



THE WHAT, WHEN & WHERE OF



FLATWARE

A RESOURCE GUIDE FROM TRIMARK

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Flatware plays a key part in the overall dining experience. Think about it. Damaged or smudged forks and knives can reflect poorly on the cleanliness and quality of the food. Your flatware should stand up to the rigors of daily service, but be attractive enough to reflect on your brand.

TYPES OF FLATWARE



American
Teaspoon



Bouillon
Spoon



Bread &
Butter Knife



Butter
Spreader



Cocktail
Fork



Demitasse
Spoon



Dessert
Knife



Dessert
Spoon



Dinner
Fork



Dinner
Knife



European
Dinner Fork



European
Tablespoon

TYPES OF FLATWARE



European
Teaspoon



Fish Fork



Fish Knife



Iced Tea
Spoon



Round Bowl
Soup Spoon



Salad
Fork



Steak
Knife



Tablespoon



Utility -
Dessert Fork



Some Things to Consider When Selecting Flatware

Before you begin to select dinnerware, ask yourself the following questions:

- *What kind of restaurant is it? What's my concept?*
- *What's on the menu?*
- *What's the cost of the average menu item?*
- *What's the average check size?*
- *Who's my typical customer?*
- *What's the volume of customers?*
- *Does my restaurant offer catering, special events, holidays, or Sunday brunch?*
- *What's my budget?*



Types of Flatware

There are two basic types of flatware used in commercial foodservice: silver plate and stainless steel. Generally speaking, silver plate flatware is generally less durable than stainless steel.

1. Silver Plate

Silver plate flatware is made using 18/10 stainless flatware and silver plating. It is primarily used in high-end restaurants, hotels and country clubs. It is durable and dishwasher safe. It must be subjected to detarnishing soaks twice a month.

Advantages of Using Silver Plate:

- Increased quality perception for entire operation
- 4-5 star standard requirement for high-end operations
- Silver appearance will improve with age as it develops a “patina” or shine

Disadvantages of Using Silver Plate:

- Up front cost higher
- Additional care and handling required

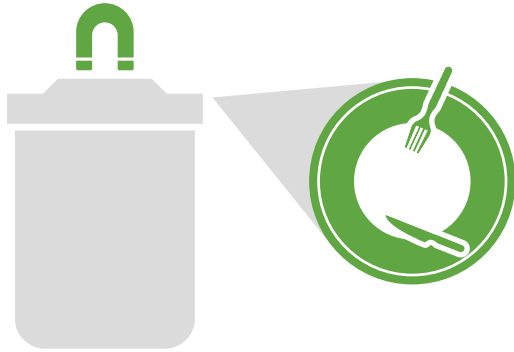
2. Stainless Steel

Stainless steel is by far, the most popular choice in flatware. It comes in four varieties: **18/0, 18/10, 18/8** and **13/0**. Stainless steel flatware is made from different alloys.

- **18/0** – 18% chrome only
- **18/10** – 18% chrome and 10% minimum nickel
- **18/8** – 18% chrome and 8% minimum nickel
- **13/0** – 13% chrome only

18/0 Stainless Flatware:

18/0 is the predominant metal used in foodservice institutions and low to medium-range restaurants. It is safe in either high or low temperature dishwashers, as long as product is stacked loosely in cylinders and allowed to air dry properly. It is made from an alloy of stainless steel with 18% chrome, which increases the luster and helps prevent corrosion.



Chrome flatware is magnetic. Chrome flatware is caught by magnetic retrievers in waste barrels, so that flatware doesn't end up in the trash. Chain restaurants are likely to utilize waste retrievers and buy heavier gauges for durability and better designs for appeal.



Wash 18/0 chrome flatware in cylinders and air dry upright, or use a compartment rack.

18/10 Stainless Flatware:

18/10 stainless flatware may be more expensive than other varieties, depending on its weight and the amount of finishing necessary to make it stronger. It resists staining or corrosion and develops a "patina" or shiny finish.

Any flatware containing nickel (18/8 & 18/10) will not work with the magnetic retrievers because it loses its magnetic ability once nickel is added.

18/8 Stainless Flatware:

The 18/8 stainless is similar to 18/0, except that nickel makes up 8% of the materials. The nickel aids in the resistance of corrosion.

13/0 Stainless Flatware:

This grade of flatware contains 13% chrome. The U.S. government specifications require that stainless steel flatware contain a minimum of 13% chrome to be called "stainless steel." Most of the flatware that is imported in the United States is 13% grade. It is less expensive than the other three grades and the least resistant to corrosion and rusting.



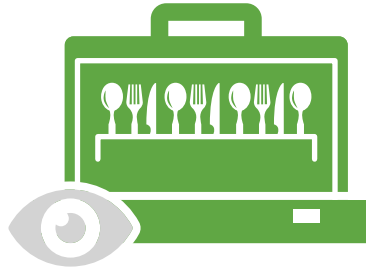
What's Weight Got to Do with It?

Research suggests that restaurant patrons use weight as the overwhelming criteria to judge flatware quality. If the flatware is light, the impression is that it's cheap. Poor flatware could affect a customer's desire to return.

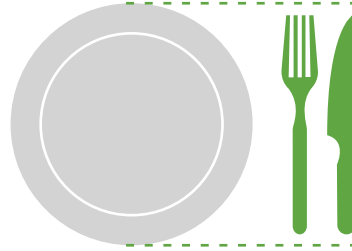
How to Choose the Best Flatware for your Restaurant:

Fine Dining and Bistro, Club and Hotel:

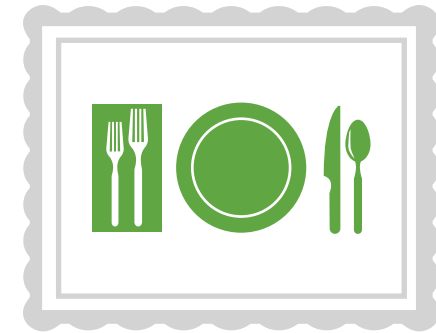
- Unique designs in 18/0 stainless with substantial weight or silver plate announce quality to the patron.
- Designs such as Victorian, Tudor, Baroque, Scandinavian, Modern, and Country should match the décor of the establishment.
- Menu items and the dinnerware should dictate flatware selection. For instance, cups of soup need bouillon spoons, and rim soups need longer-handled dessert spoons.



Be sure to see flatware samples. Make sure they complement the overall tabletop setting and the restaurant's design and décor.



Choose European (longer) forks and knives to be in balance with 11-13 inch dinner plates.*



Imagine a picture frame around your table setting - everything should be in perfect balance.

Fine Dining and Bistro, Club and Hotel (continued):

- Formal dining may require a small bread and butter knife as well as cocktail forks.
- Steak houses generally use oversize flatware, dinnerware and jumbo signature steak knives.

Mid-Range, Casual and Fast Casual Restaurants:

- In high-volume operations, 18/0 flatware may be more appropriate. It is affordable, durable and resists staining.

* European forks are longer than American forks, while European teaspoons are smaller than American teaspoons. If you use traditional-size forks and knives, it could look out of balance next to those plates.



Knives

Knives are available in either solid handle or hollow handle. Solid handle knives tend to be heavier, while hollow knives tend to weigh less. Knife blades, are 13/0, while the handle is 18/0 or 18/8 chrome. Adding nickel to chrome in stainless steel may increase the its resistance to corrosion from strong chemicals and acidic foods. High carbon knife blades are known as 13/0HC.

Solid Handle Knives



- Solid handle knives are one-piece construction and heavier.
- Solid handle knives are more durable and tend to be less expensive than hollow handle knives.



Hollow Handle Knives

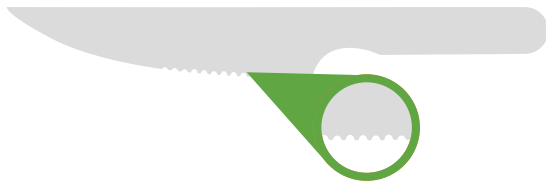


- Hollow handle knives are three-piece construction and weigh less, but tend to cost more.
- Hollow handle knives cannot be custom stamped—but the logo can be engraved on the blade.

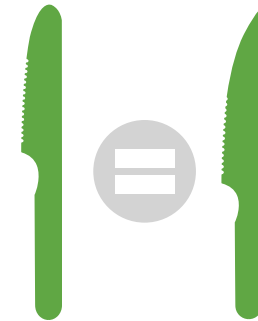
Steak Knives

- Wood-handled knives can be more expensive, depending on the type of wood used. They will become brittle over time if not handled correctly. They offer a natural material that can coordinate with a special décor or theme.
- Pakkawood is a man-made material of selected hardwood veneers that are fused with a resin into a solid, homogeneous block of material. The color carries through the entire thickness of the material. The material has a gloss finish without any spraying.

- Stainless steel steak knives can also be used at some restaurants.
- Phenolic plastic handle knives are a good alternative if you would like colors instead of high-end wood look.



Look for knives that have a sturdy blade with well-defined serrations. The serrations protect the actual cutting edge and will never need sharpening.



Rounded-edge steak knives cut just as efficiently as pointed steak knives.

Customizing Flatware

To help showcase your establishment's brand, theme and menu, you may want to consider customized flatware. Customized flatware features a unique design or logo of a particular establishment and is a way to make your customers' overall dining experience more memorable. It can even be a profit center. Some establishments successfully merchandise branded steak knife sets to their customers.



How Many Do I Need?

Opening Orders & Reorders

The amount of flatware you need for your operation can depend on many factors including your concept, number of seats, ability to control theft, customer turnover during “rush” times, warewasher capacity and more. Once you’re up and running, you’ll have a better idea of what is needed for reorders. Here are some suggestions that will help guide you.

To determine the quantity of each item needed, multiply the number of seats times the ordering factor shown for each item.

Example: A teaspoon for a 125 seat formal venue is 5 x 125 = 625 pieces.



Be sure your dishwasher is fast enough to handle multiple loads of dinnerware, especially during peak periods.

CASUAL DINING
SEMI-FORMAL DINING
FORMAL DINING

		CASUAL DINING	SEMI-FORMAL DINING	FORMAL DINING
SPOONS	Teaspoon	3	3	5
	Dessert/Soup Spoon	2	2	2
	Tablespoon	-	.25	.25
	Iced Tea Spoon	1.5	1.5	1.5
	Demitasse Spoon	*	*	2
	Bouillon Spoon	2	2	2
FORKS	Utility/Dessert Fork	3	3	3
	Dinner Fork	-	-	2
	Salad or Fish Fork	*	*	*
	Cocktail Fork	1.5	1.5	1.5
KNIVES	Dinner Knife	3	1.5	2
	Utility/Dessert Knife	*	1.5	2
	Butter Spreader	-	-	2
	Steak Knife	-	*	*
	Fish Knife	-	*	*

* Accessory items to be considered separately, depending upon type of service and menu. Your reserve stock should be at least 25% of that in active service.



Flatware Care & Maintenance

Whether it's stainless steel or silver plate, your customers will notice if your flatware is bent or stained. While it may be impossible to completely avoid damaged flatware, there are some things you can do to keep it looking new. The following guidelines will help you maintain your stainless steel and silver plate flatware.

- Keep adequate supplies of flatware for rush periods.
- Never put flatware in a hot glass.
- Never overload bus trays.
- Never carry more flatware than you can safely handle.
- Always sort all items in bus tray.
- Color code racks for different dinnerware, glass, and flatware items.
- Always keep receiving area neat and clean.

- Always handle flatware carefully.
- Remove severely abraded flatware from service.
- Never allow flatware to remain soiled overnight.
- Always load flatware into presoak containers immediately after use.
- Always change presoak solution frequently.
- Never use an aluminum pan for presoaking flatware—only use plastic or stainless steel pans.
- Check dishwasher temperature twice daily.

How to Care for Stainless Steel Flatware

Presoak:

- Place soiled flatware in a presoak solution as soon as possible to prevent corrosion.
- Never presoak flatware for longer than 15 minutes.
- Avoid aluminum compounds that are used for silver plate flatware.
- Do not use chlorine bleach.

Wash:

- After presoaking, immediately wash tableware with hot water and a nonabrasive, non-corrosive cleaning agent.
- Flatware should be run through the complete wash and rinse cycles in a vertical position.
- Low temperature or chlorine bath dishwashing systems are not recommended.
- Extended exposure to moisture increases the risk of rust and pitting.

How to Care for Silver Plate Flatware

1. Presoak

- Immediately after bussing, place silver plate in a presoak solution.
- Recommended presoak time is fifteen minutes.

2. Wash

- After presoaking, tableware should immediately be washed in hot water, using a nonabrasive, noncorrosive cleaning agent.
- Silver plate may be washed in high temperature dishwashers.

3. Rinse

- After washing, silverware should be thoroughly rinsed in clean, hot water (at least 180°F).
- Adding an oxidizing agent can prevent minerals from damaging the flatware.

4. Detarnishing

- Detarnish at least twice a month to minimize discoloration.
- Use a suitable detarnishing agent and follow instructions carefully.

5. Burnishing (optional)

- A burnishing machine can be used to smooth out scratches and dents, remove mineral deposits, harden the finish, and give silver plate a bright luster. Burnishing knives are not recommended because it can dull the blades.

Store silver plate flatware in an area free of corrosive materials away from the kitchen to prevent it from being tarnished by food chemicals.

Conclusion

Flatware can add both function and style to any tabletop setting. It can complement the menu, ambiance and brand of the restaurant.

Once you examine the different types of flatware available and analyze your needs, you can begin to narrow down your choices based on what's best for your business.



Are you ready to take your tabletop to the next level?

Let TriMark help you take your tabletop vision to the next level. Our experienced team can help you select flatware that's right for you. Whether it's a restaurant, hospital, educational institution, country club, or large scale entertainment venue, we can guide you toward choosing flatware that suits your needs and business.



TriMark offers foodservice operators a new level of service by combining the hands-on support and local market knowledge of a strong regional supplier with the purchasing strength, industry expertise, and delivery capabilities of a national company. We work closely with our customers; who include national restaurant chains, independent restaurant operators, healthcare facilities, entertainment venues, and many other segments; to provide the products and services that will help them operate more efficiently and realize better bottom line results.



Special acknowledgment to Walco and Libbey® Foodservice for providing much of the content found in this resource guide