

## Etiquette & Manners: Eating



A Simple Guide  
For Instructing  
Little Muslims  
According to the  
Quraan & Sunnah  
(Insha Allah)

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

## Introduction

The most effective time to address eating etiquette is probably during eating.

However, it is good to review the etiquettes of eating on a regular basis at other times.



This “guide” is a resource, bi-ithnillah that can be used to teach children the proper etiquette of eating, according to the Sunnah and Quran.

It contains ahadith and ayaat to support the material presented, insha Allah.

In addition, some manners listed are not necessarily from the Quraan and Sunnah, but constitute “good manners” in many cultures, so I have included them as well. These manners are identifiable as they have no proof to accompany them.

Finally, I added in little bits and facts and simple activities to make this guide a little more engaging, insha Allah.

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# Remembrance of Allah:


 What do you say before you eat?



You say Bismillah.

Narrated By 'Umar bin Abi Salama

I was a boy under the care of Allah's Apostle and my hand used to go around the dish while I was eating. So Allah's Apostle said to me, 'O boy! Mention the Name of Allah and eat with your right hand, and eat of the dish what is nearer to you.' Since then I have applied those instructions when eating. (Bukhari)

 What happens if you don't say Bismillah before you eat?

The Shaytan eats with you.

Narrated By Umayyah Ibn Makhshi:

Umayyah was sitting and a man was eating. He did not mention Allah's name until there remained the last morsel. When he raised it to his mouth, he said: In the name of Allah at the beginning and at the end of it. The Prophet (salla Allahu alayhi wa sallam) laughed and said: "The devil kept eating along with him, but when he mentioned Allah's name, he vomited what was in his belly." (Abu Dawud)

Jabir b. 'Abdullah reported Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) as saying: When a person enters his house and mentions the name of Allah at the time of entering it and while eating the food, Satan says (addressing himself: You have no place to spend the night and no evening meal; but when he enters without mentioning the name of Allah, the Satan says: You have found a place to spend the night, and when he does not mention the name of Allah while eating food, he (the Satan) says: You have found a place to spend the night and evening meal. (Muslim 5006)





What do you say when you forget to say Bismillah before you eat?

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ فِيْ اَوَّلِهِ وَاٰخِرِهِ .

Bismillahi Fee awwalihi wa akhrihi  
In the Name of Allah in its beginning and end.

(Abu Dawud)

Narrated By Umayyah Ibn Makhshi:

Umayyah was sitting and a man was eating. He did not mention Allah's name until there remained the last morsel. When he raised it to his mouth, he said: In the name of Allah at the beginning and at the end of it. The Prophet (salla Allahu alayhi wa sallam) kept eating along with him, but when he mentioned Allah's name, he vomited what was in his belly.

(Abu Dawud)



What do you say before drinking milk?

اللّٰهُمَّ بَارِكْ لَنَا فِيْهِ وَزِدْنَا مِنْهُ .

Allahumma barik lanaa feehee wa zidnaa minhu  
Oh Allah bless this for us and give us more of it.

At-Tirmidhi, Chapter 30, Hadith 2



Ibn Abbas radiAllahu anhu says that after having something, Rasoolullah sal-Allâhu alayhi Wa sallam made dua for something better than it. And after drinking milk he taught to make dua for the increase of it, because Rasoolullah sal-Allâhu alayhi wa sallam said, there is nothing that serves Both as food and water excepting milk.

At-Tirmidhi, Chapter 30, Hadith 2

Extracted from "The Hadith Software"



What do you say after you eat?



Narrated By Abu Umamah

Whenever the dining sheet of the Prophet was taken away (i.e., whenever he finished his meal), he used to say: "Al-Hamdu lillah kathiran taiyiban mubarakan fihi ghaira makfiy wala muwada' wala mustaghna'anhu Rabbuna." (Bukhari)

Narrated By Abu Umamah

Whenever the Prophet finished his meals (or when his dining sheet was taken away), he used to say. "Praise be to Allah Who has satisfied our needs and quenched our thirst. Your favor cannot be compensated or denied." Once he said, upraise be to You, O our Lord! Your favor cannot be compensated, nor can be left, nor can be dispensed with, O our Lord!"

Extra: What should we do with our dishes after eating?

# Manners of Eating

Some manners listed are not necessarily from the Sunnah, but are in accordance with not displeasing your eating companions and also constitute “good manners” in many cultures. Manners which are known (to me) to be from the Sunnah and Quraan are followed by proof.



## Eat from what is closest to you

Narrated By 'Umar bin Al Salama  
Who was the son of Um Salama, the wife of the Prophet:  
Once I ate a meal with Allah's Apostle and I was eating from all sides of the dish. So Allah's  
Apostle said to me, "Eat of the dish what is nearer to you."(Bukhari)



## Eat with your right hand

Narrated By 'Umar bin Abi Salama  
I was a boy under the care of Allah's Apostle and my hand used to go around the dish while I was eating. So Allah's Apostle said to me, 'O boy! Mention the Name of Allah and eat with your right hand, and eat of the dish what is nearer to you.' Since then I have applied those instructions when eating.(Bukhari)



Salim, on the authority of his father, reported Allah's Messenger(salla Allahu alayhi wa sallam) as saying: "None of you should eat with his left hand and drink with that (left hand) for the Satan eats with his left hand and drinks with that hand."  
(Muslim, 5010)

### Extra:

**Which hand is your right hand?**

**What do you do with your left hand ?**

To help you remember which hand to use, do the activity on the next page.

### Directions:

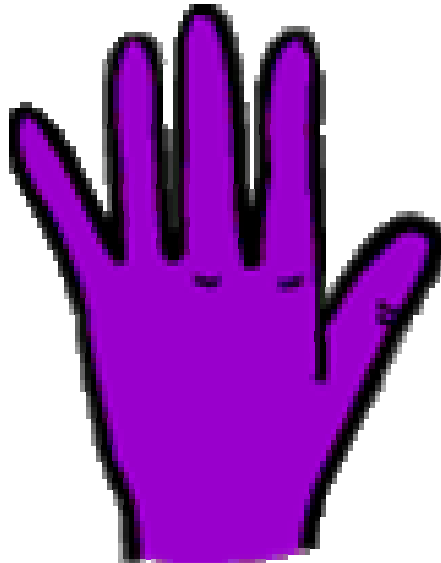
#### Parent:

1. Have your child lay his hands with palms down on the page "Which Hand Do I Use?"
2. Have him trace both of his hands
3. Have him color the RIGHT hand he traced with his favorite color.
4. Leave the left hand uncolored.
5. Hang on the wall near your eating area.
6. When child eats with the incorrect hand, encourage him to look at the sign to correct himself.

I make **istinja**  
and clean my private parts



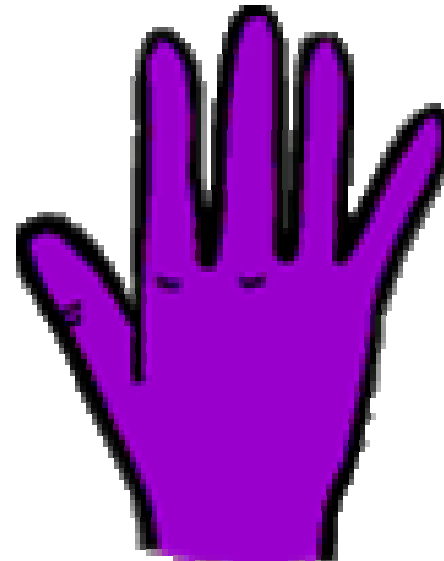
with my **left** hand



I **eat**

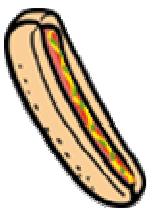


with my **right** hand





Which Hand Do I Eat With?







## Eating with your fingers

Anas RadiAllahu 'Anhu says: "Rasulullah Sallallahu 'Alayhi Wa sallam used to lick his three fingers after having eaten".

### Commentary.

It was the noble habit of Rasulallah Sallallahu 'Alayhi Wa sallam to eat with three fingers only. Although we find in a few narrations that he used five fingers also. In most narrations the three fingers; thumb, and middle fingers are mentioned. The benefit of eating with three fingers is that the amount taken (morsel) will be less, and one will not eat more. Imam Nawawi says: 'We gather from these ahadith that it is mustahab to eat with three fingers'. For this reason the fourth and fifth fingers should not be used unnecessarily. But if such food is eaten, where it is difficult to use only the three fingers, then there is no harm in using more.

At-Tirmidhi, Chapter 23, Description of the Eating, Hadith 2  
Extracted from "The Hadith Software"

### Eating with fingers vs. using utensils:

Knives in prehistoric times were primitive blades of bronze, later of iron. Early spoons were simple shallow scoops fashioned from gourds, shells, or boles of wood. Both implements were used solely as utensils; all food was eaten with the fingers.  
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**Cutlery**

Using cutlery for eating is a Western custom, whereas chopsticks are commonly used in Eastern countries.

Corbis/Peter Harholdt

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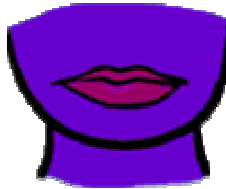


**Circulate water or milk (in an assembly) from the right hand side of the one who serves**

Anas b. Malik reported that there was brought to Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) a cup of MILK mixed with water, while there was on his right a desert Arab and on his left Abu Bakr. He (the Holy Prophet) drank; he then gave it to the desert Arab and said: (Give to one) who is on the right, then again who is on the right. (Muslim 5032)



**Chew with your mouth closed**



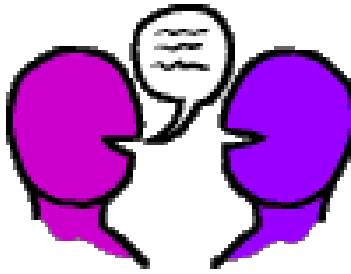
**Did you know?  
Another word  
for chewing food is  
"masticating"**



**Talk about it:  
Why should we chew with our mouth  
closed?**



**Don't talk and eat**



**Talk about it:**

**Why is it a good idea not to talk and eat at the same time?**



**If you have to burp or sneeze, turn your head from the eating area. If you have to pass wind, leave the room, if possible.**



**Chew your food well**

**Why is it important to chew your food well?**



**Don't stuff your mouth**

**What could happen if you stuff your mouth when eating?**



**Don't slurp beverages or soup**

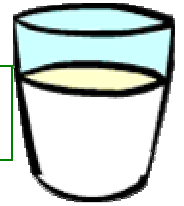
**Slurp:** to make a loud sucking sound while drinking or eating something.





### Rinse your mouth after drinking milk

Narrated By Ibn 'Abbas  
Allah's Apostle drank milk and then rinsed his mouth and said, "It contains fat."  
(Bukhari)



Milk: opaque whitish or yellowish liquid secreted by the mammary glands of female mammals for their nourishment of the young.

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How many animals can you name that give milk that humans drink?  
Have you ever drank milk from other animals besides a cow?  
What types of foods (products) can we make from milk?  
Which ones are your favorites



### Do not overeat

Narrated By Ibn 'Umar  
Allah's Apostle said, "A believer eats in one intestine (is satisfied with a little food), and a kafir (unbeliever) or a hypocrite eats in seven intestines (eats too much)."  
(Bukhari)



### Do not criticize food. If you don't like it, leave it.

Narrated By Abu Huraira  
The Prophet never criticized any food (he was invited to) but he used to eat if he liked the food, and leave it if he disliked it. (Bukhari)







### If the iqama is called, and your food has been served, eat first before praying.

Narrated by Anas bin Malik  
The Prophet said, "If supper is served and the iqama for (Isha) prayer is proclaimed, start with your supper first." (Bukhari)



What other manners or customs do you have in your household?  
Use the space below to record them  
so that you can review them regularly, insha Allah.

## Tips:

Whenever you see your child not practicing acceptable eating manners,  
try to remind him or her gently by:

Asking a question  
(e.g. What hand do we eat with?)

Quoting a hadith or ayaat

## THE END

سُبْحَانَكَ اللَّهُمَّ وَبِحَمْدِكَ أَشْهَدُ أَنْ  
لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ أَسْتَغْفِرُكَ وَأَتُوبُ  
إِلَيْكَ.

‘How perfect You are O Allah, and I praise You.  
I bear witness that none has the right to be worshipped except You.  
I seek Your forgiveness and turn to You in repentance.’