HOSA members often have the opportunity to participate in social activities.
Here are some rules of etiquette for HOSA members when they are out to impress.

Business Etiquette

For Meals and Other Activities

Seat yourself from the left side of the chair and rise from the same side to avoid bumping into others. The exception is if you are on the far right end, enter from the right to avoid excessive movement.

Sit erect at the table. Do not rest your arms on the table or crowd the individual next to you. Keep your arms close to your body to avoid hitting the person beside you. Be especially careful when cutting food.

No one should begin to eat until all are served and the hostess begins eating. Before a plate is passed for second serving or when through eating, place the knife and fork close together across the center of the plate. If in a large group, begin eating when the immediate group around you has been served.

Take small bites and eat slowly and quietly. Do not attempt to talk with food in your mouth.

Talk about cheerful, pleasant things at the table.

Do not sniff food to determine if you like it.

Stir your beverage only once or twice to mix sugar and/or cream.

Do not play with your food or move food from one side of the plate to the other.

Pace your meal. Never continue to eat long after others have stopped.

Always use serving utensils to serve yourself, not your silver.

Crumbling crackers or mixing foods is inappropriate and offensive.

Catsup is to be poured on one section of the plate, not over the entire food portion. The idea is never to let your plate look messy.

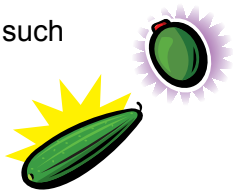
Jellies to be spread on bread, pickles, and other relishes to be eaten with the fingers are placed on the bread and butter plate, if available. Jellies or relishes to be eaten with a fork along with the meat course are placed on the dinner plate.

When a bread and butter plate is on the table, use it appropriately.

Butter is to be placed on dinner or bread/butter plate with butter server. Break bread in halves or quarters and butter only portion eating, never the entire roll. Use your knife for spreading and not the butter server.

The bread and butter knife remains on the bread and butter plate at the end of the meal.

Use fingers to remove bread from the serving plate. Spearing or eating bread with fork is not in good taste.



Fingers, not forks, are used to eat such foods as crackers, olives, pickles, radishes, and potato chips.

Business Etiquette

Pick up food in front of you and pass food to the right. You will be the last to receive the dish. Take small portions so that all present will have an equal portion.

Salt and pepper shakers are to be passed together even when only one is requested.

If sugar is in small packages and is requested, pass the container, not one or two packages. Place paper envelopes on the edge of the saucer or under the rim of your plate and not in the ashtray.

Ask to have an article passed rather than reach in front of a person to get it.

Used silver is left on the dish with which it was used; don't leave spoons in bowls or cups. Place your spoon in the saucer at the end of the meal.

Do not cool food by blowing on it. Never pour hot beverages into the saucer to cool, nor drink from the saucer.

Accept a second helping if it is desired, only after everyone has been served once.

If you pass your plate for a second serving, leave your knife and fork on the plate with the knife on the outside.

Place the napkin on the knees. If it is large, unfold it halfway. Use the napkin to wipe the mouth and fingers as necessary.

Ask to be excused if you must leave the table before the others. Place your napkin in the seat of your chair- lightly folded, not wadded.

The napkin is to be placed on the table to the left of the plate at the end of the meal function (not meal)- lightly folded, not wadded.

Don't make an issue if you don't like something or can't eat it.

Toothpicks are to be used in private, never at the table or in public places.

Avoid touching the hair and using a handkerchief at meal time. Come to the table with clothing and hair neat and tidy. Do not bite your fingernails or trim them.

When in use, hold the handle of the knife lightly in the right hand, without touching the blade. The knife is used only for cutting food.

Use the fork in preference to the knife or spoon whenever possible. Hold the fork, tines up, lightly in the right hand, between the thumb and the first finger. Rest the fork on the reverse side of the third finger, except when using in cutting, then hold it in the left hand, tines down. Avoid an upright position of the fork when cutting.

When in doubt about whether to use a fork or spoon, follow the general rule. Foods served in a cupped dish are usually eaten with a spoon; those on a flat dish with a fork. There are exceptions to this as there are for all rules. For example: Oyster and shrimp cocktail are eaten with a fork.

Do not hold food on the fork or spoon while talking, nor wave your silverware in the air or point with it.

Do not push food with the fingers or bread.

Dip the soup spoon away from you. Sip liquids from the side and solids from the tip.

Do not leave the spoon standing in a cup or dessert dish, but place it on the saucer or plate underneath the cup or dish.

Cut no more than two bites of food at a time.

Never lick an ice cream cone. Eat by small bites with the lips.

Be sure to tell your host or hostess that you enjoyed the meal.