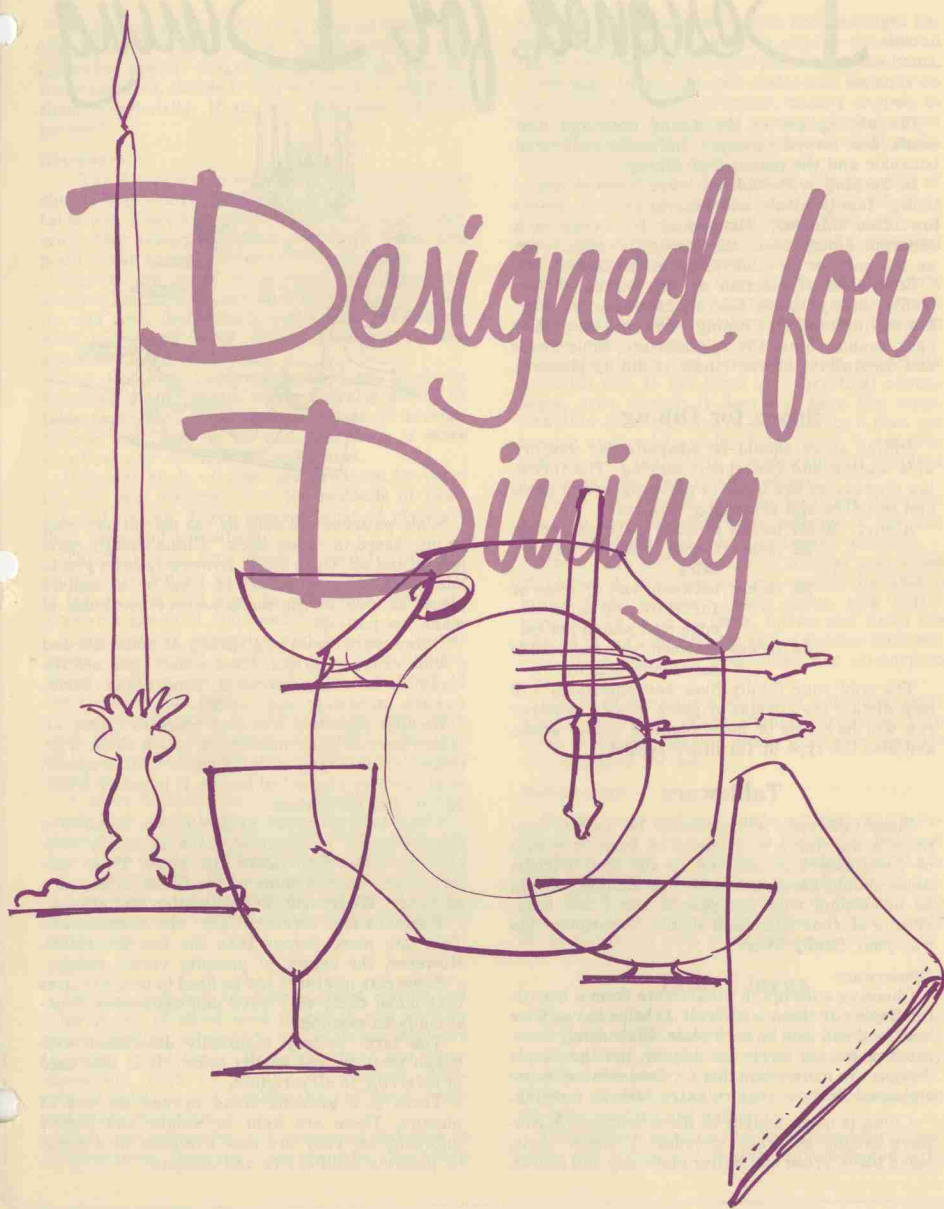


Designed for Dining



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The atmosphere of the dining area and how meals are served strongly influence individual behavior and the pleasure of dining.

In keeping with today's trend toward casual living, family meals and entertaining of guests are often informal. Meals may be served in a separate dining area, the kitchen, family room, on the patio or in other areas of the house.

Regardless of location or the degree of formality, always serve food in an attractive way; keeping in mind that dining furniture, decorative background, china, silver, glassware, table linens and decorations all contribute to dining pleasure.



Space for Dining

Dining space should be adequate for comfortable seating and convenient serving. The following dimensions are basic in planning eating areas and selecting and arranging furniture.

- Allow: 21-24 inches of table space per person
- 32 inches to rise from chair at table
- 36 inches between wall or piece of furniture and table to edge past seated person
- 44 inches between table and wall to serve comfortably.

The way your family lives and entertains will help dictate the amount of space needed, whether you will have one or more planned eating areas, and also the type of furniture needed.

Tableware

Since tableware will probably be used several times a day for a long period of time, it should be functional and pleasing to the eye. Various items should harmonize with one another, should be in keeping with the general spirit and background of your home and should complement the way your family lives.

Dinnerware

Choosing a design in dinnerware from a beautiful display of china is difficult. It helps to visualize how food will look on each plate. Elaborately decorated plates are lovely for display, but the simple designs are more adaptable for food service. Some embossed designs require extra care in washing.

China is often bought in place settings. A five-piece setting generally includes: 1 dinner plate, salad plate, bread and butter plate, cup and saucer.

Some patterns are sold by the set; others may be purchased in "open stock." China usually costs less by the set. Open stock, however, allows you to add pieces over a period of time or to replace pieces as long as the manufacturer continues to make the pattern.

Dinnerware comes in a variety of materials and a wide range of prices. Most widely used are the ceramics including porcelain, bone china, earthenware, stoneware and pottery.

Because porcelain was first made in China, all dinnerware is often incorrectly called china. Porcelain is a fine type of china made from a special white pottery clay called kaolin. It is partly transparent and nonporous.

When bone is added to kaolin, the result is a strong, highly transparent china especially suitable for decoration under the glaze. These materials are used in some of the finest china, such as Spode, Wedgwood, Royal Doulton and others.

Earthenware ceramics are not transparent. They are more porous than the fine porcelains. However, the degree of porosity varies widely.

Some clay mixtures can be fired to temperatures that make them very hard and nonporous. Ironstone is an example.

The term pottery is usually associated with rough textures and earthy colors. It is also used in referring to all ceramics.

There is a growing trend toward the use of plastics. These are light in weight and almost unbreakable. They are now available in a range of pleasing solid colors and designs.

Traditionally, most families have at least two sets of dinnerware; one for family use and another for special occasions. In selecting two or more patterns, decide if you will wish to combine them occasionally. If so, will they look well together?

Glassware

The formality or informality of your dining should help determine the glasses you choose for table use. Design of glassware should harmonize with other table appointments. Simple china and plain silver suggest simplicity in glassware.

Glasses are made in a variety of sizes and shapes. The amount and kind of entertaining you do will help determine your needs. In keeping with today's mode of living, glasses are often adaptable to different uses.

Tall, long-stemmed water goblets are lovely in full-sized dining rooms where there is plenty of table space. The short-stemmed glass of another type is less likely to tip and, therefore, is more practical and suitable for most uses.

Different kinds of glass are produced by varying the raw materials and the methods of heating and cooling. Three general types of glass are lime, lead and borosilicate.

The first type, lime glass, is used for window panes, jars, bottles and inexpensive tableware. It is low in cost and high in durability. Basic ingredients are sand, soda and lime.

Lead glass is expensive and beautiful. It has luster, sparkle and a bell-like tone when tapped. These qualities are produced from a mixture of sand, potash and lead.

When boric oxide is added to sand and soda, glass takes on a heat-resistant quality. This type of glass, called borosilicate, is useful for cooking utensils.

A piece of sparkling glass beautifully formed needs little or no additional decoration. However, there are a number of processes often used to add decorative qualities. These include the addition of color or bubbles; the application of enamels or metals, such as gold, platinum and silver; frosting; etching and cutting. Decoration usually adds to the cost.

Flatware

Flatware refers to the knives, forks, spoons and other pieces of silver used in eating and serving meals. Sterling, silverplate and stainless steel are the most usual types. However, there are other variations, such as Dirillite or Vermeil, gold-colored flatware, and combinations of wood, ivory and other materials.

The most expensive and treasured flatware is sterling silver. Over the years beautiful silverware

has reflected family sentiment and prestige. Selecting a pattern of silver is usually considered one of the first steps toward furnishing the home.

Actually, silver is a soft metal and depends on the addition of another metal, usually copper, to add strength. A product marked sterling must have 925 parts of pure silver in every 1000 parts. This is required by law.

Plated ware is made by using a base metal of nickel, copper and zinc. A coating of silver is deposited on the base material. Durability of silverplate depends on the thickness of the coating and how carefully it is applied.

With proper use, a high-quality of silverplate will give satisfactory service for many years. Since there is wide variation in quality, it is wise to deal with a reputable firm.

Stainless steel has developed wide popularity for table use. It has some very practical advantages, even though it does not have the sentimental or prestige value of silver. Since it does not tarnish and resists stains from foods, it requires little care. It is made in a wide range of patterns and costs less than sterling silver.

There are several ways to purchase flatware. You can buy individual place settings or you can buy a set of four, six, eight or twelve settings.

Basic plate settings vary in number and types of pieces. A five-piece setting usually includes a knife, fork, teaspoon, soup spoon and butter spreader. In some patterns, knives and forks are offered in both dinner size and a smaller luncheon size. Most designers now make one all-purpose size.

Choice of design is a matter of individual preference; however, silver should harmonize with other tableware. Handle pieces to be sure they are well-balanced for use.

Hollow ware

Hollow ware includes bowls, pitchers and serving dishes. As a rule, they do not match flatware in design. Silver, silverplate and stainless steel are used. Sometimes these are combined with crystal. You would use the same criteria in selecting hollow ware as you use for flat silver. It, too, should blend pleasingly with other table appointments.

Table Linens

The term "linen" is used to describe any fabric used for the table regardless of fiber content. Linen has long been the favorite even though a variety of other fibers are in popular use.

Your needs for table linens vary according to the way you live and entertain.

Table linens serve as the background for china, silver and crystal and thus should be selected care-

fully. They are chosen to completely cover the table or to serve for one or more place settings.

Every family needs at least one good, preferably linen, tablecloth. It is durable, beautiful and makes a handsome background for almost any occasion. This can be supplemented with less formal cloths, mats or more elaborate cloths, according to variations in family entertaining.

To get the greatest satisfaction from any of these, there are certain factors to keep in mind:

- The label should tell fiber content and care the linens will need. Labels often give you some indication as to the service you can expect.
- A firmly woven fabric will usually give more satisfactory wear than a loosely woven one. Amount of sizing is also an indication of quality. Some low-quality linens are given a better appearance when sizing is left in. However, this will come out during laundering, leaving a thin, sleazy fabric.
- Examine hems to see if they are hand- or machine-sewed. Mitered corners and neatly finished hems are an indication of quality.

For dining, a tablecloth should cover the table and hang over the sides 10 to 12 inches. The same amount of overhang is desirable for a round cloth. However, the cloth for a party table may have a larger overhang.

Colored cloths have become popular and make a smart background for table settings. Attractive designs made by printing, weaving, embroidering or appliqueing often add beauty and individuality to a table. It is important that table linens should be colorfast since they will be laundered often.

Since most persons serve meals quite informally, placemats have become popular. They are appropriate for breakfast, luncheon and informal dinner settings. They should be made of fabrics that launder easily.

Size of mats is an important consideration. In order to accommodate the china, glassware, silver and napkin for one place setting, the mat should be at least 13½ by 20 inches.

Napkins often are of the same fabric as the tablecloth or of a harmonizing fabric. When choosing, consider the same construction features as for tablecloths.

Size of napkins should be checked carefully, as the size needed may vary according to when it is used. For breakfast, a napkin 13½ by 13½ inches will be sufficient. Luncheon napkins should be at least 16 inches square. However, for formal dinners the napkin should be 18 to 24 inches square.

The new no-iron and soil-resistant finishes for table linens are becoming increasingly important.

Centerpiece

An arrangement of fresh flowers, greenery, fruit, berries or other interesting materials can be used to make the table setting complete. Colors, design and material should be in keeping with other table appointments. The arrangement should fit the space without crowding and be low enough to permit easy conversation by those seated at the table. If the arrangement is for a special occasion, rather than dining, a much taller centerpiece may be used.

Candles are often added for evening meals and for late afternoon and evening entertaining. Fresh flowers and candles add a festive feeling and a pleasant touch of hospitality.



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