

# LET'S SET A PRETTY TABLE



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A picture-pretty table makes a party setting of any meal. How do you create one? Before you create a table appointment it would be well to consider how a particular appointment can contribute to all family members and to your understanding that:

Colorful and properly set table appointments can be one of the focal points of hospitality and enjoyment in the home.

A well set table need not be expensively appointed nor excessively time and energy consuming.

Table appointments are planned to harmonize in color and texture, to blend with each other according to scale and design.

A correctly appointed table setting can contribute to a child's learning and will motivate him to use approved table manners.

Satisfaction as a hostess, the poise and confidence that a well appointed table provides a gracious hostess.

Good design is important, and should always be taken into consideration when planning a table appointment. See figure 1.

Five guides for recognizing good design are:

**Line** – as seen in the flower arrangement and container in this setting.

**Shape** – oval plates, rectangular shaped napkins.

**Texture** – novelty weave cloth – texture and color in the marigolds and greens.

**Color** – in the flowers – yellow napkins and brown cloth.

**Added decoration** – complementary colors to the arrangement used in the base of the flower container – added decoration should be used to enrich a surface and its texture – not to distract from it.

The accessories and tableware used in table appointments should be consistent in quality and texture. As a rule, fragile, delicately decorated china, smooth textured linens and fragile glassware go together, while pottery, coarsely woven linens and heavy pressed glassware go together in a different class.

Decorative extras, such as wicker baskets, wood or milk glass compotes, interesting figures of wood and ceramics, are nice to own, and so charming to use in making the table setting a "little special". Collect



Figure 1. INFORMAL DINING

Notice the relationships between the general shapes of all parts of this setting. Here the color scheme is yellow and brown; change the color of the napkins and the garden flowers in the simple vase and you would have a completely different effect.

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them, if you can, for the real distinction they will give your table — but select those that are consistent with the things you own. These good “extras” have unlimited uses for many settings — many occasions. This is good! Less expensive, too!

The fundamental principles of design apply to table appointments. There should be only one dominant pattern and all other designs should be subject to it. If the china is the center of interest, combine it with simply decorated linens, crystal and silver. Or, if you have an exquisite hand made linen cloth, use rather plain dinnerware with crystal and silver which depend on grace of line and inherent beauty for interest. The proper combining of table accessories can sometimes make the difference between an uncoordinated table arrangement and one that is harmonious. Careful selection of the right accessories, and special attention paid to the details of function and design are necessary to achieve a successful combination.

You can set an attractive table that does not need an expensive array of tablewares or accessories. With a little planning and imagination you will find changes in background, color, texture and centerpiece that will give a completely new look to your table appointments. “Change the setting — not the china” might well be the theme best used to illustrate an interesting change. By substituting a different centerpiece and a change of napkins in each setting the table can take on an entirely new look.

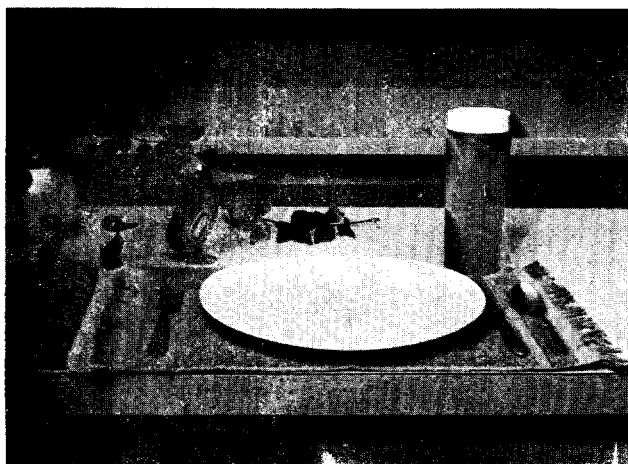


Figure 2. WHAT'S FOR LUNCH, MOM?

The everyday table becomes more inviting — and the meal-time hour more memorable — when it is attractively set. This is evident in our noon lunch setting of warm browns with gay accents of orange in the glass and green in the plant. The place mats and napkins are terry cloth fingertip towels. Fingertip towels used as a place mat or napkin have become an all time favorite of many homemakers today. They are not only easy to care for but make an interesting, inexpensive and colorful addition to any table setting wardrobe.

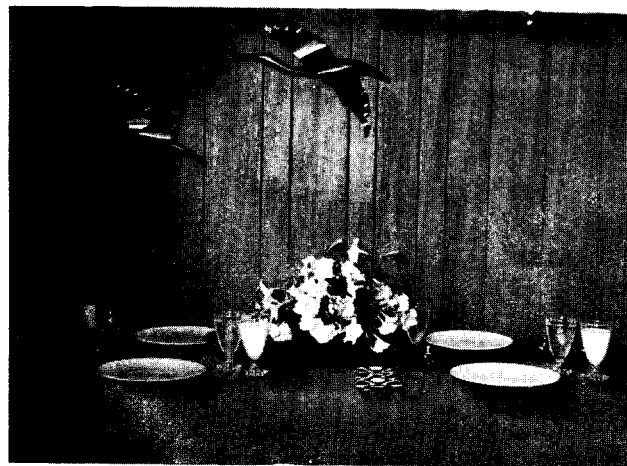


Figure 3. DARE TO USE COLOR!

Dare to use color! Red? Why not? What's more delightful to your family and friends than a table setting that reflects the feeling of “welcome” and “this was done just for you”.

Your table appointment can be a reflection of your own personality. This particular setting indicates that the person may lean toward a flair for the dramatic, with the bright red cloth, bold black and white combination in the napkins (made from a remnant) and the contrast of the black bowl used in the centerpiece and salad bowls plus the white plates and petunias. Another person might choose a setting that is dainty and delicate or we might have the individual who has a talent for combining the unusual in a spectacular way. Whatever your talent — use it — you will be glad you did, when all those compliments come your way!

When buying or making table linens always consider the number of family or guests to be served and the type of entertaining to be done. This will assure you that you have chosen the right linen for the type of entertaining to be done and the right size tablecloth and number of napkins needed for the occasion.

Whatever your choice in a selection of a cloth, remember to keep in mind:

- (1) Color, texture and weight of cloth (avoid bulk)
- (2) The furniture in the room
- (3) Background and background colors in the room
- (4) Dishes and accessories used (types of centerpiece included)
- (5) Type of meal being served (color, shape, texture, etc. of the food)

If these details are considered, your table setting will harmonize in color and texture and will blend in scale and design, plus satisfying the mood of the occasion.

Clever use of color and texture is one of the easiest ways to make your table distinctive. With colorful napkins and other accessories to offer contrast or harmony of color and texture, you can achieve almost

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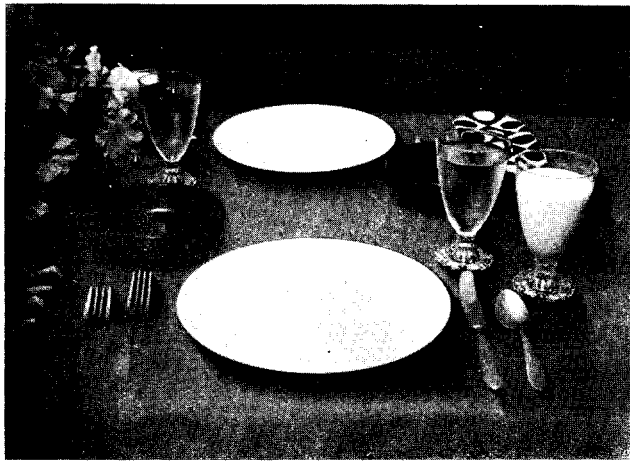


Figure 4. BALANCE FOR COLOR

Here is an individual place setting from the table shown in Fig. 3. The cloth is bright red cotton, napkins black and white print, salad bowls black and the china white. The "crystal" is inexpensive pressed glass. Note the simple lines of the silverware.

any effect you have in mind. The usual sizes for napkins are:

- Dinner napkins – 18, 20, 22, 24 inches square
- Luncheon, breakfast napkins – 17 by 17 inches
- Tea napkins – 12 by 12 inches
- A "lapkin" is an oblong napkin measuring about 12 by 18 inches.

Some rules to remember for the placement of the cloth on the table:

- (1) Center fold of cloth should be in the exact center of the table.
- (2) Equal overhang of the cloth at the sides and ends of the table is ideal; 10 to 15 inches overhang is recommended.
- (3) Always have table linens "spotless".

If you raise your own flowers – try your hand at making some special arrangements for the table. It can be a lot of fun and can give one a genuine feeling of accomplishment. Don't overlook the flowers that grow wild – the prairie rose, the sunflower. Combine them with dried weeds or small grains. There are any number of interesting arrangements that can be made from materials found in the fields or by the side of the road.

The average homemaker sets at least 1,095 tables per year (three meals a day!) With this much practice correct table setting should become a habit that can be done quickly and yet produce attractive results. If a few basic rules are followed, your table should produce the results desired. Refer to figure 4.

Some points to remember:

- Each diner should be comfortable. An individual cover should measure 20 to 26 inches in breadth and 15 inches deep. The number of inches between 20 to 26 allowed for each person, of course, will depend on the size of the table and the number being served.
- Place flatware at least one inch from the table edge, with forks at the left, knife and spoons at the right, knife edge towards plate.
- If the salad is to be eaten first the salad fork is placed next to the dinner fork. The salad bowl is placed at or near the tip of the fork.
- Place water glass above the tip of the knife. The milk glass is to the right of the water glass and a little closer to the table edge.
- The napkin is usually folded in a square or rectangle shape but in many of the contemporary settings of today the folds vary with preference and occasion. The napkin when folded in a square or rectangular shape is folded with the open corners at the lower right (most convenient) or lower left and is usually placed to the left of the fork. Here again placement will depend on preference and occasion.

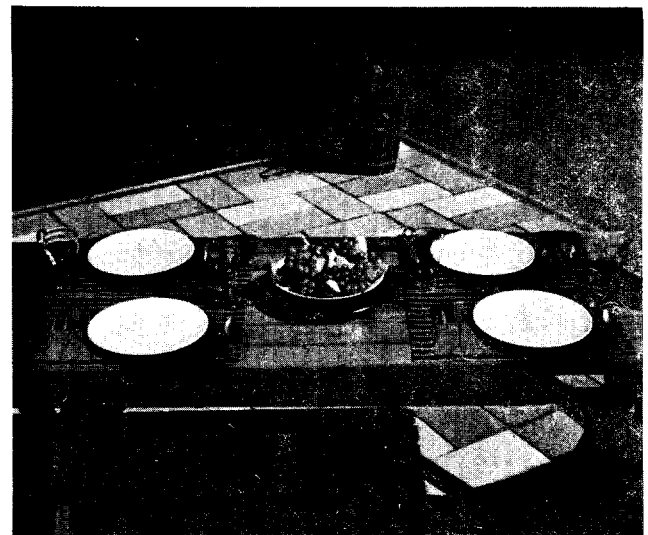


Figure 5. THE BOUNTIFUL BARBECUE!

In this out-of-doors setting we see an orange, gold and black place mat and napkin set made especially for this occasion. The small pocket to the left holds the napkin in place and thus prevents it from blowing off the table. A matching napkin for hot bread helps keep the buns nice and warm in the rattan basket. A treat for the youngsters! Here we have a centerpiece of fruit, luscious slices of rich ripe cantaloupe, sprinkled with bunches of sweet green grapes arranged on a white plate placed on a revolving lazy susan, a delight to the children and convenient for all!

Don't be tempted to "throw" the plates and flatware on the table any old way but take that "extramminute" to place them on the table with care. Remember – a pretty table needs loving, not lavish, care. Regardless of their cost, your tablewares bring to your table size and shape, lovely colors and interesting textures, the basic art forms with which to work. Don't waste their potential by insisting you are "too busy", or having a "who cares" attitude. Somebody will care if you care, and really, are you that busy?

Before the final decision is made on the selection of a table appointment consider:

- The color in the table setting itself and the background
- The design
- The practicability
- The time needed to achieve the effect
- The economic factor

Setting a pretty table should not leave those you have entertained (be it family or friends) with the impression that you are "putting on the dog". This is not the objective of a hostess with the true desire to please those she is truly interested in or loves.

Set a pretty table. Let it be colorful and gay; important for guests, more important for the family.



Figure 6. AND BABY MAKES THREE

Good manners are not made overnight but are an accumulation of many experiences learned by a child through the years. That is why it is so important that this youngster has the opportunity to learn in his own home what good manners are, why they are important and where and how they are used. By setting the table properly and using good manners everyday in your home your youngster will be taught not to consider manners for "company only" but will accept them as a part of everyday living.

This setting includes a reversible duck place mat, a napkin and bib made from washable cotton twill trimmed with iron-on tape and bias tape. The centerpiece is a grapefruit studded with gumdrops, real treat for the kiddies!

