



Planning a dinner party? What your guests see before their meal arrives is just another opportunity to impress.

How to arrange your table settings to give your dinner party a professional polish

While the food will always be the star of a great dinner party, the thing that separates any old meal at a friend's house from a real dinner party is the table settings. As your guests wait for dinner to be served they'll admire their surroundings and the care you've taken to set the scene will make their mouths water in anticipation.

Here's how you can arrange your table for that professional polish:

Decide on the theme of your table settings

The key to making your table look perfectly styled is a consistent overarching theme. Whether you want everything to have a rustic feel, be sleek and modern or be festive and summery, your theme should come out in every element of your dinner party. Your theme should also compliment your menu – you probably wouldn't serve Hawaiian punch and summer flavours with cosy, log cabin-inspired styling.

Bring in your colours

You don't necessarily have to have every single item colour coordinated and perfectly matching. In fact, once you've nailed down your theme adding a variety of colours can help to elevate the styling. Generally speaking, pair cool shades of green and blue together, while keeping warmer shades like yellow and red to their own settings. If you're planning on a monotone design, a single coloured or metallic element can add some dynamic interest.

Mix up your textures

Layering your soft textiles like table cloths and napkins can help you to add some vibrancy, particularly if you're mixing up the colours. If you're using plates and bowls of the same colour, a contrasting cloth napkin in between will add dimension to the final look and some visual contrast between the different textures.

Get out all your plates

With all the bowls, plates and cutlery needed throughout the night already on the table, your guests will have an idea of what they have in store while also helping to make your table setting look complete. If you're serving multiple courses and don't want your menu to be self-serve, a single dinner plate in each spot is enough to signify a place setting.

Consider your greenery

While beautiful flowers in a vase is a tried and true way to decorate your home, it definitely isn't the only option. Smaller flower arrangements scattered along the length of the table will not only allow your guests to chat across the table but will surround your food as it is brought out.

You can also tie your table settings into the general décor by using a single flower or leaves as the finishing touch for each person. Place in the centre of the plate or create a bundle with your napkins and cutlery.

