

# **Victorian Protocol**

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- ✚ **Decorum:** Standard of behavior; Appropriateness of behavior or conduct, propriety.
- ✚ **Genteel:** refined in manner and style; well bred and polite.
- ✚ **Protocol:** A system of standards used to govern a specific situation; forms of ceremony and etiquette used to govern conduct.

The Victorians witnessed the grandeur of the above principles permeating all aspects of their social interactions. Down to the minutest detail, the Victorians considered their behavior a reflection of their higher civilization. We today can take a lesson from our ancestors on common civility to those we interact with daily. Put a little bit of protocol into your life and see the positive effect it has to all around you.

Manners can recapture a bit of our lost humanity. The idea of common courtesy makes it easier for people to interact with each other on a daily basis. Rudeness breeds discontent, anger and eventually hatred.

Protocol may include:

- ✚ Meals
- ✚ Transportation
- ✚ Visitations
- ✚ Business Interactions
- ✚ Dating
- ✚ Sports and Relaxation
- ✚ Toiletries
- ✚ Correspondence
- ✚ Dress

A topic of interest for most of those in our lifestyle who seek to learn more on this style of protocol is the Victorian Table. Here is a quick over view of how a table should be laid out:  
Dinners are at least five courses.

First a tablecloth of felt should be laid down to prevent slippage. Follow that with the fine linen or lace one. Centerpieces are usually fresh flowers tailored to the season and time of day. Formal dinners used full candelabras. Next place your chairs around the table for as many guests as you will be having. Do not do seating arrangements at this time.

First item on the table is the silverware. First course utensils go on outside, then work way in with courses.

Knife blades are always into the plate face.

Traditionally there are no plates to start on the table, only the napkin. Once the napkin is placed on the lap, then the first course is brought out. Service is from the right, over the shoulder. `

When a guest has completed a course, they should place the utensils across the top of the plate. Serve will then clear the plate.

The art of Victorian dining is a long and complicated one. These are just a few facts to get you started in running your house with this protocol.