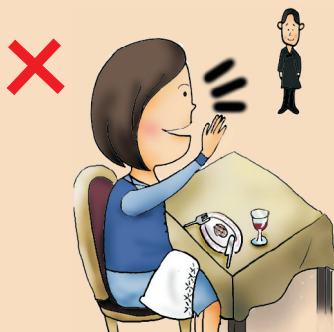
**Figure 33:**

Don't spit bones or other inedible parts of your food directly onto the plate or the table.



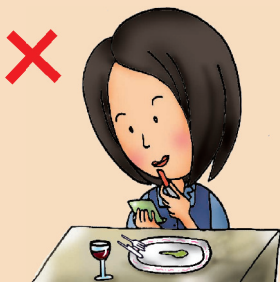
**Figure 34:**

If you need an item on the table that is not within your reach, ask the person next to you to pass it to you.



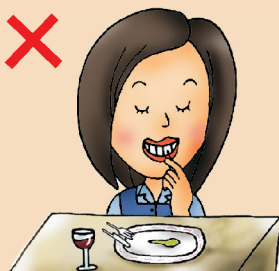
**Figure 35:**

If you need help from the service staff, simply lift your hand. Don't shout or snap your fingers.



**Figure 36:**

It is inappropriate to apply makeup at the table.



**Figure 37:**

Don't use a toothpick or your finger to pick your teeth at the table.



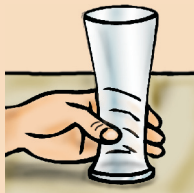
## How to Properly Hold Wine and Liquor Glasses:



Hold wine and champagne glasses by the stem.



Hold brandy glasses with your palm at the base of the bowl and with the stem passing through your middle and index fingers. The warmth of your hand will help release the aromas in the liquor.



Hold tall and skinny beer glasses by the lower, narrower part of the glass.



Hold long-stem cocktail glasses as you hold a wine glass.



## 2.5 Types of Banquets and Parties

- **Luncheon or Business Lunch**

Typically held between noon and 2:00 p.m.

- **Dinner**

Usually held after 6:00 p.m., often with couples invited.

- **State Banquet**

Official banquet held to welcome a visiting head of state.

- **Supper**

Held after an opera or concert performance. In Europe or the United States, a supper is often comparable to a dinner banquet in size and scale.

- **Tea Party**

May be held either between breakfast and lunch, or between lunch and dinner.

- **Cocktail, Cocktail Party, Reception**

Time should be specified in the invitation.

- **Garden Party**

Time should be specified in the invitation.



- **Buffet**

May or may not have assigned seating, depending on individual circumstances. Guests typically serve themselves and eat in the order they arrive.

- **Soirée**

Held after 6:00 p.m., and usually includes dinner and entertainment such as a musical performance or a dance.

## 2.6 Buffet Etiquette

- Properly queue in the buffet line, do not cut the line, and refrain from talking while taking your food.
- Take reasonable portions of food in the order in which it is served on the buffet table.
- Don't take excessive portions of food so that it piles up on your plate, as indicated in figure 38.
- Don't get up from the table until you have finished chewing your food. It is not appropriate to chew and walk at the same time.
- Don't stack your plates when finished or reuse your plates. Instead, return them to the designated area or ask a member of the service staff to remove them.



**Figure 38:**

Don't overload your plate while taking food at a buffet.



While at a buffet, wrap a napkin around your cold beverage to prevent it dripping on you.



**Dress**



### **3. Dress**

#### **3.1 Importance of appropriate dress**

One's dress reflects one's manners and character, while offering insight into the culture, traditions, and economy of one's homeland. You should try to appear neat and approachable in accordance with your status and age, and the occasion.

#### **3.2 For men**

##### **1. White tie / formal dress**

(1) A formal suit with a swallow tailcoat or dress coat and a white tie is the quintessence of formal attire. It is worn during state banquets, formal dinners, opera performances, and other evening events. The tailcoat and trousers should be made from black wool cloth. The front of the tailcoat should just reach the waistline and form a swallow tail with the back of the coat, giving the coat its hallmark trait. The trousers

usually lack cuffs and feature black satin stripes masking the side seams. A white piqué shirt or a white shirt pleated in the front sporting a stiff wing collar, together with a white bowtie, should be worn. The waistcoat should be made from white cotton fabric with floral patterns. Other formal accessories include leather or white cotton gloves, black silk socks, and black patent leather shoes. Top hats are no longer considered fashionable (see figure 39).

### (2) Morning coat

A morning coat should be worn when attending formal daytime events, such as presentations of credentials, weddings, funerals, celebrations, and official visits. The tailcoat should extend to the back of the knees, and a black one is preferable to a grey one. Wearing a black tailcoat with a grey waistcoat or a grey tailcoat with a black waistcoat is usually acceptable. Morning dress also includes trousers with dark grey stripes; a



black twill tie with white, silver or grey stripes; a white soft front or regular soft-collar dress shirt; a black or grey silk top hat; grey sheepskin gloves; black silk socks; and black patent leather shoes (see figure 40).

Note: Swallow tail and morning coats are rarely seen at social events nowadays.

(3) Black tie / semiformal dress: Tuxedo, smoking jacket, dinner jacket, dinner suit or dinner coat

The above are the norm for black tie (semiformal) evening events. Jackets are typically black, featuring lapels faced with black satin. White jackets may also be suitable for formal summertime evening events. Trousers should be black with a silk braid covering the seam. White dress shirts with a piqué or pleated front should be worn. As for accessories, black



bowties, black socks, and black patent leather shoes should be chosen (see figure 41).

## **2. General attire**

### **(1) Suit, business attire, or lounge suit**

This type of clothing is proper for official work-related occasions, such as paying a visit or attending a conference. Men should wear white or light colored shirts, together with a necktie, black or dark shoes, and black or dark socks. The jacket and trousers should be the same color, preferably a dark color, and made from the same material. Men may wear a light colored suit in the summer or during the day, but a dark suit is more appropriate for a formal banquet.

Note: When wearing a single-breasted suit, never button the bottom button, whether it has two or three buttons. You may unbutton the jacket when sitting down, but button it up after standing up. As for a double-breasted suit, the bottom button may be buttoned or left unfastened. However,



never unbutton the other buttons when sitting down. When wearing a three-piece suit, leave the bottom button of the waistcoat unbuttoned. On formal occasions, one should never remove a suit jacket or tie nor wear a short-sleeved shirt under the jacket. Suspenders, if worn, should not be visible. A necktie should have an elegant color and pattern, and be the same width as the jacket collar and long enough to reach the belt. The suit jacket pockets are for decoration only and should be empty, with pocket covers kept outside of the pockets. The color of the shoes, socks, and suit jacket must complement one another. For instance, dark shoes and socks should be worn with a dark suit jacket. Red, yellow, white, or other light colored socks should not be worn with dark shoes (see figure 42).

Note: On formal occasions, either a Western suit or national costume may be worn.

(2) Smart casual or business casual

On some informal occasions, men may wear smart casual or business casual attire. Wearing casual trousers with a long-sleeved shirt, leather or casual shoes (except for sports shoes), and a jacket or coat is acceptable. Ties are normally not worn on such occasions (see figure 43).

(3) Casual

On informal social occasions, casual trousers or jeans with a polo shirt and casual shoes, but not sports shoes, may be worn (see figure 44).

### **3.3 For women**

On formal occasions, makeup, fragrance, and hairstyle should not be excessive. Accessories should not be distracting, such as by making tinkling sounds. For daytime activities, stockings, accessories, clothes, or shoes with small beads, sequins, or bright gold or silver materials should be avoided. Select earrings of



matte, light-colored materials.

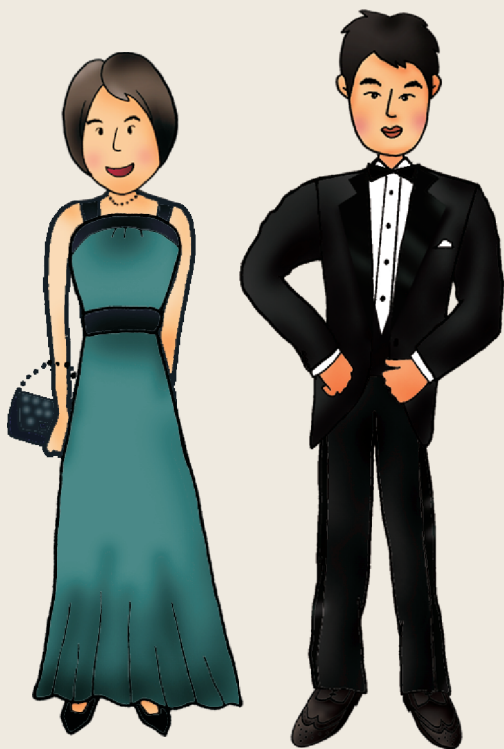
Women may wear cheongsams, dresses, or suits, as appropriate. As for cheongsams, normally short ones are worn during the day, and long ones or an evening gown with a shawl (but not a sweater) at night. High-heeled shoes should be worn, as flat shoes or low-heeled shoes would be inappropriate. According to Western etiquette, stockings should not be worn with open-toed high-heeled shoes or with flat shoes. During a daytime event, women may wear hats unless it is a religious event. On garden tours, hats and parasols are allowed.



**Figure 39:**  
Men's swallowtail coat



**Figure 40:**  
Men's morning coat

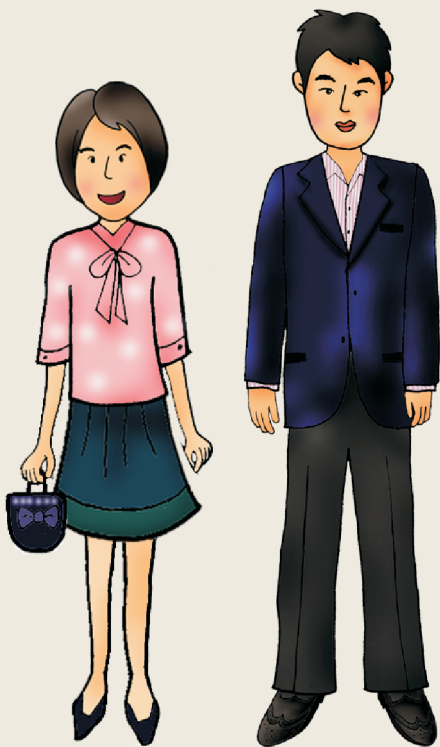


**Figure 41:**

Women's evening gown and men's black tie ensemble



**Figure 42:** Women's and men's suits



**Figure 43:** Smart casual wear





**Figure 44:** Casual wear



# **Accommodation**

## 4. Accommodation

Whether staying at home, in a hotel, or as a house guest, be clean, tidy, hygienic, and quiet for the comfort and convenience of others. Etiquette is especially important when staying at a hotel or as a house guest in order to avoid upsetting others. Some suggestions are provided below:

### 4.1 At home

- ◎ Try not to make too much noise, such as by speaking or singing loudly.
- ◎ When opening or closing doors and windows, moving objects, cooking, taking the stairs or walking, do so lightly in order to minimize sounds and vibrations that may disturb others.
- ◎ Remind children not to run around or be noisy.
- ◎ When raising a pet in an apartment, try to



keep it from bothering neighbors.

- © When decorating, renovating, or moving, choose appropriate times and avoid times of rest, such as early mornings, lunch breaks, and nighttime.

## **4.2 As a house guest**

- © House guests should retire at the same time as the host or other guests.
- © When entering someone's house or residence, knock, call out, or ring the doorbell. Do not barge or sneak in.
- © Do not use a host's phones, open the refrigerator, or receive guests without permission.
- © Before hosting a large get-together or traveling a long distance at night, notify the host or neighbors.
- © Before moving out, clean the bedroom and bathroom, restoring them to their

original condition.

### **4.3 At a hotel**

- ◎ When making a reservation, be sure to tell the hotel how many days you will be staying.
- ◎ Refrain from making noise, speaking, and listening to the TV, radio, and other electronic devices at a volume that would disturb others.
- ◎ Do not wear pajamas or slippers when walking in public areas or calling on other guests (see figure 45).
- ◎ Do not smoke in bed or steal from the hotel. Do not leave the room or bathroom in a mess.
- ◎ Leave a tip, as appropriate, and check out on time.
- ◎ Do not let children run in public areas, such as corridors, restaurants, or lobbies



(see figure 46).

- © When showering, put the shower curtain on the inside of the bathtub in order to keep the bathroom floor dry (see figure 47).



**Figure 45:** Do not wear pajamas or slippers in the public areas of a hotel.



**Figure 46:** Do not let children run in public areas.





**Figure 47:**

1. Bottom of the shower curtain is inside the bathtub.
2. Nonslip bathtub mat is inside the bathtub.
3. Bidet
4. Bath mat is in front of the bathtub.



# Travel

## 5. Travel

When traveling, whether on foot, by car, in an elevator, or on the stairs, etiquette is very important and should not be disregarded.

### 5.1 On foot

When two people are walking, it is more polite to have a superior or a woman walk in front or on the right side. If three people walk abreast, the most senior person should be in the middle, and the second most senior person on the right. If three people walk in line, the most senior person should walk in front, and the second most senior person should take the middle position.

When a man and a woman walk together, the man should be on the woman's left. However, should the street be on her right, he may walk on her right due to safety considerations. In addition, men should help women carry heavy objects, open doors, hold umbrellas, lead the



way and ask for directions (see figure 48).

When changing directions, check to see if anyone is behind you to avoid a collision. Pay attention to your personal belongings, especially in crowded areas. Should you bump into or brush against someone by accident, apologize. Be careful when choosing a location to get into or out of a taxi so as to avoid blocking traffic and endangering pedestrians.



**Figure 48:** When a man and woman walk abreast, the man should be on the woman's left side or next to the road.



## 5.2 By car

When riding in a car, the seating arrangement will depend on whether a chauffeur or the host is driving.

### 1. Cars driven by a chauffeur

When the steering wheel is on the left side and there are two passengers and a chauffeur, the higher-status passenger sits in the right rear seat and the other passenger takes the left rear seat. The positions are usually reversed when the steering wheel is on the right side. (Note: When the steering wheel is on the left side, all countries follow this principle. However, when the steering wheel is on the right side, this principle is not always followed, as in Japan, where the right rear seat is always reserved for the higher-status passenger.) In either case, female passengers should never sit in the front.

To get into a car when there are three passengers and cars are driven on the right-

hand side, the middle-status passenger should enter using the left rear door. However, when downtown, this passenger may enter first using the right rear door and slide over to the left side, with the highest-status passenger entering next. The third passenger should enter using the right front door. When exiting the vehicle, the passenger in front should exit first and open the door for the others, helping the highest-status passenger first and then the second-highest status passenger.

## **2. Cars driven by the host**

In this scenario, the front passenger seat is reserved for the guest of honor. As the car is being driven by the host, the guest of honor should sit in front to avoid making the host feel like a chauffeur, which would be impolite. As the front seat is usually more comfortable, let passengers who are older or have more seniority sit in the front seat. Should the guest in front be



dropped off first, the guest with the next priority should move to the front. If a host couple drives for a guest couple, the host couple should sit in front and the guest couple in back.

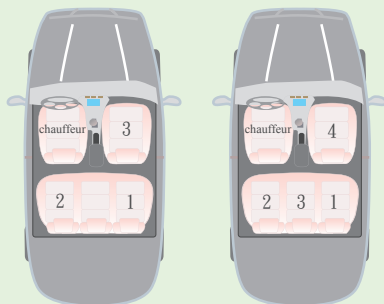
Note: To respect the comfort and personal space of passengers, do not make a guest sit in the rear middle seat. Instead, arrange for an additional vehicle, especially for official events or when male and female passengers are taking the same vehicle.

Note: When traveling by bus, train, or other forms of mass transportation, remember that the highest-status passengers should be seated in the front. Also, they should board last and exit first.

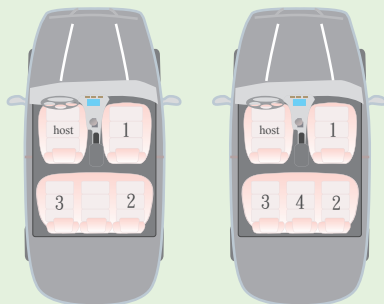


Seating charts when steering wheel is on the left

- © When a chauffeur is driving, the right rear seat is for the most senior passenger.



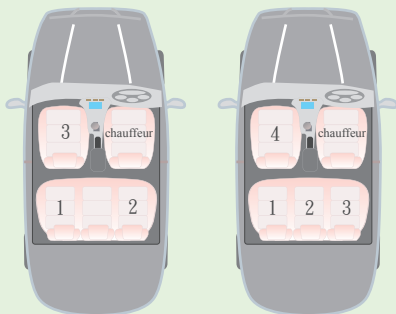
- © When the host is driving, the front passenger seat is for the most senior passenger.



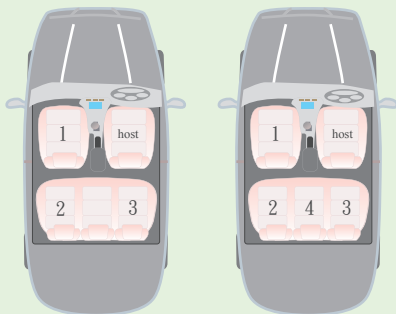


Seating charts when steering wheel is on the right

- © When a chauffeur is driving, the left rear seat is for the most senior passenger.



- © When the host is driving, the front passenger seat is for the most senior guest.



### Seating chart for a jeep

- © The front passenger seat is for the most senior guest.



### Seating charts for a bus with nine seats

- © The right seat in the middle row is for the most senior passenger.





## Seating chart for a tour bus

- © The far right seat in the first row is for the most senior passenger, with the next most senior passengers sitting next to him/her. The order is repeated for the subsequent rows.



### 5.3 In an elevator

- ◎ Let people of more senior status, women, and older or disabled people enter and exit first.
- ◎ Before entering an elevator, give way to the exiting passengers and then enter quickly for the convenience of others.
- ◎ According to United States custom, after entering an elevator, turn toward the elevator door so as to avoid standing face-to-face with other people. In Europe, passengers should stand facing the middle of the elevator.
- ◎ Do not speak loudly or smoke in an elevator.

### 5.4 On the stairs

- ◎ When walking up the stairs, let women and the elderly go first out of respect.
- ◎ When walking down the stairs, men and



younger people should go first for safety's sake (see figure 49).



**Figure 49:**

When walking up the stairs, women and older people go first; when heading down the stairs, men and younger people take the lead.

## 5.5 By airplane

When traveling by plane, elderly, disabled, and pregnant passengers, as well as passengers with small children, should board first.

- ◎ In the cabin, if you want to change seats, wait until all passengers are seated.
- ◎ When disembarking, let the passengers in the rows in front of you disembark first and refrain from rushing.
- ◎ In the cabin, do not talk loudly or make noises that may disturb other passengers.
- ◎ When standing up or walking down the aisle, try not to bump into the seats of other passengers.



When dining, return your chair to the upright position for the sake of the passenger behind you.

## 5.6 By public transport

- ◎ When boarding a bus, let disembarking passengers off first.
- ◎ When disembarking, wait for your turn and do not rush.
- ◎ In a train, cell phones should be set to mute or vibrate mode in order to avoid disturbing others.



- ◎ When talking, speak quietly.
- ◎ Do not place your belongings in empty seats or other people's space.
- ◎ When boarding a bus, hand carry backpacks so as to avoid bumping into other passengers.
- ◎ If you have a cold, wear a mask.
- ◎ Do not stand in front of a door, disrupting the flow of passengers entering and exiting the bus or train.



# Interaction

## **6. Interaction**

Though interaction covers a wide range of situations, this section will focus on introductions, handshakes, visits, gifts, and flags, with the goal of teaching basic social competence.

### **6.1 Introductions**

Before making an introduction, the host should first take into account any concerns or inconveniences among the parties to be introduced, and should ask the parties about potential problems beforehand when necessary. In addition, it is not appropriate to make introductions to those who are engaged in conversation or who are preparing to depart.

#### **Order of Introductions**

- A man should be introduced to a woman, except when a woman is meeting someone more senior or of higher rank (such as a president, bishop, ambassador or



government minister), in which case the woman should be introduced first.

- A person of lower status should be introduced to a person of higher status (see figure 50).
- A younger person should be introduced to an elder.
- An unmarried person should be introduced to a married person.
- A guest should be introduced to the host.
- An individual should be introduced to the group.

Note: Sunglasses should be removed during introductions.

### **Titles Used During Introductions**

Generally speaking, men are addressed with the title Mr., married women with *Madame* or *Mrs.*, and unmarried women with *Miss*, while Ms. can be used for both married and unmarried

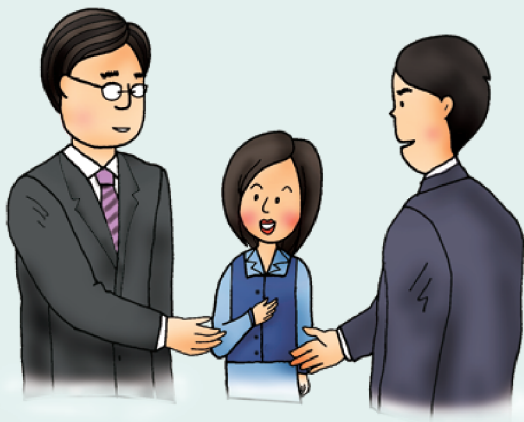
women. Convention in the Republic of China (Taiwan) calls for addressing presidents, vice presidents, premiers, and government ministers by their official title alone, without their surname. Western practice, meanwhile, calls for addressing these high government officials with the honorific *Your Excellency*. *Your Majesty* is used for kings and queens; *General* for generals, lieutenant generals, and major generals; *Colonel* for colonels and lieutenant colonels; *Your Excellency* or *Mr./Madam Ambassador* for ambassadors; and *Mr./Madam Minister* for government ministers.

Note: In a Western context, *His Majesty* and *Her Majesty* are used when mentioning a king and a queen to a third party, and presidents, vice presidents, prime ministers, ministers, ambassadors and other high officials are referred to in the third person as *His Excellency* and *Her Excellency*.



## Situations Meriting Self-Introduction

- When the hostess and guests at an event are not acquainted, the guests may take the initiative to introduce themselves.
- Men who do not know the women sitting next to them at a formal dinner banquet should take the initiative to introduce themselves.
- When meeting new people at a reception, it is appropriate for both parties to exchange names and introduce themselves.



**Figure 50:**

Introducing a person of lower status to a person of higher status.



## 6.2 Handshakes

- When shaking hands, stand about a step away from the other party, and extend your right hand with your thumb out and your other fingers together to exchange a handshake.
- The handshake should be neither too long nor too firm. To express cordiality, you can move your hand lightly up and down during the handshake, but not sideways or in circles.
- When shaking hands, smile and make eye contact with the other party (see figure 51). Gloves should also be removed beforehand.
- It is not necessary to bow during a handshake.



## Handshaking Order

- A man and a woman meeting for the first time may prefer to acknowledge one another with a smile and a nod instead of a handshake.
- Unless he is older or of higher rank, a man greeting a woman should wait for the woman to extend her hand first.
- When two women meet, the elder or married woman should extend her hand first.
- Hosts are responsible for extending their hand first to greet guests.
- Don't extend your hand first when greeting someone older or of higher rank.

Note: In Europe and America, friends often hug in addition to exchanging a handshake when meeting and/or parting. But in principle, a man should not initiate a hug with a woman



unless the woman expresses a desire to do so. In addition, cheek kissing is also common in Europe and America, but it is generally only done by women to men and other women. It is common to touch just the right cheek, but there are also places in which it is expected to touch the right and then left cheeks. Cheek touching customs vary according to local tradition.



**Figure 51:**

When shaking hands, smile and make eye contact with the other party.



## 6.3 Visits

For both official and personal visits, it is always appropriate to make a prior appointment so as to avoid being an uninvited guest. It is also important to arrive at the appointed time, neither early nor late. If, during the visit, the host is unable to engage in extended conversation, excuse yourself after a brief chat.

## 6.4 Gifts

- Remember to remove the price tag before wrapping a gift, and unless you are the one giving the gift, attach a card bearing the name of the gift giver as below:

*With the Compliments  
of  
Mr. & Mrs. Da-ming Wang*

An example of a gift card in English.

Note: Mandarin-language gift cards are usually printed with a red name on a white card.

- In some Western countries, it is acceptable to unwrap the gift directly after receiving it, to thank the giver, and to compliment them on the gift.
- Upon the passing of a friend or relative in Taiwan, it is appropriate to send a wreath of flowers with a written epitaph to the public funeral service. When visiting a sick person at the hospital, it is proper to bring flowers and fruit.
- For the epitaphs displayed at Taiwanese funerals, an elegiac couplet is written at the center, the name of the deceased is inscribed at the top with an accompanying expression appropriate to their gender and religion, and the bottom of the epitaph carries the name of the person giving the offering with a phrase conveying their condolences. The Western custom is to write and sign a condolence card



to the family of the deceased expressing sympathy for their loss. When attending a Western-style funeral, it is appropriate for men to wear a dark or black suit and tie, and for women to wear a dark or black dress.

- In Western custom, wedding guests who are not close relatives of the bride or groom are usually expected to give the new couple a beautiful or practical gift rather than money. Some new couples provide a wedding registry with gifts for invited guests to buy either individually or collectively.

## 6.5 Flags

- **When flying two flags, the position of honor is on the right**

(From the perspective of the flag itself facing its intended audience)

When flying national flags, the position of honor is on the right. The host country's flag occupies the rightmost position of honor, with other nations' flags to its left. Therefore, when overseas flying the national flags of the Republic of China and a host country at the same time, the host's flag should be on the right (see figures 52-53).

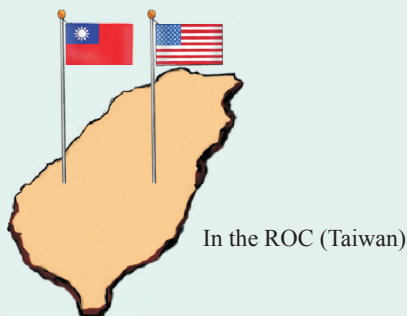
- **When in Taiwan flying the flag of the Republic of China next to non-national flags, the Republic of China flag should be in the middle, with its flagpole slightly higher and its size slightly larger (see figure 54).**



- When flying multiple national flags at the same time, the flags should be the same size and height to show equality.
- When flying more than 10 national flags together, they should be arranged in alphabetical order according to the first letter of each country's English or French name. The national flag of the host country, however, should still occupy the position of honor to the right of all the other flags, which would appear to an observer facing the flags as the leftmost position.
- When flying fewer than 10 national flags side by side, with an even number of flags, the host country's national flag should occupy the right of the middle two positions, and the other countries' flags should be arranged in alphabetical order alternately to the right and left of the center. If there are an odd number of

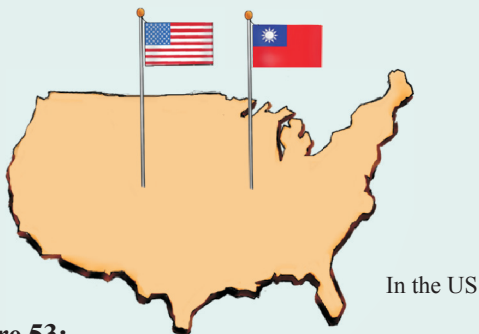


flags, the host's national flag should be positioned in the middle (see figure 55).



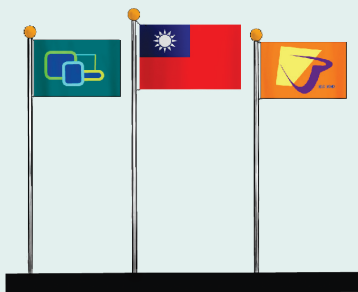
**Figure 52:**

In the Republic of China (Taiwan), the ROC national flag flies on the right.



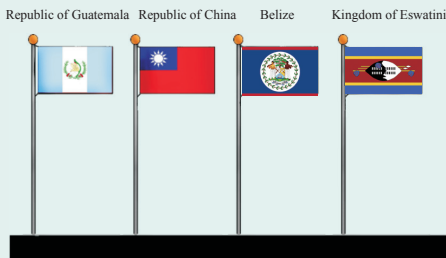
**Figure 53:**

In a foreign country, the ROC national flag stands on the left.



**Figure 54:**

If a national flag is flown next to non-national flags, the national flag should be in the middle, higher than the other flags.

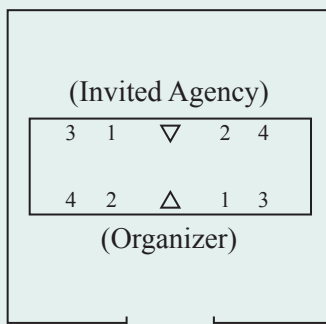


**Figure 55:**

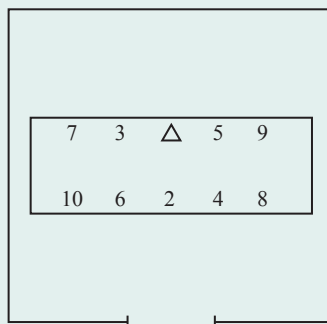
When flying fewer than 10 national flags side by side, and there are an even number of flags, the flag of the host country should be flown on the right of the two middle positions.

## 6.6 Seating Arrangements for Meetings

- Small meeting with participants from another agency:



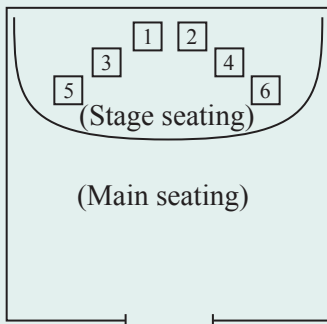
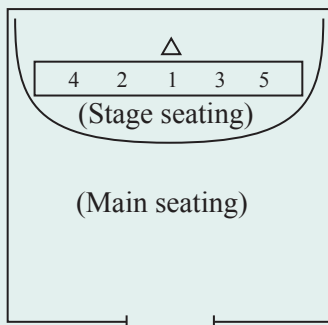
- Small internal meeting:





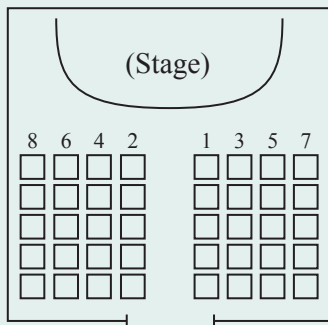
● Large conference (stage seating):

The seat of honor is in the middle, with the other guests seated alternately to the right and left in descending order of privilege.



● Large conference (main seating):

The front seat immediately to the right of the central corridor is the seat of honor, with the next most important seat to the left, and so on.



● Conference order of address:

The head or representative of the organizing agency, after which the invited guests speak in descending order of rank.



## 6.7 Small Talk

- After the host and guests are introduced, it is appropriate to engage in some small talk. Conversation should avoid religion, politics, marriage, age, salary or other private topics in favor of more general topics like weather and sports.
- To show respect during business meetings, conversation, and small talk, it is important to pay attention to oral hygiene in order to avoid affecting the atmosphere of the exchange.

## 6.8 Mobile Phones

- Do not use a mobile phone while driving.
- When attending a concert or conference, turn your mobile phone off or switch it to vibrate to avoid creating a disturbance.
- During a meal, go to the lobby or outside the restaurant to use the phone, rather than talking

or texting at the table.

- When talking on the phone in a public area, lower your voice and keep your conversation short.
- Avoid using your phone while walking in order to prevent an accident.

## **6.9 Email**

- Set up official and personal email accounts separately.
- Write official emails using business correspondence conventions, including proper greetings and endings.
- The subject line should reflect the content of the email, explain its purpose and serve as a reference for the recipient.
- Unless it concerns an urgent matter, do not mark the email as such.
- Reply to emails in a timely manner. If unable

to fulfill the other party's request directly, reply with a brief explanation.

- Keep email contents short and concise.
- Before sending an email, review its contents to ensure they are accurate, check the list of recipients, and confirm if any other parties should receive a carbon copy (cc).
- If an error becomes evident after sending the email, immediately correct the error and resend the email, adding in the subject line that it is a revised version and to please delete the previous message.

## **6.10 Social Media**

- It can be difficult or impossible to permanently delete data from the internet, so be careful when posting or uploading information.
- Real privacy does not exist on social media, so be prepared to face the expectations of



others and bear responsibility for what you say online.

- Apply the same standards of etiquette that you would follow in everyday life to your activity on social media.
- Do not take to social media to post angry screeds, spread rumors, or slander your employer or colleagues.
- When posting on social media, uphold the principles of honesty, sincerity and positivity, and focus on highlighting your interests and skills.



**Entertainment**

## **7 Entertainment**

### **7.1 Receptions and Garden Parties**

There is typically no assigned seating for these types of gatherings, and guests usually stand or sit while conversing and eating, creating a lively atmosphere.

- By convention, the host typically stands at the entrance of the venue to welcome the guests and shake their hands. Guests should avoid lingering in the reception area for too long, lest others are prevented from entering.
- The host of a reception may arrange to make a speech welcoming the guests, though this is not typical for garden parties.
- After the start of the reception or garden party, the host may mingle and make small talk with guests, and guests should speak with and introduce themselves to other guests rather than stand or sit alone.



- At the event's conclusion, the host may stand at the exit of the venue to see the guests off. Guests who decide to leave early may do so directly without bothering the host.

## 7.2 Concerts

- You should enter the concert hall about 10 minutes prior to the start of the performance in order not to interrupt the program. If late, wait for an intermission between performances before entering the hall.
- It is not appropriate to bring babies or children to concerts, and smoking, snacking, or whispering are not allowed in the concert venue. Mobile phones should also be turned off (see figure 56).
- When entering the venue, the man should help his woman companion in checking her tickets and finding and taking her seat.

- Guests should wait for the curtain to close and applause to end before leaving the venue.



**Figure 56:**

Using mobile phones is not permitted during concerts.



### 7.3 Dances

- Dances are a form of diplomatic or social entertainment, and are normally divided into tea dances and dinner dances. There are also formal balls and masquerades, among other types of dances.
- Except in the case of a ball or a more formal occasion, it is acceptable to arrive late to a dance. If it is necessary to leave early, do so without disturbing the host or other attendees.
- When asking for a dance, it is necessary to first obtain the other party's consent, and when asking a married woman to dance, it is best to first seek her husband's consent as a matter of courtesy.



A dance is typically opened by the hosts, or by the guests of most advanced age or status.



## 7.4 Golf

### **Courtesy on the course:**

- Avoid being late for a round of golf. Plan to arrive at the course before the arranged tee time. If you have invited others for the round, you should arrive early to manage course registration.
- Bring appropriate clothing and equipment. The order of play on the first hole can be decided by drawing lots or by each player's handicap. The order of play on subsequent holes is based on the players' scores on the previous hole, with the player with the lowest score starting the play.
- When playing from the fairway, the player with the ball farthest from the green plays first. The other players should not stand in front of the one making the shot. While waiting for someone to make a shot, choose a club and prepare for your shot; after the other players



have made their shots, proceed to your spot and make your shot.

- The first player to putt is the one whose ball is farthest from the hole. When walking on the green, do not step on or through the areas between the balls of the other players and the hole.
- Do not waste time while playing the course; follow the principle of walking fast and taking time to make your shot.
- The players in the group should only make their shots after the group ahead has walked to a safe distance.
- Fellow players should show courtesy in helping to look for a ball. If there is a delay while looking for a ball, let the players behind play through.
- After finishing a hole, players should leave the green directly.



- When a player is making a shot, the others should not stand within the player's line of sight or the range of their swing, and should not walk around or make conversation. Keep a safe distance from the player making the shot (see figure 57).
- When moving their ball, players should first seek permission from their fellow players.

### **Priority on the course:**

- Each group of players has a responsibility to keep up with the group ahead. If a group has players that are a hole behind the group ahead and are affecting the group behind, that group should let the members of the group behind play through, no matter how many players are in the group behind.
- Priority on the course should be determined according to how fast each group plays. Those

playing a full round of 18 holes are entitled to pass those playing a shorter round.



**Figure 57:**

When a player is making a shot, the others should not walk around or engage in conversation.

