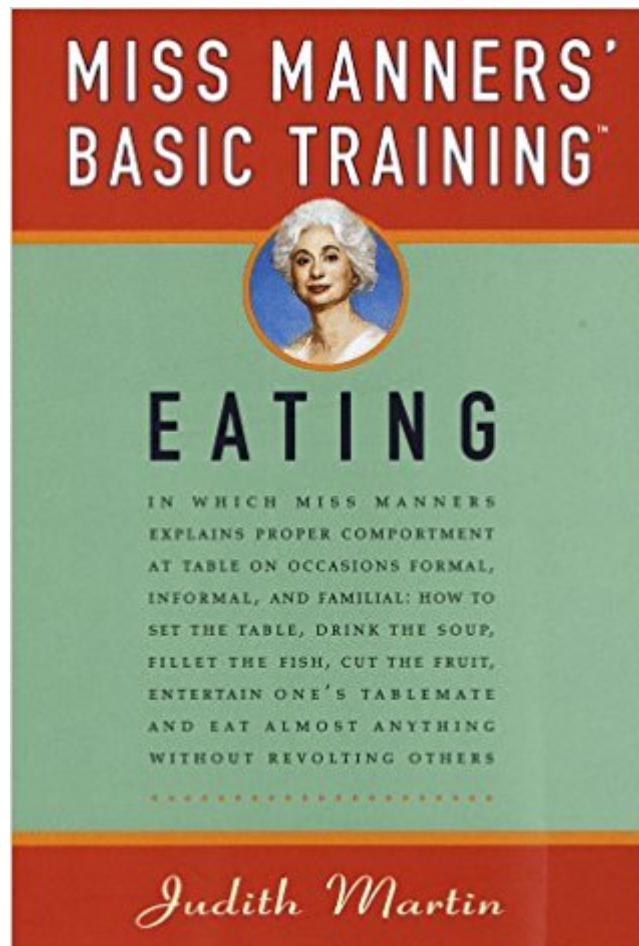




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Miss Manners' Basic Training: Eating



Synopsis

We eat every day, three or more times, yet the skill of taking nourishment properly has all but disappeared from our society. We are afflicted with fear of forks and baffled by the sight of more than one plate before us on the table. Blame it on the demise of the family dinner or the advent of "do your own thing, many of us have never learned, or have simply forgotten, the rules for eating in civilized company. In her fabulously witty style, Miss Manners reacquaints us with the proper use of implements for navigating nourishment from plate to mouth and gives specific, practical advice on all manner of mealtime issues: Serving takeout food How to fillet a fish, pound (pop open) a crab, and cope with the mysteries of the mango, the artichoke, a thick, juicy steak, and that long stringy glob of cheese atop French onion soup Safely feeding children in restaurants Place cards and seating plans for dinner parties Rules for vegetarians and other special cases The spinach-in-teeth maneuver How to signal with your napkin whether you've left the table for good or will soon be back. Give this essential volume to your children, your husband, your coworkers, your mother-in-law, and never be grossed out at the table again.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Miss Manners instructs us in a forgotten art: table manners, from which fork to use to the correct way of ingesting all the cheese that floats atop French onion soup. Copyright 1997 Reed Business Information, Inc.

... Martin dishes up some notable surprises in Eating (munching asparagus with your fingers is acceptable; twirling spaghetti on a spoon is not)... -- Entertainment Weekly

We need more of these kind of book taught in our homes and school cafeterias.

Great!

These are great books. I think that everyone should read them. if for nothing else, just for a general overview of how one should behave.

I ordered this book for resource material. I knew the format of the Miss Manners publications but wanted to take a look at the content and it was very reasonable to purchase. I am not a big fan of the format. Certainly there is good information that will give all readers a leg up in social situations.

Information not any different from all of the other books on manners. Did not notice any unique qualities or attributes.

If common sense and courtesy overnight became the overwhelming condition of modern humanity, Miss Manners might seem in danger of losing her job. Of course, such a mental and social revolution is unlikely to occur; even so, she would hold onto her job due to the fitting, cutting remarks sent to those who are not operating under those two principles alone. There would still be enough stupid, petty people to fuel fher column.If one hasn't read a Miss Manners column or book before, this slim volume is the perfect introduction -- it's all about eating, something most people get a chance to deal with every day. She answers questions regarding how to eat specific food items properly, who should be paying for a meal at a restaurant (clue: it's the one who said "I'll be taking you out to dinner"), and even touching upon the dreaded fork issue. I'll give that one away, too: you work from the outside in.Even if you know all the proper behavior for mealtimes, Miss Manners holds one's interest by bringing up intriguing etiquette history facts - such as the handbook of etiquette rules that a teenaged George Washington wrote containing such tidbits as the fact one should not use silverware or table linens to clean one's teeth at table. And, of course, those who fight on the side of etiquette in all realms (such as family meals) find themselves bolstered by Miss Manners unanswerable arguments.Even if you have read many of her books before, I would still get it, for it is the perfect size for reading on the subway or the occaisional lunch alone (never read while

eating with someone else... except at breakfast time). It reads quickly, and one can skip around topic by topic.

In "Miss Manners Basic Training: Eating", Judith Martin explains how to "eat almost anything without revolting others". Good to know, but it should be clear that this book is about eating etiquette, not about restaurant protocol. It doesn't give advice on who's who among restaurant staff or what to do about it. "Eating" is divided into 3 chapters: Equipment and Its Use, Food Traps, and Basic Eating Rituals. In each chapter, Miss Manners addresses a wide variety of topics with direct explanations as well as with questions that readers have asked her along with her responses. In "Equipment and Its Use", we get explanations of "Basic Flatware Skills and Manners", "Platters", "Glasses and China", and "Table Linens". "Food Traps" is a straightforward list of foods, in alphabetical order, and how to properly eat them. "Basic Eating Rituals" is the longest chapter in the book, in which Miss Manners tackles family meals, "Afternoon Tea", "Picnics", "Restaurant Dining", and "Private Entertaining". Judith Martin is a good writer with a sharp wit, but I feel that she too frequently sacrifices clarity for cleverness in "Eating". There is a lot of good information in the book, but apart from the chapter on "Food Traps", it is not organized in a straightforward fashion. It's organized by topics, which are somewhat haphazard. The result is that the book is not comprehensive, because it does not proceed from, say, one course to the next, or one utensil to the next, or the start of the meal to the finish. More illustrations would also have been helpful. Judith Martin is an opinionated woman, and no where is that more apparent than in Chapter 3, which is a bit controversial, as some of this etiquette is constantly changing and rather subjective. A little controversy never hurt anyone, but I wonder how many readers will agree that children should never be excused from the table and that women should not touch up lipstick at the table. But I have to compliment Miss Manners for not trying to make things difficult and for consistently praising simplicity over pretentiousness.

Any question you could ever think of, from where to put your napkin if you're intending to return to the table to how to properly eat pasta, is answered in this book. Incredibly useful, immensely entertaining (letters to Miss Manners, as well as her responses, are sprinkled throughout), this book is a must for people (especially us adolescents) who wish to learn something that should never go out of style.

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