



4-H Table Setting Contest Guidelines

Participants select a theme and display one place setting, including table covering, dishes, glassware, silverware, centerpiece and menu.

Why participate in the Table Setting Contest? It is a fun way learn how to:

- properly set a table
- plan nutritious meals
- express originality and creativity in choosing a theme
- present to the judge
- express knowledge of food, nutrition and food safety

Guidelines in Creating Your Table Setting

Do you know that you can be a designer each time you set the table? A designer chooses and arranges things according to a plan for beauty and order. A neat, interesting, clean and attractive table setting makes any meal more enjoyable.

Actually, there is more than one way to set a table. The usual way to set a table is to put all the dishes, flatware, and food on the table before anyone sits down. When there is

company or for a special meal, part of the food and dishes may be left in the kitchen and served later. Diners at a buffet or a picnic may fill their plates and glasses before they are seated. The way to set your table depends upon the way the meal is to be served. Be creative and have fun! Color texture, design and creativity are important. For the Table Setting Contest, *one place setting* is to be displayed. Include table covering, dinnerware, stemware, flatware, centerpiece and menu. **DO NOT PREPARE THE FOOD.** You must provide a card table for the display (except for the picnic category, in which an appropriate blanket or other covering may be placed on the floor).

Select a Theme — What is the occasion...a family dinner, a holiday, or lunch with friends? Select a theme which fits the occasion. Possibilities can run from a fishing party sack lunch to a formal Mother's Day dinner.

Table Appointments — These include any item used to set a table: tablecloth, placemats, dinnerware, glassware, flatware, and centerpiece. Choose table appointments to fit the occasion and carry out the theme. Paper plates, plasticware, and paper napkins may be used for a picnic but they would not be appropriate for a formal dinner. Flatware and dishware must be safe to eat from i.e., no glitter, glue, etc. is to be used on eating surfaces.

Table Covering — This is the background for the food and table appointments placed on it. It protects the table and makes for less noise. Placemats and/or tablecloths may be used. Sometimes the table is left bare. Choose a covering which is appropriate for the occasion and the other table appointments. You may match or blend colors and textures in the dishes — or use something quite different for contrast.

Place Setting — Allow at least 20 inches for each person's dishes. This is called a cover and each cover is set exactly the same. A cover contains the dinnerware and flatware for the meal served.

- Put the plate, china, pottery paper, glass, etc., in the center of the cover about one inch from the edge of the table. If a table is not used at the event, placement may vary.
- Place the knives and spoons on the right side, the forks (silver, plastic, etc.) on the left about one inch from the plate and one inch from the edge of the table. Turn the cutting edge of the knife towards the plate. If there is more than one piece in each cover, such as one dinner fork and a salad fork or one teaspoon and a soup spoon, place the one that will be used first outside the other.
- napkins folded into oblongs are placed next to the forks with the fold to the left so it opens like book. Decorative and creative folds are encouraged. Placement of the napkin may vary.
- The first beverage glass is placed about one inch above the tip of the knife. If serving more than one beverage, place additional glass(es) to the right of first glass in order served.
- If coffee or tea is served, the cup is placed on the saucer and set to the right of the spoon. Have the handle pointing to the right.
- Salad, bread and/or dessert plate(s) — or bowl(s) — may be placed at the top of the fork(s).
- When selecting your cover, include a dish for each course. Placement may vary according to how and when food is served.

Centerpiece — The centerpiece should be coordinated with the table appointment and be appropriate for the occasion. Even though a single place setting is set, the centerpiece should be visible to all as if the entire table was set and should not obstruct anyone's view of each other. Centerpiece candles are NOT to be lit. Points will be deducted for lit candles.

Menu — When planning a menu, first decide on the main dish. Select appropriate vegetables, appetizer, soup or salad. Add a bread, dessert and beverage, if desired. Use My Plate to plan nutritious meals. Breakfast, party, and picnic menus should contain two or three food groups. Other meals should contain five food groups. Participants are encouraged to develop interesting and creative menus. For example, you might name a food to fit your theme. Visit www.choosemyplate.gov for more information. **Note:** The use of alcoholic beverages in any menu will disqualify table setting.

Attire

Participant's attire should complement the theme/ occasion of their table setting. Participants may come dressed or change in the restrooms.

At the Contest

The judge spends 5 minutes with each participant. To alleviate some of the waiting, judging is divided into half-hour time slots. Five participants are assigned to each half hour. Prior to the contest, you will be mailed your assigned half-hour time slot with the judge.

Registration & Set Up — Please arrive 15–30 minutes prior to your assigned time to set up your table (set up is not timed, only time with the judge). You **MUST** bring a card table for the

display (except for the picnic category, in which an appropriate blanket or other covering may be placed on the floor).

When you arrive, check-in at the registration table. You will be assigned a specific area to set up (numbers are taped to the floor). Areas are grouped by category. ONLY contestants will be allowed in the judging area.

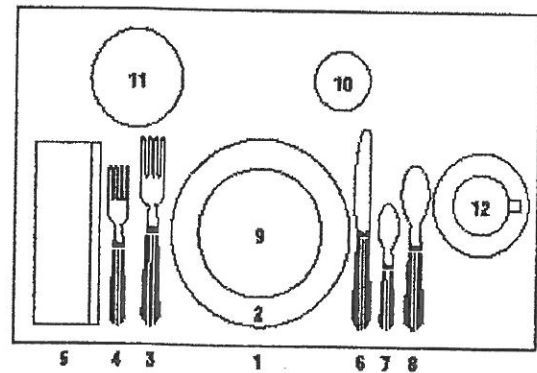
After registering, there will be someone to assist the 4-H'er in carrying their things to the judging area. No parents, family, or viewers are allowed in the judging area until all contestants have been judged. This is being courteous and respectful to all contestants and judges.

Participants must have their table setting ready by their assigned time. Once you have set your table, go to the participant waiting area.

Judging & Interview — During the judging, you present your table setting to the judge by telling about your ideas and why you chose this particular theme. You should view yourself as a host and the judge as your guest. You should extend a welcome to your guest and present your ideas behind your theme, choice of menu, food preparation and food handling. You should also demonstrate an understanding of table setting techniques. Following your presentation, be prepared to answer any questions your guest may have. You should be able to describe the ingredients and preparation required for all menu items, as well as food safety. After your interview, return to the waiting area until the awards presentation.

The following rules for setting a table correspond to the numbers seen in the table setting illustration below.

1. The flatware, plate, and napkin should be one inch from the edge of the table.
2. The plate is always in the center of the place setting.
3. The dinner fork is placed at the left of the plate.
4. If a salad fork is used, it is placed to the left of the dinner fork.
5. The napkin is placed to the left of the fork, with the fold on the left (unless a decorative/creative fold is used). The napkin may also go under a fork or on top of the plate.
6. The knife is placed to the right of the plate with the sharp blade facing in towards the plate.
7. The teaspoon is placed to the right of the knife.
8. If a soup spoon is needed, it is placed to the right of the teaspoon.
9. The soup bowl may be placed on the dinner plate.
10. The drinking glass is placed at the tip of the knife.
11. If salad, bread and/or dessert plate(s) — or bowl(s) — is used, place at the top of the fork(s).
12. The cup or mug is placed to the top right of the spoons.



Note: Only the utensils needed are placed on the table.

*If using a placemat, place it so it is even with the edge of the table. A table cloth should have an 8" - 12" drop. Table runners should be wide enough to hold an individual place setting and should also have an 8-12" drop.

*Place all silverware and tableware one inch from the edge of the table. If your placemat is oval, follow the curve of the mat. The lowest piece of silverware should be one inch from the edge.

*Try different ways with the napkin. If you use the traditional way, be sure the open corner of the napkin is in the lower right hand corner.

*A dinner napkin is 20", 22" or 24" square. A luncheon napkin is 17" square and a tea napkin is 12" square.

Judging is in conjunction with the pre-fair judging day. Members enrolled in Foods may exhibit. **1)** all supplies must be furnished and kept in order by the exhibitor. Bring your own card table. No food should be used. **2)** Exhibitors must bring their place setting To the County fair (not card table).

Juniors – Explain the meal theme/occasion and list menu to be served on one sheet (8 ½” by 11”). Arrange one place setting
Intermediate – Explain the meal theme/occasion and list menu to be served and how the menu meets the current My Plate recommendations on one sheet (8 ½ by 11). Arrange one place setting.

Senior – Explain the meal them/occasion, list menu to be served and tell how the menu meet the current My Plate recommendations. Arrange one place setting. Also include meal preparation, order, timeline and serving steps.

Writing the Menu

The menu should be displayed on 4x6 or larger on your choice of medium (index card, ceramic tile, chalkboard, etc.) printed or typed by the participant. You may decorate and/or prop up the menu.

- 1) (a) List the foods in the order in which they are served. (Every menu will not include all the foods listed.) * **Appetizer**
 ***Main dish** ***Starchy vegetable** * **Other vegetables** ***Salad** ***Bread** ***Dessert** ***Beverage**
 (b) Group foods served in one course. Use single line spacing between food items and a double line spacing between courses.
- 2) Use CAPITALS at the beginning of all words except articles, conjunctions, and prepositions. Correct spelling is important.
- 3) When an item on the menu has an accompaniment:
 - (a) place the main item to the left and the accompaniment to the right,
Braised Pork Chops Applesauce
 - (b) or you may center the main item and write the accompanying item underneath.
Braised Pork Chops
Applesauce
 - (c) if more than one accompaniment appears, place one at each side on the same line,
Sesame Seed Wafers Tomato Bouillon Saltines
 - (d) or place both on the same line below.
Tomato Bouillon
Sesame Seed Wafers Saltines
- 4) When a food is commonly prepared in more than one way, avoid confusion by describing the method of cooking, such as:
Roast Turkey or French Fried Potatoes.
- 5) List each food with the exception of butter, cream, sugar, or salad dressing, unless it is something special, such as
Honey Butter or Poppyseed Dressing.
- 6) List beverages last.
- 7) Plan the spacing and arrangement of the items on the menu so that the written menu is symmetrical.
- 8) Consider creativeness when choosing names of menu items (except for formal menus). Formal menus must use original names of items. Ex. Using Patriotic Punch for a 4th of July theme and Cherry Punch for a formal Theme.

EXAMPLES FOR A FORMAL MEAL:

Broiled Ham	Cream of Broccoli Soup
Grilled Pineapple Slices	Curried Toast Fingers
Cole Slaw	Fresh Fruit Salad Plate
Hot Gingerbread with Applesauce	With Lime Sherbet
Coffee Milk	Crescent Rolls
	Glazed Chocolate Roll
	Coffee Milk



Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service
 K-State Research and Extension is an equal opportunity provider and employer. Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension Work, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, as amended. Kansas State University, County Extension Councils, Extension Districts, and United States Department of Agriculture Cooperating, Gary Pierzynski, Interim Director.

TABLE SETTING JUDGING SHEET

NAME _____ AGE _____ CLUB _____

Number of years in Food & Nutrition project _____

Division Foods Class Jr. _____ Int. _____ Sr. _____

Suitability:

To the individual
To the occasion

General Table Appearance:

Balance
Set correctly
Cover
Placement of table ware
Centerpiece
Individuality
Color Combinations
Texture combinations

Knowledge of Table Service

And Meal Planning:

Nutrition according to My Plate
Budget
Menu/Buffer Plan
-Does it meet My Plate
Recommendations
-suited to occasion
-balance in color
-balance in food value
-foods complement one another

Member:

Personal Appearance
Attitude

	Excellent	Satisfactory	Needs Improvement
Suitability: To the individual To the occasion			
General Table Appearance: Balance Set correctly Cover Placement of table ware Centerpiece Individuality Color Combinations Texture combinations			
Knowledge of Table Service And Meal Planning: Nutrition according to My Plate Budget Menu/Buffer Plan -Does it meet My Plate Recommendations -suited to occasion -balance in color -balance in food value -foods complement one another			
Member: Personal Appearance Attitude			

Overall Comments:

Placing: Purple _____ Blue _____ Red _____ White _____