

School Resource

Tudor Table Manners

Primary Source

- Sit not down until you have washed.
- Undo your belt a little if it will make you more comfortable; because doing this during the meal is bad manners.
- When you wipe your hand clean, put good thoughts forward in your mind, for it doesn't do to come to dinner sad, and thus make other sad.
- Once you sit place your hands neatly on the table; not on your trencher and not around your belly.
- Don't shift your buttocks left and right as if to let off some blast. Sit neatly and still.
- Some allow children to stand, bare-headed at their betters' table to take their meat. They should not stay for the whole meal, but once they have eaten enough, pick up their trencher, salute them that is at table and leave.
- Any gobbit that cannot be taken easily with the hand, take it on your own trencher.
- Don't wipe your fingers on your clothes; use the napkin or the 'board cloth'.
- If someone is ill mannered by ignorance, let it pass, rather than point it out.

Desiderius Erasmus, *De Civitate*, 1534

