**JAPANESE ETIQUETTE: FROM** [**http://www.japan-guide.com/e/e2005.html**](http://www.japan-guide.com/e/e2005.html)

**BOWING:** In [Japan](http://www.japan-guide.com/), people greet each other by bowing. A bow ranges from a small nod of the head to a long, 90 degree bend at the waist. If the greeting takes place on [tatami floor](http://www.japan-guide.com/e/e2007.html), people get on their knees in order to bow. When bowing to someone of higher social status, a deeper, longer bow indicates respect. Conversely, a small head nod is casual and informal. However, most Japanese do not expect foreigners to know proper bowing rules and so a nod of the head is usually sufficient.

It is also common to bow to express thanks, to apologize, to make a request or to ask someone a favor. Shaking hands is uncommon among the Japanese, but again, exceptions are made for foreigners.

**SHOES**: When entering a Japanese house or a [ryokan](http://www.japan-guide.com/e/e2029.html), outdoor shoes are always replaced by slippers at the doorway (genkan). Slippers are provided by the host.

When entering a room with [tatami floor](http://www.japan-guide.com/e/e2007.html) (woven straw mats), slippers are removed as well. Tatami should only be stepped on with socks or in bare feet.

Finally, there are special [toilet](http://www.japan-guide.com/e/e2003.html) slippers for exclusive usage inside the washroom. The usual house slippers are left outside the door while using the washroom.

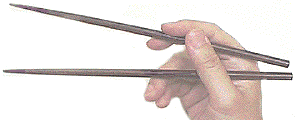
**TABLE MANNERS**: In Japan, some [restaurants](http://www.japan-guide.com/e/e2036.html) and private [homes](http://www.japan-guide.com/e/e2001.html) have low tables and cushions on the floor, rather than Western style chairs and tables. These are usually found on [tatami](http://www.japan-guide.com/e/e2007.html) floors. The **formal** way of sitting for both genders is kneeling (**seiza**) as shown on the picture below. People who are not used to sit in seiza style may become uncomfortable after a few minutes. Foreigners are not usually expected to be able to sit in seiza style for a long time, and an increasing number of Japanese people themselves are not able to do so either.

In **casual** situations, men usually sit cross-legged, while women with both legs to one side.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| http://www.japan-guide.com/g/ib200601n.gif women only | http://www.japan-guide.com/g/ib200602n.gif seiza | http://www.japan-guide.com/g/ib200603n.gif men only |

**Itadakimasu and Gochisosama** –In Japan, you say "itadakimasu" ("I gratefully receive") before eating, and "gochisosama (deshita)" ("Thank you for the meal") after finishing the meal.

**Individual versus shared dishes** --It is not uncommon in private households and in certain [restaurants](http://www.japan-guide.com/e/e2036.html) (e.g. izakaya) to share several dishes of food at the table rather than serving each person an individual dish. When eating from shared dishes, move some food from the shared plates onto your own with the opposite end of your [chopsticks](http://www.japan-guide.com/e/e2039.html) or with serving chopsticks that may be provided for that purpose.



**Chopsticks**

Chopsticks are used to eat most kinds of

Japanese foods, with some exceptions. Some

of the most important rules to remember when

dining with chopsticks are as follows:

* Hold your chopsticks towards their end, not in the middle or the front third.
* When you are not using your chopsticks, or have finished eating, lay them down in front of you with the tips to left.

[](http://chasingcivility.files.wordpress.com/2013/09/where-to-put-your-chopsticks-big1.jpg)

* Do not stick chopsticks into your food,

especially not into [rice](http://www.japan-guide.com/e/e2043.html). This is only done

at [funerals](http://www.japan-guide.com/e/e2060.html) with rice that is put onto the altar.

* Do not pass food directly from your set of chopsticks to another's. Again,

this is a [funeral](http://www.japan-guide.com/e/e2060.html) tradition that involves the bones of a cremated body.

* Do not spear food with your chopsticks.
* Do not point with your chopsticks.
* Do not wave your chopsticks around in the air or play with them.
* Do not move plates or bowls around with your chopsticks.
* To separate a piece of food in two, exert controlled pressure on the chopsticks while moving them apart from each other in order to tear the food. This takes some practice. With larger pieces of food such as tempura, it is also acceptable to pick up the entire piece with your chopsticks, and take a bite.
* If you have already eaten with your chopsticks, use the opposite end to take food from a shared plate.

Knives and forks are used for Western food only. Spoons however, may be used with certain [Japanese dishes](http://www.japan-guide.com/e/e2035.html) such as [donburi](http://www.japan-guide.com/e/e2342.html) or Japanese style [curry rice](http://www.japan-guide.com/e/e2351.html). A Chinese style ceramic spoon is sometimes used to eat soups.

**Some Table Rules**

* Blowing your nose in public, and especially at the table, is considered bad manners.
* It is considered good manners to empty your dishes to the last grain of rice.
* Talking about toilet related and similarly unappetizing topics during or before a meal is not appreciated by most people.
* It is considered bad manner to burp.
* After eating, try to move all your dishes back to the same position they were at the start of the meal. This includes replacing the lids on dishes and putting your chopsticks on the chopstick holder or back into their paper slip.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| http://www.japan-guide.com/g3/2035_11.jpg | **How to eat...**  **... Rice**: Hold the rice bowl in one hand and the [chopsticks](http://www.japan-guide.com/e/e2039.html) in the other. Lift the bowl towards your mouth while eating. Do not pour [soya sauce](http://www.japan-guide.com/e/e2045.html) over white, cooked [rice](http://www.japan-guide.com/e/e2043.html). |
| http://www.japan-guide.com/g3/2035_01.jpg | **... Sushi**: Pour some [soya sauce](http://www.japan-guide.com/e/e2045.html) into the small dish provided. It is considered bad manners to waste soya sauce, so try not to pour more sauce than you will use. In general, you are supposed to eat a sushi piece in one bite. Attempts to separate a piece into two generally end in the destruction of the beautifully prepared sushi. Hands or [chopsticks](http://www.japan-guide.com/e/e2039.html) can be used to eat sushi. |
| http://www.japan-guide.com/g3/2035_13.jpg | **... Miso Soup**: Drink the soup out of the bowl as if it were a cup, and fish out the solid food pieces with your [chopsticks](http://www.japan-guide.com/e/e2039.html). |
| http://www.japan-guide.com/g3/2035_18.jpg | **... Noodles**: Using your [chopsticks](http://www.japan-guide.com/e/e2039.html) lead the noodles into your mouth. You may want to try to copy the slurping sound of people around you if you are dining in a noodle shop. Rather than being bad manners as Westerners are often taught, slurping noodles is considered evidence of enjoying the meal. In case of [noodle soups](http://www.japan-guide.com/e/e2035.html#noodle), be careful of splashing the noodles back into the liquid. If a ceramic spoon is provided, use it to drink the soup, otherwise, lift the bowl to your mouth as if it were a cup. |
| http://www.japan-guide.com/g3/2035_04.jpg | **... Big pieces of food**: (e.g. prawn tempura, [tofu](http://www.japan-guide.com/e/e2045_tofu.html)) --Separate into bite sized pieces with your [chopsticks](http://www.japan-guide.com/e/e2039.html) (this takes some exercise), or just bite off a piece and put the rest back onto your plate. |

From: http://goasia.about.com/od/Food-and-Drink/a/How-to-Use-Chopsticks.htm

When taking a break, place your chopsticks in a tidy fashion to the right of your plate, preferably with the tips on the provided rest and without pointing them in anyone's immediate direction. **Putting chopsticks on top of your bowl or plate indicates that you are finished** and the staff may whisk it away!

* Do not rub chopsticks together to remove splinters or wooden strings.
* Do not tap chopsticks together in the air for practice or on a bowl to make noises.
* Do not leave chopsticks standing in a bowl vertically.
* Do not use chopsticks to gesture while talking or to point at people or dishes. ….
* Do not pass food to people with your chopsticks -- doing so resembles the practice of passing cremated bones at funerals. Instead, put the piece of food you intend to share directly onto the other person's plate.
* Do not suck sauce off the ends of your chopsticks or nibble on the ends.
* … allow elders or senior members at the table to lift their chopsticks first.
* Don't pick through dishes for specific pieces of meat or vegetables that happen to be your favorite.
* Avoid crossing your chopsticks, as it symbolizes death in some cultures. Always keep them held in eating position or placed in a tidy, side-by-side configuration.
* If disposable chopsticks were used, place them back inside of the paper wrapper at the end of your meal and leave them to the right of your plate. (This prevents germs from getting on table clearer.)
* If a chopstick rest is not provided on the right side of your bowl, some Japanese prefer to fold their own out of the paper provided for the disposable chopsticks.
* Japanese often jump at the chance to pour drinks for each other; you should do the same. Top up the glasses of people seated around you, and never pour your own drink.

**ASSIGNMENT: MAKE COMPARISONS:**

**Create a Double T chart showing :**

***5 or more* ways Japanese table etiquette is *similar* to US table etiquette, &**

***5 or more* ways it is different from customs here.**

**Use your chart to help you write the information into an essay of at least 2 paragraphs. Turn in both your chart and your essay. Use this heading:**

**Name:**

**Table \_\_\_\_\_ Period \_\_\_\_\_**

**Etiquette Comparisons Essay**

From: http://www.japanzine.jp/wp-content/uploads/2010/11/07\_Manners.jpg

