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# Four Dinner Parties

# Jane's Dinner Party

Jane was a real **foodie**. She read about food, listened to podcasts about food, took photos of food, went to food festivals, watched programmes about food and attended courses on everything to do with food - knife skills, dinner table decorating, how to lay a table, wine tasting, **dining etiquette** and, of course, cookery courses.



She took a very long time thinking about her menu for the evening. She had decided that she would spend as much money as she needed to. She was going to win.

When the three friends arrived at Jane's house (once again with wine and flowers), she led them into the dining room. They couldn't believe their eyes. The room had been completely refurbished since the last time they had been there - two weeks ago for a Saturday brunch.

The dining room at that time had been nice and modern, decorated in **beige** and cream shades. Now it had completely changed and looked rich and **luxurious** in gold and deep red colours. A large, **impressive** dining table stood in the middle

**foodie**: a person who loves food and enjoys trying new dishes;  
**dining etiquette**: polite behaviour at the table; **beige**: a light brown or cream colour; **impressive**: making people feel admiration

of the room, with soft, comfortable chairs around it. A beautiful **rug** lay underneath the table, and an elegant **chandelier** hung from the **ceiling**, shining down on the room.



“Err - is this the same room as the one we had the brunch in two weeks ago?” gasped Chrissie.

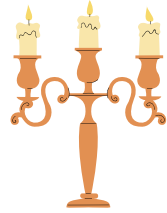
“I just did a quick refurb, nothing too dramatic,” smiled Jane proudly, “I was going to have it changed soon anyway so I just brought the date forward. Take a seat and I’ll bring in the first course.”

“It feels like we’re in a **stately home**,” remarked Nia, “look at all this!”



**rug**: a small carpet; **chandelier**: a large, decorative light that hangs from the ceiling; **ceiling**: the top inside surface of a room; **stately home**: a large and impressive old house, often open to visitors

There was a crisp white linen **tablecloth** covering the table. An elegant candle holder was in the centre. Each place setting had a large silver-coloured dinner plate and silver **cutlery** was placed on either side. Crystal glasses for water, and red and white wine glasses stood next to the plates. A beautiful flower arrangement of white roses and fresh eucalyptus leaves were at both ends of the table. Each place setting also had a personalised name card on top of each **napkin**, folded neatly and **tied** with a satin ribbon.



“What if we break something?” asked Rubi, “everything looks so expensive.”

When Jane came in pushing a trolley containing the first course, she didn’t notice a strange atmosphere in the room. She was too busy looking at her amazing dining room and thinking about her amazing menu.

**tablecloth:** a cloth that covers a table; **cutlery:** knives, forks and spoons; **napkin:** a piece of cloth or paper used to clean your mouth and hands at a meal; **tied:** fastened using something like string or ribbon

At the end of the meal when the last plates had been taken away (and thankfully nobody had broken anything), Jane started her ‘entertainment’. She presented each of them with a beautifully wrapped gift box with a pretty ribbon on top.



“Go on,” she said, “open them. I can’t wait for you to see them. I wanted everything to be perfect for this evening.”

Rubi opened her present and couldn’t believe her eyes. It was a very big jar of **cellulite cream**.



“It’s very expensive,” explained Jane, “and I’ve read that it’s the best on the market, it’s really effective.”

**cellulite cream**: a cream used to try to reduce fat under the skin

Chrissie was **scared** of opening her gift box and she was right to be. Her box contained a set of **teeth whitening strips**.

Nia wanted to say that she would open her gift later but saw the looks on Chrissie and Rubi's faces and knew she couldn't.

She opened it slowly. It was a bottle of shampoo for **hair loss**.

Nobody said a word. Silence.



On the way home in the shared taxi, Chrissie asked if it was perhaps a joke?

“Well, she once gave me a book on **anger management** for my birthday,” said Rubi, “but I didn't think about it really, we all get angry now and then, don't we? She knows I like reading books on self-help and self-development...but now I'm not so sure.”

**scared**: afraid; **teeth whitening strips**: thin strips used to make teeth look whiter; **hair loss**: losing hair from your head; **anger management**: learning how to control your anger

“And I can remember a time when she gave me a book on dieting,” said Chrissie, “I was rather **insulted** to be honest.”

“It wasn’t very nice of her,” said Nia, “we’re best friends, aren’t we?”

They filled in their score cards in silence.

# Tricky pronunciation



**Check how to  
say it**

proteins page 65 - line 11

tied page 66 - line 6

various page 67 - line 8

knives page 67 - line 10

envelope page 68 - line 7

sign page 68 - line 8

etiquette page 69 - line 8

beige page 69 - line 21

**with an  
App**

**with an  
online  
dictionary**

**with a  
teacher,  
parent,  
friend**

# Tricky pronunciation



**Check how to  
say it**

**luxurious** page 69 - line 23

**chandelier** page 70 - line 4

**ceiling** page 70 - line 5

**cuisine**

**scared** page 73 - line 1

page 80 - line 2

**enough** page 75 - line 9

**calm** page 76 - line 17

**plaque**

page 85 - line 16

**pouch** page 77 - line 13

**folk** page 78 - line 5

**with an  
App**

**with an  
online  
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teacher,  
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# TOASTING TRADITIONS

In France  
always make eye  
contact and hold it until  
you've taken the first  
sip

In Russia  
you should **drain** your  
glass after toasting

In Spain  
it's bad luck to toast  
with water



In Greece  
expect lots of toasts,  
especially through family  
dinners

In Japan  
wait for the most  
senior person to begin  
the toast and hold glass  
at lower level to show  
respect

In Sweden  
don't drink until  
everyone has made eye  
contact and said the  
word "Skål"

In China  
elders toast first

In Germany  
eye contact is essential

**a sip**: a small amount of a drink; **drain** your glass: drink everything; **elders**: older people

# TABLE DECORATIONS

Last week I went to a dinner party. As is usual in my culture, I was going to take along a bottle of wine. However, the host, Olivia, told me that she had won a case of wine in a competition so I didn't need to.

But I wanted to contribute something and I decided to be creative. I would make a table decoration.

I went online to get some ideas - Pinterest is fabulous for this. I then hunted around my house for things I could use.

I found an old **mason jar** in our garden shed. I remembered I had a collection of **pebbles** from a beach holiday and unearthed them from the cellar. I discovered some old **string** in a box. I noticed my neighbour had thrown out a dried flower arrangement.

Armed with my **bits and bobs**, I cleaned up the mason jar, washed the pebbles, freshened up the old string and dried flowers. I then arranged them all in the mason jar. It looked fabulous and Olivia was very impressed.

Next time I am going to make candles.



**mason jar**: a glass jar with a metal lid often used for storing food;  
**pebbles**: small, smooth stones; **string**: strong thread used to tie things;  
**bits and bobs**: small things of different types

# TABLE DECORATIONS

## HOW TO MAKE CANDLES



### Ingredients

wax - **wick** - a **heat-proof container** - **fragrance** (optional) -  
colour - optional - **skewers** or sticks to hold wick in place

- Heat the wax in a pot until **melted**
- Add colour and fragrance to the wax
- Position the wick into your heat-proof container  
(you can tie the end of the wick onto a skewer and place over the container to keep the wick in place)
- Pour the hot wax into your container
- Let the wax cool
- Cut the wick to the size you want



**wick**: the string inside a candle that burns; a **heat-proof container**: a container that does not break or burn in high heat; **fragrance**: a pleasant smell; **skewers**: long, thin sticks used to hold piece of food together; **melted**: became liquid because of heat

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At the time of publishing you can find her website at [www.jg-english.com](http://www.jg-english.com)

Also by Joanne Glen

All About Food B2  
Tommy T's English Tense Training  
Test your English Tenses  
A Tale of the English Tenses  
A Tale of the English Tenses: The Workbook  
The Big English Tense Check  
Perfect your English Tenses  
Transform your Business Emails

