

What Manners Most

Get a modern-day addendum for the classic rules of decorum.

Does the man always pick up the tab? Is texting at the table considered just plain impolite? Plenty of things have changed since etiquette maven Emily Post first published

her famous guidebook to civility in 1922. Patricia Rossi, national manners correspondent for *NBC Daytime*, supplies you with a long-overdue update.

THE SCENE	THE SITUATION	POST'S POSITION	WHAT MODERN MANNERS SAYS
 <p>AT HOME</p>	<p>Your friends show up at your place unannounced, and you're not in the mood to hang out.</p>	<p>Keep an emergency stash of paper plates and cups. Just in case.</p>	<p>"I think face-to-face communication is wonderful, and you can learn so much more that way than chatting online," says Rossi. "If your friends want to see you, let them. You can always order a pizza. If you're really tired, just tell them the truth: You're happy they came to see you, but you need to reschedule for next week. Always start with the positive."</p>
 <p>ON THE TOWN</p>	<p>You're at a restaurant with a friend who spends more time texting than engaging in conversation.</p>	<p>Be courteous to your friends. Don't draw attention to yourself.</p>	<p>"When you're sitting kneecap-to-kneecap breaking bread with someone, don't touch your phone. Put it away so you're not tempted to glance at it throughout the meal. Try using humor by saying, 'Can I have some eye contact, please?' The only exception is if you're expecting a call or a text. Just let the other person know first thing when you sit down."</p>
 <p>CAREER PURSUIT</p>	<p>Your interview for your dream job went great, and you're eager to send thanks to the top brass.</p>	<p>Send a letter. Be choosy about paper stock and color. They reflect your taste.</p>	<p>"A hand-written thank-you note is the best way. Write it in the car after the interview, and mail it to the hiring manager within 24 hours to show you're punctual and conscientious. Wait a few days and follow up with an e-mail. Use blue or black ink, good paper, and stay away from anything bold, bright, and colorful, unless the job is in a creative field."</p>
 <p>ON A DATE</p>	<p>You're out on a date. The waiter drops off the check in the middle of the table. Who pays?</p>	<p>The man pays for everything.</p>	<p>"When it comes to paying the check, whoever did the inviting should pay, but it's always nice for the other person to offer to split the bill. If the person paying says no, you can always return the favor by covering the next meal."</p>