LA COUNTY LIBRARY

DIY Library Program

ADULT 101: SOCIAL ETIQUETTE

ETIQUETTE FOR INTERACTIONS IN SOCIETY

Recommended for Ages 12 – 18

There is more to social etiquette than just proper handshakes and making eye contact. Good etiquette goes beyond "please" and "thank you." Social etiquette can (and should) include small things that you can do to demonstrate good social manners and respect to others and the general public. This program will touch on some of the simple and quick things we can do every day that can promote good social etiquette.

Questions for Discussion:

- What do you know about etiquette (or manners)?
- What are some ways you can practice healthy social etiquette?

Social etiquette can be practiced in any setting. From the gym to the sidewalks to our own homes, we can perform good social etiquette skills. For instance, it is often easy to get caught up in moving from one workout to another when we are at the gym. We should try to remember this good social etiquette practice before moving to the next exercise, which is to clean the equipment after use so that the next person can use it (many gyms provide sanitizers or wipes for this) without having to touch dirty or sweaty equipment. In this case, a respect to the space and to the next gym user has been demonstrated.

How many times have you been to a parking lot and noticed trash spread around the area? Making sure that you (and the people around you) put trash into the trashcan and not littered around the parking lot is another example of a good social etiquette practice. Leaving garbage to sit in a parking lot, on a sidewalk, or anywhere else can cause problems for others and the environment. Cleaning up after yourself and proper disposal of trash—whether in public spaces or at home—demonstrates respect (i.e. good etiquette) for the environment, people, and animal life.

Being aware of personal space is another social etiquette practice that may be familiar to you. This is sometimes referred to as a person's space bubble or a personal zone. Most of us tend to know that we can be physically closer to friends and family, but what happens when someone stands just a little too close? Or when you stand too close to someone you don't know? Their

reaction may include taking a few steps back or losing focus in the conversation. This happens because they are feeling uncomfortable. Allowing a person to have their personal space can make them feel more comfortable interacting with you, and it demonstrates that you are respecting their personal boundaries.

Social etiquette can be as simple as cleaning your gym equipment, making sure your garbage ends up in the trashcan, and respecting someone's personal space. If we do little things like these, then we can have a positive impact on people and the world.

Activity: Everyday Etiquette

Take a moment and think of other social etiquette practices that show respect for others. These may be things you already do, things you wish you did, or things you notice other people doing. Here are a few prompts to help you with your brainstorming:

- What etiquette do you practice in your home? This could be anything from taking your shoes off when you enter to closing the door behind you when you leave.
- What etiquette do you practice when interacting with people and places in your neighborhood?
- What etiquette do you practice in school?

Write down all the everyday etiquette ideas you come up. Invite someone else in your household to create their own list and see if your lists match. Discuss any differences and similarities.

Activity: Etiquette Around the World

Etiquette is cultural and varies greatly from place to place. What is considered good social etiquette in other parts of the world?

- Write down things that you know are considered good social etiquette. These can include things in public spaces and your personal surroundings such as at home. Your list from the previous activity may help with this.
- Discuss whether or not you think these social etiquette practices are being used in other parts of the world.
- Using our library databases, find information on social etiquette practices in other countries or cultures. We suggest starting with Gale eBooks in our Virtual Reference Library: https://tinyurl.com/ydza9lsq *Hint: there's an eBook encyclopedia of etiquette and taboo's from around the world!*
- Discuss any differences you may discover between countries/cultures and understand why social etiquette norms may vary.

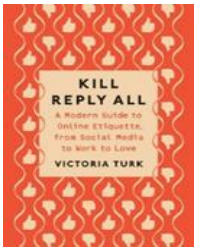
Recap (things to remember about social etiquette):

- Manners can be small things that we normally wouldn't think about. Whether it's knowing how to shake hands or cleaning up after ourselves, good social etiquette can have a positive impact.
- Social etiquette norms can vary from place to place, and person to person. Certain practices that are considered good manners in one place may not be the standard practice in other places. Being knowledgeable and aware of the fact that different social etiquette practices exist is important in today's diverse society.

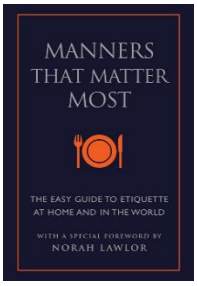
DIGITAL RESOURCES AVAILABLE THROUGH LA COUNTY LIBRARY

eBooks & Audiobooks
LA County Library offers numerous resources that can help you learn more about social etiquette. Here are just a few, all of which are available as eBooks on OverDrive and Libby:

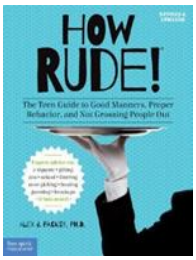
Modern Etiquette Made Easy: A Relatable Guide to Formal Etiquette **by Myka Meier**
Get the inside scoop on how to get the competitive edge in etiquette. Become the party guest that everyone wants, create the best first impression, and know which greeting to use in a situation. Great for all ages and life stages, from teens to established working professionals.



Kill Reply All **by Victoria Turk**
This book covers etiquette in the online space. From emailing at work to social media, the author lays out etiquette rules for our digital lives and how to manage relationships with others in the digital world.



Manners That Matter Most: The Easy Guide to Etiquette at Home and In the World **by June Eding and Norah Lawlor**
A comprehensive guide to etiquette and manners in everyday situations, including the little things. Includes information on etiquette as well as teaching the reader how to implement the information into their everyday life.



How Rude!: The Teen Guide to Good Manners, Proper Behavior, and Not Grossing People Out **by Alex J. Packer**
Explaining etiquette from A ("Applause") to Z ("Zits"), this book offers a thoroughly hilarious perspective on etiquette while explaining why manners are important. The author includes advice for every situation a teen might typically experience.

Online Learning

- *Universal Class* offers online courses taught by instructors and explores a diverse range of subjects. Search for "social etiquette" and you may find classes such as *Etiquette for Children and Teens* and *Etiquette 101.*
- *Opposing Viewpoints* offers essays, articles, and primary resources on contemporary social issues. In the database, search for "etiquette" and you may find resources such as *Gym Etiquette* and *Moral Rules and Principles*.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- "Social and Work Etiquette for Teens" on The Spruce – https://tinyurl.com/y988vylf
- "The 15 Main Rules of Modern Etiquette" on YouTube – https://tinyurl.com/yc9wner8