

# *Etiquette* FOR DUMMIES® 2ND EDITION

by Sue Fox



Wiley Publishing, Inc.



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## **Etiquette For Dummies®, 2nd Edition**

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# About the Author

**Sue Fox** has provided etiquette products, group training, and private consultations to business professionals, celebrities, corporations, and educational institutions since 1994 with her company, The Etiquette Survival Group. Prior to that, she was employed in the high-tech industry with ten years of experience in sales and marketing and event planning at Apple Inc.

Sue has traveled extensively, is well-acquainted with various international cultures, and has provided train-the-trainer programs in India, Singapore, Malaysia, Hong Kong, China, Central America, East Africa, and Europe. She has developed teaching curricula and set up many Etiquette Survival Consultants nationally and internationally.

She is a certified member of the International Association of Protocol Consultants (IAPC) and has an additional background in image consulting and makeup artistry, with 20 years of fashion-modeling experience in television and print.

Sue is also the author of *Business Etiquette For Dummies*, published by John Wiley & Sons, Inc. She is the Executive Producer of *The Etiquette Survival Kit*, a series of educational videos and DVDs featuring dining and social etiquette and proper table settings for adults and teens.

The Etiquette Survival Group and its affiliates, MCE International in Los Angeles, California and Global Adjustments in Chennai, India, have formed strategic alliances and are currently developing etiquette and diversity products and programs. They are working together to create a better understanding of people in diverse business and social environments by emphasizing the importance of respect, diplomacy, and civility in every aspect of life.

Sue and her businesses have been featured in many national and international publications, including *Woman's Day*, *Vogue*, *Ladies' Home Journal*, *Real Simple*, *American Baby*, *Newsweek*, *Fortune*, *New York Magazine*, *US Weekly*, *People*, *Los Angeles Times*, *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, *New York Post*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Washington Times*, *San Francisco Examiner*, *Boston Globe*, *USA Today*, *Sunday London Times*, *Australian Financial News*, *Folha de S. Paulo*, *Brazilian Daily News*, *Nikkei Business Journal*, *Times of India*, and *The Hindu Businessline*.

Media credits include radio interviews and feature stories on CNBC TV, KRON-TV San Francisco, Knowledge TV, San Francisco Mornings On 2, KOVR Sacramento, ABC World News, ABC News with Sam Donaldson, KQED San Francisco, CNET News.com, and KABC Los Angeles.

Etiquette Survival has offices in Northern and Southern California. Sue is the mother of two grown sons, Stephen and Nathan, and two grandsons, Joseph and Michael Fox.



# Dedication

In memory of my parents, Ray and Betty Swanson.

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May we all strive for a more peaceful and civil society.

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# Introduction

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Your time will come. When you least expect it, you'll receive an invitation to a banquet where each table setting involves more utensils than you have in your entire silverware drawer at home. Your company's annual holiday party will be designated semiformal, and you won't even have a clean tie. You'll buy exactly four steaks for Sunday dinner with your in-laws, and they'll bring along two cousins you never even knew existed. Life is full of moments when you don't know exactly what to do — but have no fear, a little bit of etiquette can help you through.

Yes, etiquette deals with which fork to use for the salad course and concerns your behavior at cocktail receptions. But etiquette is a much broader issue. Etiquette is your key to surviving every human contact with your sense of humor and your self-esteem intact, and your reputation enhanced. Etiquette works in supermarket checkout lines, at family picnics, at company holiday parties, on the phone, online, and yes, at wedding receptions.

Remember that there's no such thing as a vacation from good manners. Politeness works everywhere, all the time, and is all about taking the lead, making guests feel welcome, taking the time to evaluate the needs and intentions of others, and behaving in a way that ensures a pleasant outcome. At home, your polite behavior helps everyone in your family develop self-esteem. On the job, good manners encourage others to work well with you. As you go about your errands and chores, polite contacts with others earn you pleasant and helpful responses. As Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote, "Your manners are always under examination, and by committees little suspected, awarding or denying you very high prizes when you least expect it."

Unfortunately today, many people are exhibiting less civility toward one another, and children are following suit with teachers and peers in the classroom. The point is that everyone should do his best to set a good example and put others first. And that's a point that you hear again and again in this book. *Etiquette For Dummies*, 2nd Edition, can help you find a way to put others at ease in almost any situation.

## About This Book

You certainly can't find a shortage of books loaded with the so-called rules of etiquette. This book contains rules, too, but I approach the subject from the perspective of an ordinary person faced with social situations that are just a bit challenging. If you have time to put up your feet and read this book from cover to cover, you can come away with a working knowledge of etiquette in all its aspects. On the other hand, if you just received an invitation to a party and you aren't sure how to dress or how to behave, you can turn to the appropriate section in this book, find the information you need, and head out to the party with confidence.

## Conventions Used in This Book

I include the following conventions to help you navigate this book easily:

- ✓ *Italics* point out defined terms and emphasize certain words.
- ✓ **Boldface** text indicates the key words in bulleted and numbered lists.
- ✓ `Monofont` highlights Web addresses.

When this book was printed, some Web addresses may have needed to break across two lines of text. If that happened, rest assured that I haven't put in any extra characters (such as hyphens) to indicate the break. So, when using one of these Web addresses, just type in exactly what you see in this book, pretending as though the line break doesn't exist.

## What You're Not to Read

Feel free to skip sidebars (the shaded gray boxes within chapters). They contain information that's definitely interesting (to me, at least!) but not crucial to understanding the fine points of etiquette.

## Foolish Assumptions

As I wrote this book, I made the following assumptions about you, dear reader:



- ✔ You want to build better relationships with your family, friends, co-workers, and other important folks in your life through good etiquette.
- ✔ You seek information on how to behave with courtesy and consideration no matter the situation — whether you're addressing an in-law, answering your cell phone, opening a gift, or attending a special function.
- ✔ You may want to provide guidance to someone in your life who needs help with the finer points of etiquette.
- ✔ You may want to have a competitive advantage in a growing work environment, and good manners just might do the trick.
- ✔ You just want to refresh what you already know or clear up confusions about the complexities of contemporary etiquette — such as the etiquette rules for new technologies.

For whatever reason you're reading this book, remember to always trust your instincts, because your gut feeling can be quite powerful and can help you come out feeling better about yourself and those around you.

## *How This Book Is Organized*

I've organized this book into parts and then chapters by specific topics and situations. You don't need to read any previous section to understand the one that interests you; just plunge in anywhere and get what you need. Following is a description of each part and what you can find in it.

### *Part I: Starting Down the Road to Better Etiquette*

In this part, I focus on *you*! I explain how to take pride in your own manners, give and receive compliments, and rise above rudeness. I also tell you all about how to keep yourself neatly groomed and how to send the right messages with your body language. And if you need to figure out what you should wear to a semiformal or formal event, or you need to get to the bottom of this business-casual thing, look no further than this part of the book.

## ***Part II: Fostering Well-Mannered Relationships***

Etiquette is all about putting others at ease. The result is that you build better relationships, whether it's with the members of your family, your friends, or your co-workers. This part walks you through each type of relationship, giving you advice about making all your relationships better. I also address the particulars of gender relations — an especially tricky area in modern times. Do you hold the door for her or don't you? Do you allow him to pay the tab or not? This part of the book has the answers.

## ***Part III: Converse with Care: Saying Everything Right***

Good communication is essential to good relationships, and thus an essential part of etiquette. This part explains how to handle yourself gracefully on paper, on the telephone, online, and in face-to-face conversations. I also include a chapter on business communication and the particular issues associated with communicating in the workplace.

## ***Part IV: That's Entertainment! Meals, Parties, and Gifts***

Many etiquette questions come up when you're planning to host a party or dinner. This part provides quite a bit of useful material for uncertain hosts who want to provide a good time for all guests. I also explain how to be a gracious guest who will definitely be invited back and how to both give and receive with the best of manners. You also receive a dose of proper table manners and discover the art of selecting, ordering, and tasting wine!

## ***Part V: Making the Most of Special Situations***

Special occasions are times that put many people into a panic, because "normal" behavior may no longer apply. The chapters in this part address those special situations, such as weddings, funerals, baptisms, and bar and

bat mitzvahs. I also cover travel, both local and international, as well as the special etiquette that's required when you're interacting with someone who has a physical disability or illness.

## *Part VI: The Part of Tens*

This part contains three quick chapters that give you small, easily digestible bits of information. Here, you can find hints on teaching etiquette to children and tips on tipping.

## *Icons Used in This Book*

Every *For Dummies* book uses icons to help you navigate your way through the text and to point out particularly noteworthy information. Here's what the icons in this book look like and what they tell you:



This icon highlights important information that you need to bear in mind.



The Tip icon indicates etiquette pointers that can help you get through a particular situation with ease.



Pay special attention to this icon that alerts you of areas you can trip up on if you aren't careful.



If you see this icon, you can find out about faux pas to avoid at all costs.

## *Where to Go from Here*

So what now? You may use this book as a reference guide, reading any section that interests you. But if you're new to this etiquette thing, I recommend starting off with the basics in Part I. There, you can get the info you need to set a solid foundation for future good manners. Even if you feel like you have basic manners down pat, a little review never hurt anyone.

If you have a specific situation or event in which you need some etiquette coaching, Parts IV and V offer chapters on a variety of topics. For example, if you've been invited to a wedding and you aren't sure what to wear or what to bring, check out Chapter 18. Or maybe you want to host a dinner party at your home; if so, Chapter 14 is where you want to start.

# Part I

# Starting Down the Road to Better Etiquette

The 5<sup>th</sup> Wave

By Rich Tennant



"Oh, quit looking so uncomfortable! It's a pool party! You can't wear a cape and formal wear to a pool party!"

## *In this part . . .*

**T**his part explores the basic questions of why *knowing how* to treat each other and behaving in a polite and considerate manner hasn't gone out of style. I touch on how good manners apply to your life and ways for you to extend courtesy to everyone. You'll be a model of good manners in no time! And, why knowing how to best present yourself can get you started down the road to better etiquette!