Guideline Series

Social Customs and Traditions of the Navy

NAVAL SERVICES FAMILYLINE

A Mentoring LifeLine Since 1965

Naval Services FamilyLine

Our mission is to empower our sea service families to meet the challenges of a military lifestyle with Education, Resources, and Mentoring.

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Naval Services FamilyLine is a volunteer, non-profit organization founded in 1965 by Navy wives who recognized the value of an engaged and informed Navy family. Their aim was to provide resources and mentoring to increase every spouse's understanding of the Navy's mission. These Navy wives had the foresight to see the need for spouse and family support and they provided the groundwork for what has developed into a relied upon worldwide information and support network.

Formerly known as the Navy Wifeline Association, the Naval Services FamilyLine name was adopted in September 1999 to reflect the changing face of today's sea services.

The founding spouses established an office at the Washington Navy Yard and published a quarterly newspaper, providing information and assistance to spouses who were moving overseas. Today, utilizing a variety of methods and resources, the organization provides information and spouse mentorship on topics as widely varying as emergency preparedness to naval customs and traditions. From convenient printed publications to week long courses for the spouses of active duty leadership, their goal is a successful Navy family.

With the support of Navy leadership world-wide, along with financial backing from the Navy League, spouse clubs, Navy family advocates, corporations, and dedicated individuals, Naval Services FamilyLine has continued to grow and flourish.

FamilyLine is a non-profit 501 (c) (3) organization.

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Social Customs and Traditions of the Navy

WELCOME ABOARD!

This book has been written as a guide to social customs and traditions that are distinct to the United States Navy. It also contains information on the protocol and etiquette of everyday social life as it is generally observed today. We have tried to answer some of the "whys" and the "whats," so that you will be comfortable in a variety of social and military situations and be able to adapt to the variations of these customs. The particular protocols, customs, and traditions discussed here are especially important because of the nature of naval careers.

As part of the sea service community, your life will hold many rewarding experiences for you. Some will challenge all your abilities and some your sense of humor. You will find that you become as close to military friends as you are to your own family.

You will most likely be making your home in many places, including foreign countries, and will want to have some idea of what to do and what to expect. The social customs of the other uniformed services (and some foreign nations) are similar to our own Navy customs. So, wherever you go, you will find military friends and a way of life with which you are familiar. If some things are different, or you are living in a foreign country, once you have your "sea legs," you will easily adapt. Additionally, in most Fleet and Family Support Centers(or similar organizations) will be able to assist you in learning about and adjusting to the culture of your host country.

While rules of etiquette are important to follow, always keep in mind that no rules will replace a warm heart, a friendly smile, and the sincere desire to share in the fellowship and camaraderie of the sea services.

Sea service traditions and customs have changed over the years and vary from time to time and from place to place. You will not find every custom and tradition described here practiced in exactly the same way at every duty station or within every command. However, in one form or another, they are widely practiced. We hope the information provided in this Guideline will be helpful during your association with the military—and as you go through life.

"I can imagine no more rewarding a career. And any man who may be asked in this century what he did to make his life worthwhile, I think can respond with a good deal of pride and satisfaction: 'I served in the United States Navy.'"
President John F. Kennedy, 1 August 1963

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NAVY PROTOCOL & ETIQUETTE

SHIPBOARD ETIQUETTE

Navy families will have opportunities to go aboard ships during their service member's active duty life. Always remember that it is a privilege to be invited. Whether your opportunities to visit the ship or unit are many or few, we hope you enjoy them all, for they are a very special part of your military life.

Going Aboard Ship

When boarding a ship from the pier, you will use a walkway called a brow. Sometimes a ship is anchored offshore, in which case you will come aboard from a small boat via an accommodation ladder. For safety reasons, it is suggested that the guest precede the service member up and follow him/her down. When you step aboard the ship, you may face the American flag and pause, then quickly move aside so the next person may board. (When leaving, you may face the flag and pause before departing the ship.)

When you accept an invitation to go aboard, be prompt and considerate of those for whom the ship is "home." One should never go aboard for any occasion without an invitation. This is true even when the ship is returning from a long cruise.

Piping Over the Side

A dignitary boarding or leaving a ship on an official visit passes through a line of sailors, called sideboys, accompanied by the shrill whistle of the boatswain's (bosun's) pipe. Years ago, the sideboys hoisted the dignitary aboard ship by pulling the line connected to the bosun's chair in which he sat. Since senior officers tended to be heavier, more sideboys were needed to lift a senior admiral "over the side" of the ship. Hence, today, the higher the rank of the visitor, the greater the number of sideboys.

What to Wear Aboard Ship

Give careful thought to dressing to go on board. You will be doing a lot of walking as you tour the ship and will be going up and down ladders. Low-heeled shoes are recommended, even for changes of command and receptions. Rubber-soled, closed-toed shoes are appropriate. Dresses and skirts are not recommended, except for specific ceremonies where you will not be climbing ladders. For safety reasons, it is also best not to wear loose fitting attire.

For an informal visit or a cruise, you may wear pants or nice capris. Short shorts, halter tops, crop-tops, and flip-flops are never appropriate. There can be a wide variation in temperatures between the decks and enclosed spaces, so consider bringing an extra sweater or jacket. It is helpful for guest to carry a purse with a shoulder strap so hands will be free for climbing up and down ladders.

Visiting Your Service Member On Board Ship
The ship is not only the workplace of the whole crew, but it is also the home of the crew members. On occasion, however, you may be invited to visit the ship for dinner when your service member has duty or for other occasions. Similarly, if your service member has work spaces located at a facility on shore, you may be invited to visit. This same basic advice applies in all instances when visiting your service member at work.

- It is important to arrive on time.
- After dinner, there may be a movie to which you will be invited.
- It is never appropriate to visit berthing spaces.
- Some spaces are classified and are "off-limits" to visitors.
- Some areas are "off-limits" due to safety concerns.
- Do not overstay your welcome. Remember your service member and others are there doing a job.
- Since the guest of one member is considered the guest of all, exercise your visiting privileges seldom, rather than often. You will then be warmly welcomed.

Family Day Cruises
Sometimes ships schedule cruises for family members called Family Day cruises. They are usually scheduled prior to a deployment, but can be held at any time.

Families of the crew are invited for a day of steaming off the coast. Age and health requirements are provided by the command. The ship may go through some of her operating procedures to give you an idea of what life on board is like. Family and friends get to see where their service member works, eats, sleeps, and relaxes. It is all noisier, more crowded, and more impressive than you could have imagined. For these reasons, and because it is fun and interesting, try to accept invitations to visit.

Sailors are good hosts and the cruise will be well organized. You will be informed of what you can and cannot do and where you can and cannot go. Due to safety precautions, some areas may be "off limits." You should always have a military escort when on board. Feel free to ask any questions you wish. The main purpose of the cruise is to learn about the ship and your service member's life on board.

Tiger Cruise
A Tiger Cruise is an opportunity for family and friends to have an up-close perspective of what the Navy, and their Sailors, do on a day-to-day basis. These family and friends embarkment events generally take place while the ship is transiting home following a deployment. Participants, or "Tigers," will embark while the ship is in its last port before returning to its home port. When a Tiger Cruise is planned, the ship will issue information about the necessary requirements to be shared with family and friends. A Tiger Cruise includes many activities such as a movie and popcorn night, videos and board games, air power and/or sea power demonstrations, ice cream socials, and tours of work areas and barracks.

FLAG PROTOCOL

During the ceremony of hoisting or lowering the flag or when the flag is passing in a parade or in review, all persons present in uniform render the military salute. Members of the armed forces and veterans who are present, but not in uniform, may also render the military salute. All other persons present should face the flag and stand at attention with the right hand over the heart. Citizens of other countries present should stand at attention. All such conduct toward the flag in a moving column should be rendered at the moment the flag passes. During honor ceremonies, respect is shown to flags of other countries with a salute by those in uniform. All others should stand at attention.

Colors

When driving a car on a military installation and "Colors" (when the national flag is hoisted in the morning or lowered at sunset) is sounded, stop the vehicle, if safe to do so, and wait until the ceremony has been completed. If walking, stop, turn toward the flag and stand at attention with your right hand over your heart. All persons in uniform, stop walking, turn toward the flag and render the military salute. NOTE: The other services carry out similar flag honors.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG

"I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America,
and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God,
indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

The Pledge of Allegiance should be rendered by standing at attention facing the flag with your right hand over your heart. When not in uniform, men should remove their hat with their right hand and hold it at the left shoulder, the right hand being over the heart. Persons in uniform should remain silent, face the flag, and render the military salute.

NATIONAL ANTHEM PROTOCOL

When the flag is displayed during the playing of the Star-Spangled Banner, all present, except those in uniform, should stand at attention facing the flag with their right hand over the heart. Men not in uniform should remove their hat with their right hand and hold it at the left shoulder, the right hand being over the heart. Alternatively, service members not in uniform and veterans may choose to salute. (Per 2008 and 2009 National Defense Authorization Acts.) Persons in uniform stand at attention and render the military salute at the first note of the anthem and hold their salute until the last note is played.

When the flag is not displayed, those present should face the music and act in the same manner they would if the flag were displayed. The same marks of respect prescribed during the playing of the national anthem should be shown during the playing of a foreign national anthem.

The Star Spangled Banner

O say can you see, by the dawn's early light,
What so proudly we hailed at the twilight's last gleaming,
Whose broad stripes and bright stars through the perilous fight,
O'er the ramparts we watched, were so gallantly streaming?
And the rockets' red glare, the bombs bursting in air,
Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there;
O say does that star-spangled banner yet wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?

-Francis Scott Key

SERVICE SONG ETIQUETTE

It is customary for the service member to stand when his/her service song is played. Family members may also rise. On some occasions, all service members may stand during the playing of all service songs. Take your cue from those around you.

The service songs are:

Army—*The Army Goes Rolling Along*
Marine Corps—*Marines' Hymn*
Navy—*Anchors Aweigh*
Air Force—*The U.S. Air Force*
Coast Guard—*Semper Paratus*

It is a good idea to familiarize yourself with Anchors Aweigh and the Navy Hymn, as they will be often sung at various events.

ANCHORS AWEIGH

"Anchors Aweigh" is often misspelled as "Anchors Away" and misunderstood to mean "drop anchor." The word "weigh" in this sense comes from the archaic word meaning to heave, hoist, or raise. "Aweigh" means that the action has been completed. The phrase "anchor's aweigh" is a report that the anchors are clear of the sea bottom and, therefore, the ship is officially underway.

In 1906, Lieutenant Zimmermann, the Naval Academy Bandmaster, and Midshipman First Class Alfred Hart Miles set out to create "a piece of music that would be inspiring, one with a swing to it so it could be used as a football marching song, and one that would live forever."

In 1906, Lieutenant Zimmermann composed the music and Midshipman Miles set the title and wrote the two first stanzas in November 1906. This march was played by the band and sung by the brigade at the 1906 Army-Navy football game later that month, and for the first time in several seasons, Navy won. This march, "Anchors Aweigh," was dedicated to the Academy Class of 1907 and adopted as the official song of the U.S. Navy.

In 1997 MCPON John Hagen, USN (Ret), revised the lyrics to "promote new respect for the Navy's official song." This is the version sung today.

Stand Navy out to sea,
Fight our battle cry;
We'll never change our course,
So vicious foe steer shy-y-y-y.
Roll out the TNT,
Anchors Aweigh.
Sail on to victory
And sink their bones to Davy Jones, hooray!

Anchors Aweigh, my boys,
Anchors Aweigh.
Farewell to foreign shores,
We sail at break of day-ay-ay-ay.
Through our last night ashore,
Drink to the foam,
Until we meet once more.
Here's wishing you a happy voyage home.

Blue of the mighty deep:
Gold of God's great sun.
Let these our colors be
Till all of time be done, done, done, done.
On seven seas we learn Navy's stern call:
Faith, courage, service true, With honor over,
Honor over all.

ETERNAL FATHER, STRONG TO SAVE
THE NAVY HYMN

Lyrics by William Whiting of Winchester(1860)

Eternal Father, strong to save,
Whose arm hath bound the restless wave,
Who bidd'st the mighty ocean deep
Its own appointed limits keep,
O hear us when we cry to thee
For those in peril on the sea!

O Christ! Whose voice the waters heard
And hushed their raging at thy word,
Who walkedst on the foaming deep,
And calm amidst its rage didst sleep,
O hear us when we cry to thee,
For those in peril on the sea!

Most Holy Spirit! Who didst brood
Upon the chaos dark and rude,
And bid its angry tumult cease,
And give, for wild confusion, peace,
O hear us when we cry to thee
For those in peril on the sea!

Eternal Father, grant, we pray,
To all Marines, both night and day,
The courage, honor, strength, and skill
Their land to serve, thy law fulfill;
Be thou the shield forevermore
From every peril to the Corps. (J. E. Seim,1966)

Lord, guard and guide the ones who fly
Through the great spaces in the sky.
Be with them always in the air,
In darkening storms or sunlight fair.
Oh, hear us when we lift our prayer,
For those in peril in the air! (Mary C. D. Hamilton, 1915)

FLAGS, PENNANTS, AND CUSTOMS CHART

The flag and the national anthem are symbols of our nation. Honoring our national symbols is a duty for members of the Armed forces and all American citizens.

WHEN TO SALUTE				
	INDOORS		OUTDOORS	
	Civilian Attire	In Uniform	Civilian Attire	In Uniform
Flag During ceremony of hoisting or lowering flag, position of colors or when flag passes by in parade or review.	Stand at attention (3)	Stand at attention salute (1) (3)	Salute (2) (3) (4)	Salute (3) (4)
National Anthem When flag is NOT displayed, face toward music	Stand at attention (3)	Stand at attention salute (1) (3)	Stand at attention (3)	Salute (1)
National Anthem When flag is displayed, face the flag	Stand at attention (3)	Stand at attention (1) (3)	Salute (1) (2) (3)	Salute (1) (3)
Pledge of Allegiance While reciting the Pledge of Allegiance	Salute (2)	Salute	Salute (2) (3)	Salute (3)

(1) Salute is rendered at first note of music and held until last note.
(2) Proper form of salute when in civilian attire: MEN—Remove hats and hold at left shoulder with right hand over heart; without hats, place right hand, palm open, over heart. WOMEN—Place right hand, palm open, over heart.
(3) When in athletic clothing, face flag or music, remove hats or caps, and stand at attention. Hand salute is not rendered.
(4) Salute is rendered when flag is six paces from viewer and held until it has passed six paces beyond.
5) Members of the Navy do not, as a rule, remain covered indoors, unless "under arms" (carry a weapon). A ceremony or formation may require service members to remain covered throughout the proceeding or for the purpose of rendering proper salutes and honors.

*NOTE: No salute is rendered indoors or outdoors during playing or singing of "America." During a foreign national anthem, the same marks of respect prescribed for the US National Anthem should be shown. For salutes during the US National Anthem, see "National Anthem Etiquette."

Foreign nationals should stand at attention.

CUSTOMS AND TRADITIONS

THE LONE SAILOR TABLE (POW/MIA)

The small table at the front of the mess has been placed there to honor our POW/MIAs. The items on the table represent various aspects of the courageous men and women still missing. The table can be set for one or four - Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force -- with or without hats.

The table is smaller than the others symbolizing the frailty of one prisoner alone against their oppressors.

The white tablecloth represents the purity of their response to our country's call to arms.

The empty chair depicts an unknown face, representing no specific Soldier, Sailor, Marine or Airman, but all who are not here with us.

The table is round to show that our concern for them is never ending.

The Bible represents faith in a higher power and the pledge to our country, founded as one nation under God.

The black napkin stands for the emptiness these warriors have left in the hearts of their families and friends.

The single red rose reminds us of their families and loved ones; and the red ribbon represents the love of our country, which inspired them to answer the nation's call.

The yellow candle and its yellow ribbon symbolize the everlasting hope for a joyous reunion with those yet unaccounted for.

The slices of lemon on the bread plate reminds us of their bitter fate.

The salt upon the bread plate represents the tears of their families.

The wine glass turned upside down reminds us that our distinguished comrades cannot be with us to drink a toast or join in the festivities this evening.

from "Social Usage and Protocol Handbook, OPNAVINST 1710.7A"

TWENTY-ONE GUN SALUTE

In early times, it was customary for a ship entering a friendly port to discharge its cannon to demonstrate that they were unloaded. This tradition of discharging a ship's weapons has evolved to show honor rather than subservience or a state of readiness.

Today, the national salute of 21 guns is fired in honor of a national flag, the sovereign or chief of state of a foreign nation, a member of a reigning royal family, and the President, ex-President, or President-elect of the United States. It is also fired at noon on the day of the funeral of a President, ex-President, or President-elect, on Washington's Birthday, Presidents Day, the Fourth of July, and Memorial Day.

At military funerals, one often sees three volleys of shots fired in honor of the deceased veteran. This is often mistaken by the laymen as a 21-gun salute. The three volleys come from an old battlefield custom. The two warring sides would cease hostilities to clear the dead from the battlefield, and the firing of three volleys meant that the dead had been properly cared for and the side was ready to resume the battle.

THE SALUTE

The origins of the military salute is unknown. It is speculated that it originates from a gesture used by Roman citizens when they wanted to see public figures. Because assassinations were common, they would approach with their right hand raised to show they did not hold a weapon. Another theory is that it evolved from medieval knights in armor who raised their visors with their right hand when meeting a comrade. In both cases, the right hand, the weapon hand, was raised as a greeting of friendship. Over time the salute became a way of showing respect, sometimes involving the removal of the hat. During the early nineteenth-century, the motion was modified to touching the hat and has since become the hand salute used today.

MISSING MAN FORMATION

The origins of the missing man formation are obscure, but it is believed to date back to World War I and the Royal Air Force. The missing man formation is an aerial salute performed as part of a fly-by at a funeral or memorial event, typically in memory of a fallen aviator, well-known service member, or veteran. Generally the fly-by has two to four planes and one of them breaks away to signify the loss of a comrade.

PLAYING OF TAPS

A commonly known, 24 note, military bugle call, taps was officially to be played at military funerals, by Army regulation, beginning in 1891. Today, it is played at military funerals, wreath-layings, and memorial services. It is also played at the end of the day.

MILITARY CHALLENGE COIN

Coins can represent anything from a small unit to the offices of top leaders. They are also designed to commemorate special events and anniversaries. These coins are exchanged and proudly displayed. Official records do not include the history behind the start of the coin tradition and there are many oral traditions.

One of the most popular stories dates back to WWI and states that a wealthy lieutenant of the new US Army Air Service, who wanted to give each member of his unit a memento, ordered several coin-sized, bronze medallions. He wore his own medallion in a leather pouch around his neck. After being shot down and captured, he escaped, and used the medallion to identify himself as an American service member, and was spared execution.

There is a Vietnam era origin story indicating that a bar required anyone without "proof" of having been in combat to buy a round of drinks for the bar. The "proof" evolved to become a coin-sized item with unit insignia. Another story from the 1960s states that a special forces group had old coins over-stamped with an emblem and gave them to unit members. Whatever the origin, the tradition became universally popular in the mid-1980s. Today challenge coins are collected and often kept on displayed in an office or home study.

SWORD ARCH

While not officially recorded, many service members elect to have a military wedding. Part of the pageantry may include the sword arch following the ceremony, which is a symbolic pledge of loyalty to the newly wedded couple. (Commissioned and warrant officers are authorized to carry a sword and non-commissioned officers may carry a cutlass.) On the way out, following the ceremony, the bride and groom walk through an arch of swords held aloft by fellow, uniformed service members. At each set of swords, the swords are lowered and the couple must kiss to pass. After the last kiss, the new spouse is tapped on the backside with a sword and welcomed to the Navy.

Cell Phone Etiquette

Please turn cell phones off or to vibrate mode when attending a military social function or ceremony so as to not create an unwanted distraction.

CEREMONIES

Most traditions observed by the United States Navy today have their origins in early history. Many were borrowed in colonial times from the British Royal Navy. Many early customs have gradually become established traditions.

SHIP / BOAT KEEL-LAYING

This ceremony is conducted by shipyard officials. The program includes suitable remarks by shipyard officials and invited dignitaries. Then the announcement is made: "The keel has been truly and fairly laid." A reception usually follows.

SHIP / BOAT CHRISTENING OR LAUNCHING

This is the ceremony at which the ship is given her name and committed to the sea. The program is conducted by the shipbuilder. A ship has a sponsor, always a female, who breaks a bottle of champagne, symbolic of the water from the seven seas, across the bow and says, "I christen thee (name of ship)!" At that moment, the dock hands knock away the last supports, and the ship glides down the ways to her true home, the sea. The designation of United States Ship (USS) is not used with the name at this point because she has not yet been commissioned into naval service.

Society of Sponsors

Beginning in 1907, The Society of Sponsors is made up of the women who have been given the honor of christening a ship. There are approximately 340 active members of this distinguished organization.

SHIP / BOAT COMMISSIONING

Occurring after her sea trials, commissioning is the most important ceremony in the history of the ship. On this occasion, the very first crew members become "plankowners." The program includes remarks by distinguished guests and the reading of orders placing the ship in commission in the U.S. Navy. Upon commissioning, the ship is called USS (ship name) and flies her commissioning pennant.

SHIP / BOAT DECOMMISSIONING

This ceremony marks the end of active service of a ship. Although it is generally a somber and less elaborate occasion, the illustrious history of the ship is highlighted to guests. Often, the previous commanding officers of the ship are in attendance and may take part in the proceedings. The ship is retired when her commissioning pennant is hauled down and her crew departs for the last time.

CHANGE OF COMMAND

When a British officer received orders to command, he traveled to his new ship, boarded, called the crew together, read his orders and took command. Today's ceremony is basically the same. Before the assembled crew (and guests), the Commanding Officer (CO) and prospective CO read their orders so all will know that the chain of authority and responsibility has passed unbroken to the new commander.

It is a privilege to receive an invitation to these ceremonies, and you should accept if possible. Be on time. Plan to be seated 15 minutes prior to the scheduled start of the ceremony. You will be given a program and shown to a seat. The master of ceremonies, usually the Executive Officer (XO), conducting the ceremony will indicate when to sit and stand. A reception often follows the ceremony.

What to Wear to a Change of Command

The prescribed uniform of the day and equivalent civilian attire will be noted on the invitation. Typically, a tailored dress or suit for ladies and a coat and tie for gentlemen is appropriate for the ceremony (business attire). Invited guests should dress for the weather if the ceremony is outside and note any special attire required for the location (such as aboard ship).

CHANGE OF OFFICE

A change of office ceremony is held to recognize the unique leadership position held by leaders who do not hold "command." These leaders include the Command Master Chief (CMC), the Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy (MCPON), members of the Chaplain Corps, Nurse Corps, and Judge Advocate General Corps (JAGC), the Chief of Information (CHINFO), and others. It is a privilege to get an invitation to these special occasions and you should accept when possible. Type of attire and punctuality are the same as for a change of command.

OFFICER COMMISSIONING

A formal ceremony where new officers are administered the Oath of Office by a commissioned officer. These are often group ceremonies as an entire class is commissioned. They may host a private celebration to mark the occasion.

LDO AND CWO COMMISSIONING

Some officers who advance out of the enlisted ranks are designated as Limited Duty Officers (LDO) or Chief Warrant Officers (CWO). This is a unique achievement and the transition to the officer ranks is recognized in a special officer commissioning and promotion ceremony.

CHIEF PETTY OFFICER PINNING

The promotion from Petty Officer First Class (E6) to Chief Petty Officer (E7) marks a significant change in a Sailor's professional life. This promotion brings more than just a promotion in rank, it also includes substantial increases in responsibility, authority, and prestige which is unique to the Navy.

The pinning ceremony is traditionally held on September 16th, unless otherwise directed by the MCPON. This ceremony is a time-honored event where the CO and CMC muster the crew to witness as new chiefs receive their anchors and covers. Please see NSFL *Guidelines for the Spouses of Chief Petty Officers* for more information.

BOOT CAMP GRADUATION

A ceremony celebrating the completion of initial enlisted training and advancement to more specialized training or to the fleet.

POST ACCESSION SPECIALTY TRAINING GRADUATION

After graduation from boot camp or following a commissioning, Sailors go on to schools that provide more specialized training for their future roles in the Navy. Upon completion of these schools, a graduation is held. These ceremonies vary by community, but are open to family and friends by invitation.

RE-ENLISTMENT

When an enlisted service member's contract ends, they are able to re-enlist for another term. The ceremony is administered by an officer, who gives the Oath of Enlistment. Service members often host special celebrations to mark the occasion.

RANK PROMOTION

Promotions or advancement of officer or enlisted service members are celebrated within the command. This includes frocking, which is the practice of a commissioned or noncommissioned officer selected for promotion wearing insignia of the higher grade before the official date of promotion (the "date of rank"). An officer who has been selected for promotion may be authorized to "frock" to the next grade. Service member often have family members pin on their new rank insignia. They may also host private celebrations or wetting downs.

RETIREMENT

A retirement ceremony is a special occasion marking the end of a service member's 20 years or more of active military duty and service to the United States. The program often includes remarks by distinguished guests, honors, and gifts to the retiring service member, and the reading of retirement orders. A reception often follows the ceremony.

SOCIAL FUNCTIONS AND TRADITIONS

RECEPTIONS

A reception is a party given in honor of a special guest(s) or occasion. Generally, a reception is two hours. Arrive on time.

What to Wear to a Reception

The attire for a reception should be specified on the invitation. Attire can range from informal to formal depending upon the time of day and geographic location. If in doubt, call the office responsible for the reception. Refer to "Attire Guidelines" for additional information.

The Receiving Line

Many receptions begin with a receiving line. It will consist of the guest(s) of honor, the host and hostess, and an aide. While receiving lines are more common overseas, it is important to understand the etiquette. The order of the persons in the receiving line may vary with the type of occasion and desires of the hosting official, but traditionally a woman is never the last person in the line.

When you arrive, tell the aide, who is first in line, your name. It is not necessary to shake hands with the aide. The service member usually proceeds through the line followed by his/her spouse. As you go through the line, if no one is behind you, a moment of conversation is permissible. If it is necessary to keep moving, a short comment such as "I'm happy to meet you," or "It's nice to see you again," will be sufficient. You are then free to join the other guests. If there are many people waiting to go through the line, you may get some refreshments and wait until the line shortens.

Remember, dispose of any food, drink, or tobacco/vaping products before getting in line. Do not offer gifts in the receiving line as there is no place to put them. Also, photos should not be taken in the line unless the host has a professional or official photographer.

When the Reception is Over

When the reception is over, find your host and hostess and convey your thanks. If there are many people surrounding them and you must leave, it is acceptable to forego this farewell. Make an effort to leave at designated time.

Even though it is generally not necessary to write a thank-you note for large official functions such as a reception, it is always a thoughtful and appreciated gesture.

WETTING-DOWN PARTIES

This is a party an individual gives when he/she receives a promotion or advancement.

The Origin of the Wetting-Down Party

The custom was to pour a drink over the new stripe, thus wetting it down and making it blend with the older, and presumably more tarnished, stripes. Since it was a celebration, the Sailor would also offer his shipmates a drink. Traditionally, the celebration was held on the first payday after the promotion or advancement or at the first liberty port. The invited guests consisted solely of shipmates.

Today's Custom

Tarnished braid was once considered the salty hallmark of a seagoing man. Today, the newly promoted or advanced individual almost always orders a completely new set of stripes for his/her uniform. Also, the celebration may be held at a later time, although timeliness is considered important. The guest list frequently includes spouses, dates, coworkers and other friends. The celebration can be held in someone's home, the club, or anywhere the individual(s) wishes to hold it. Often, several people celebrating new promotions or advancements join together as hosts.

ALL HANDS EVENTS

Once or twice a year, a social event may be planned called an All Hands Party. The event might be as casual as a picnic or cookout or as formal as a dinner with dancing. All Hands Parties include everyone in the unit or command and their guests. It is an opportune time to meet the spouses of the active duty members of the unit or command.

When attending a party, make every effort to introduce yourself to everyone. Junior people should seek out senior ones and introduce themselves. This may seem awkward at first, but the gesture will be greatly appreciated.

DINING-IN AND DINING-OUT

Dining-In

Periodically, Navy officers and chief petty officers of a unit, command, or several commands may conduct a Dining-In. This is a formal military dinner. The attendees wear their dress uniforms and observe a great deal of protocol. A ritual of toasting and speeches are the main feature of the dinner which consists of elegant foods and wines. For all its formality, Dining-Ins are usually festive affairs. Only military personnel attend a Dining-In.

Dining-Out

Dining-Outs are a similar type of affair to the Dining-In with formal attire required; however, at a Dining-Out, spouses and dates are included.

NAVY BIRTHDAY BALL

The traditional Navy Birthday Ball is usually a formal dinner dance held in October to commemorate the establishment of the U.S. Navy, October 13, 1775. Traditionally, the oldest and the youngest service members in attendance are announced and asked to cut the birthday cake.

In addition to the official birthday ball, many of the Navy Corps communities hold celebratory balls including, the Civil Engineer Corps' Seabee Ball, the Medical Corps' Oakleaf Ball, and the Supply Corps Birthday Ball. Other communities will also hold Birthday Balls each have their own unique atmosphere and are festive celebrations. One of the most festive ones held around the Navy is the Submarine Birthday Ball (Sub Ball).

KHAKI BALL

Traditionally held a few days after the new Chiefs pinning, this ball is an opportunity for the Chiefs Mess to welcome new Chiefs and their spouses into the Chiefs community in a celebratory, formal setting. See the NSFL *Guidelines of the Spouses of Chief Petty Officers* for more information.

HAIL AND FAREWELL

In service life, someone is always arriving or departing. Arrivals and departures are often acknowledged by a social event known as "Hail and Farewell." Hail and Farewell parties are an opportunity both to say good-bye to friends and shipmates and to provide a generous welcome to those arriving.

Fair Winds and Following Seas

This phrase is thought to have originated as two quotes that evolved, by usage, into a single phrase which is often used as a nautical blessing. It is used in commissioning ceremonies, as well as in retirement or decommissioning ceremonies. The phrase is also used when saying farewell to a shipmate. It is meant to wish the ship, crew, or person a safe journey and good fortune.

INVITATIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE

INVITATIONS

Invitations may be sent or received by traditional mail or through electronic invitation.

Sending Out Invitations
When inviting guests to an event, you should include the date, time, location, attire/ appropriate dress, and a map with directions. Be prepared to receive R.S.V.P.s immediately.

Responding to Invitations / R.S.V.P.
An invitation will include date, time, and place of the event. It may also include appropriate dress and a request for a response. If an invitation reads R.S.V.P. (Respondez s'il vous plait) or "please respond." The invitation may also include a date by which your response is required; if so, be sure to make a note of that date and respond no later. It is very important that you answer with your response as quickly as possible, generally within 2-3 days. Although it is impolite to wait until the last minute to respond, failure to respond at all is unacceptable.

If you cannot talk to the hostess directly with your response, you may leave a message on voice mail. If you are uncomfortable with telephoning your response, it is appropriate to answer with a simple written note or by email, if an address is provided for response. It is common to receive electronic invitations via email or other online invitation systems. Respond as directed in the invitation. Also, be sure that you understand the complete details of the invitation. If you have any questions, feel free to ask the host and hostess when you respond.

If you are unsure if you will be able to attend, it is best to call the host or hostess and explain that you have extenuating circumstances that preclude you being able to make a firm decision (e.g., your spouse is on travel, and you cannot verify his or her schedule or you have not yet been able to secure child care.) This allows your hostess to continue the plans for the function without wondering why she has not received your reply to her invitation. It is the option of the hostess to extend you extra time if she can, but it should not be expected on the part of the guest.

To Remind and Save the Date
Because people have busy schedules, it is often important to get the date and time of a function confirmed so that the hosts can formalize the guest list. Telephone invitations followed by a "to remind" card are used for this purpose. Your hosts may instead opt to use a "save the date" card to inform you that a particular event will be held on a specific date. An invitation for the event will follow at a later time.

Regrets Only
Occasionally, you may receive an invitation that reads "regrets only." Respond immediately if you are unable to attend. The hostess will expect everyone who has not responded to attend and will plan accordingly.

Hostess/Host Gifts
When a dinner invitation is offered, a small gift is usually presented to the hostess/host unless the invitation states "no gifts." Examples of appropriate gifts include: flowers, candy, a bottle of wine, or some homemade baked goods for the hosts to enjoy the next day.

Thank You Notes
After an event, a thank you note should be sent immediately. The host/hostess will feel his/her efforts were really appreciated by your prompt response.

FORMAL CORRESPONDENCE

When writing letters, announcements, invitations, thank you notes, etc. to military personnel, it is important to use the correct form of address not only on the envelopes, but also in the note or invitation.

Invitations
There are several ways to write invitations. For example, a formal invitation to a reception is written as follows:

Captain and Mrs. Thomas Wilson Phillips
Request the pleasure of the company of
Commander and Mrs. Smith
at a reception...Etc.

An informal invitation to a dinner might read:

You are cordially invited
to attend
a backyard barbecue
at the home of CAPT and Mrs. John Smith
18 January 2014
1600...Etc.

Addressing Envelopes

- When corresponding with military personnel, an address should include the rate/rank, name, corps (if applicable), and branch of service. Example: *Lieutenant William Wilson, CHC, USN (*See NSFL *Sea Legs* for Rate and Rank Charts*)*
- When addressing correspondence to a couple, only the rate/rank is used. Example: *Lieutenant and Mrs. William Wilson*
- If the couple does not share the same last name, then address correspondence to the couple as "*Lieutenant William Wilson and Ms. Jane Doe*"
- If both spouses are military personnel, letters addressed to the couple should normally place the title and name of the spouse who is being invited in his or her official capacity first. Where both are invited in their official capacity, the senior spouse is listed first. Example:
  Commander Mary Jones, SC, USN
  Lieutenant Commander David Jones, CEC, USN

- If the wife is a service member, she is listed first and then her spouse beneath on military correspondence. Example:
  Commander Mary Johnson, MC, USN
  Dr. David Johnson, M.D.

- In civilian correspondence, the civilian spouse may be written first, but the female service member is still addressed by title on the line below. Example:
  Dr. David Johnson, M.D.
  Commander Mary Johnson, MC, USN

Thank You Notes

A thank you note is addressed to the hostess with the host mentioned in the body of the letter. Example:

Dear Mary,

Jim and I thank you and Tom (or Captain Phillips, if he is senior to the service member) for inviting us to your home for dinner...Etc.

Address the envelope to Mrs. Thomas W. Phillips. If the spouse uses her birth name, then address the envelope using Ms. and her first and last name.

Depending on your relationship with the hostess, you may choose to send a thank you note by email.

INFORMAL CORRESPONDENCE

There are many forms of correspondence and informal, electronic correspondence is most prolific. However, there is still some basic etiquette and security concerns of which to be aware. Three points to always bear in mind are that 1) it is very important to consider your intended and unintended audience, 2) whether intentionally or unintentionally, it is easy to share electronic messages, and 3) in the age of screen shots, nothing is ever really deleted or private.

Email Etiquette

For many, email has replaced more formal, written correspondence, such as letters. However, of all electronic correspondence, emails follow most closely to the model of a traditional letter.

When sending an email:

- Have a clear subject line defining the topic and purpose of the email.
- When composing your message, keep your audience in mind.
- Understand the difference between "CC" (carbon copy) and "BCC" (blind carbon copy) and use them appropriately. Everyone can see and reply to a "CC" email, but only the one, direct recipient, the "BCC," can see that they received a message. And, the "BCC" can only reply to the original sender, not the whole group. However, the "BCC" can see all "non-BCC" recipients. Before sending, make certain that all recipients are the ones you intend.
- Do not send emails when you are emotional or angry and always re-read an email before sending.
- Always proofread your message before sending. You always want to check spelling and use proper grammar and punctuation, but this is especially important in professional or official emails.
- Do not assume the recipient(s) know what you are talking about. Clearly explain your points.
- Do not "Reply All" unless it is necessary. Only reply to those who need to receive your message.
- Keep private / confidential information that way. It is easy for people to inadvertently share an email, so it is best to share this information in person or over the phone.
- Remember that all caps is generally viewed as shouting. Also, do not overuse exclamation points.
- Before sending your email, make certain it has any attachments, web links, or contact information referenced.
- Do not forget to include your signature.
- If sending a professional email, use a professional salutation, closing, and signature.
- Do not expect an immediate response to an email.
- When you receive and email, try to send a response or acknowledgement within 24 hours, even if the message was not intended for you.

Text Messaging Etiquette
Many of the points of email etiquette apply to text messaging. However, text messaging is a more brief and immediate form of communication, often taking the place of phone call.

- As with phone calls, texts are very direct, real-time communication. Be aware of the time you are texting someone. A good rule of thumb is to send messages during business hours or between 9:00 AM and 9:00 PM.
- Be careful when selecting recipients from your phone book. It is easy to select the wrong recipient.
- Consider your audience. A text message is a projection of you and it is important to present yourself in a way you want to be perceived.
- If texting someone who does not have your number, start by stating your name and consider having a signature that attaches at the end of all of your messages.
- Communicate clearly and concisely.
- Respond promptly to messages you receive. Think of texting as a conversation and, if you would reply in a conversation, then you should respond to a text. (For instance, to say thanks.)
- In more professional texts, use symbols and emojis only when necessary.
- Keep texts brief. Use email for longer messages.
- Be patient in waiting for others to respond.
- Do not use a texts to deliver sad or distressing news. Make a phone call or, if possible, deliver the news in person.
- Do not texts anything confidential, private, or potentially embarrassing.
- Remember, texts can be forwarded, copied, and screen shot just like emails and social media.
- Just as with a phone call, you should not text when you are engaged with someone else. If you have to respond to a message, as when you take a call, excuse yourself. (And, if they cannot stop texting while with you, feel free to excuse yourself.)
- Know when to end the text conversation.
- Never text and drive. It can wait.

Social Media Etiquette
Many of the basic rules of emails and texts also apply with social media. Remember, your social media is a reflection of you and is available to all. These sites are public, even if you are extremely vigilant about your settings. Social media is great for networking and staying connected, but it should also be a positive place for you. Your management of your accounts will help you maximize your social media experience.

- **Privacy and Settings**: Be sure to regularly check your settings. You can determine the level of privacy and security for your accounts, but it is a good idea to periodically review them. If you are concerned about privacy, also consider a screen name that does not use your full name.
- **Friending and Unfriending**: Be selective with who you accept or request as a friend. Just because you have a few friends in common does not man you want someone to have access to your personal profile. You can also "hide" people if you do not want to unfriend them, but also do not want to see their status/posts. (And, while it is fine to prune your friends list, you do not need to make an announcement about it.)

- **Following and Unfollowing**: Just because someone follows you, you do not need to follow them. And, it is acceptable to unfollow people when you do not want to see what they are sharing. However, the point of social media is connection and, the broader your online community, the better your experience. This does not mean you should not be selective.
- **Status Updates / Tweets**: Avoid intentionally vague posts, chronic complaining, meaningless calls to action, oversharing, commenting negatively about your employer or command, and posting too frequently. Ask yourself if you really need to share that thought with the world before you post it. Try to keep your social media a positive place. And, do not forget, it is a good idea to check spelling and use punctuation before you post, particularly if you are posting in any professional capacity. Further, keep in mind that, what makes sense in your head, may not read clearly to others.
- **Photos**: Use restraint. You do not need to share all the photos you take. Make sure you do not post inappropriate, revealing, or embarrassing photos of you or, most especially, of anyone else. Once you share a photo, it is forever in the public domain. Tag with care. When you post a picture, do not tag someone without their permission. They can always tag themselves or you can message them first.
- **Dealing with Hurtful Comments**: Unfortunately, you cannot get away from all negativity on social media, but you can manage it. The easiest option is to simply not respond. You do not need to engage. If you do feel you must respond, take some time and consider your response carefully before posting. Remember, you can also work to control the negative comments on pages you manage be deleting inappropriate comments or turn off comments on the post.
- **Blocking:** In most cases, social media platforms allow you to "block" another user. This will prevent them from seeing your posts and tags or having any interaction with you through the platform.

Quick Reminders:

- As with all communication , always be respectful and considerate.
- Do not mix business and pleasure. Use separate accounts.
- Understand the best practices of the platform you are using.
- Know that everything you share is public and forever. Be mindful of what you write/share.
- Do not use screen shots to capture conversations to be shared outside of the intended forum.
- Use caution with photos.
- Be self-centered in small doses.
- Do not misrepresent yourself.
- Do not write/share on social media while under the influence.
- Understand that your sense of humor is not universal.
- Do not be reactive. Think before you respond.
- Do not over use hashtags (#).
- Remember to respond / write-back.
- Never share private or confidential information on social media.

SECURITY IN CORRESPONDENCE

In the age of digital and instant communication, security in correspondence is of very great concern. Security issues can arise in the form of Operations Security (OPSEC), Personal Security (PERSEC), and Cybersecurity. These security concerns are addressed at length in other Naval Services FamilyLine (NSFL) Guidelines. However, as a reminder, you should never share via email, text, social media, or phone any information which may compromise OPSEC, your PERSEC, or cybersecurity. Avoid sharing any information with regard to command or personnel locations, dates, troop/ship movement, personal contact information, etc. And, with all devices possible, consider using a Virtual Private Network (VPN) to provide another layer of security to your correspondence. Remember, while everyone corresponds in a variety of ways, all share the goal of keeping service members and families safe.

CALLS

The Custom of Calls Made and Returned

Some years ago, officers were expected to call on their commanding officer at home, and could expect to receive a return call in their homes. With the passing of the widespread practice of receiving callers at home at a specific time each week, this custom has vanished.

The current custom is for the senior officer in a command to entertain the officers and their spouses at a party or reception. If you should receive such an invitation, by all means try to attend. Often this will provide an opportunity to greet not only newcomers to the command, but also to renew old acquaintances.

The reception may be held at the home of the commander or in another facility. The beginning and ending times of the reception will be indicated. The reception will last one to two hours. Do not remain beyond the ending time of the reception unless specifically asked to do so. When the party is over, thank your hosts for their hospitality.

Your service member will be advised of the appropriate dress for the occasion either on the invitation or by the commander's staff. You can take your cue from his or her dress; or if in doubt, check with another spouse. Thank you notes are always welcome and a hostess gift may be appropriate.

INTRODUCTIONS AND FORMS OF ADDRESS

INTRODUCTIONS

Knowing how to introduce other people is a basic part of good manners. Generally, there are no hard and fast rules for introductions, except in military and diplomatic protocol. Here are some tips and guidelines for introductions and introducing people in various situations. Following these, you will find reference charts for the correct forms of address for officer and enlisted personnel. It is important to be familiar and comfortable with the correct way to introduce and meet people; but remember, a warm, friendly smile is your greatest asset.

Introducing Members of the Military

When you introduce members of the military to someone, introduce them by rank or title. Because they do not address each other by first names professionally, this is especially important when an enlisted person is being introduced to an officer. By giving titles, rates, and ranks you provide the necessary information to both parties.

There are, however, a few exceptions. Chaplain is a proper form of address for military clergy regardless of rank. Military doctors and dentists are addressed as *Dr.* through the rank of commander and then should be addressed by rank.

Do not worry, sometimes it can be difficult when addressing or introducing military personnel. Your intention to do the right thing will be more than sufficient to make up for any slips you may make through inexperience.

Captain: The Rank or the Commanding Officer?

Navy and Coast Guard ranks and rates are different from those of other services. One form of address that you may find confusing is when Navy and Coast Guard members call the commanding officer of a ship "Captain" regardless of the actual rank of that officer. In other words, a commanding officer might be a Lieutenant, but the crew may still address him/her as "Captain." In some commands, the CO is generally called "Skipper" by those in the command or unit.

Introducing Military Spouses

When meeting other military spouses, you should do what comes naturally. A little sensitivity and tact will tell you when it is comfortable and appropriate to be on a first name basis. However, when first introduced to a spouse more senior than yourself, it is best first to address him or her by *Mr.* or *Mrs.* If the spouse asks you to be on a first name basis, then feel free to do so.

In the past, there was a direct connection between a woman's social title and her marital status. Many women still follow that tradition, but others prefer to use *Ms.* whether they are married or not. It is more common today for a married woman not to take her husband's last name, but rather to continue to use her birth name in both business and social situations. In this case, *Ms.* would be the preferred form of address. Remember that the most important thing is to be pleasant and courteous.

Other Practical Tips and Suggestions

When making introductions, the following list of guidelines generally applies in both military and civilian situations:

- A woman who is being introduced to a group extends her hand and greets each person. If the group is large, only those nearest the newcomer should rise and say "Hello" or "Good morning/afternoon/evening."
- A firm handshake should accompany a greeting. Your hand shake should have a firm grip and be confident, it should not be floppy or with a weak wrist.
- But, you should not squeeze the other person's hand hard enough to cause them discomfort.
- If you are sitting, rise to greet someone when you are introduced.
- When two women are introduced, the more senior woman should extend her hand first.
- A junior person is always introduced to a more senior person: "Mrs. Senior, may I present Mrs. Junior" or "Mrs. Senior, this is Mrs. Junior."
- If in doubt about the need to introduce someone you know to someone standing near you, introduce them. If you are worried about who to introduce to whom, just use common sense.
- It is always proper to include the rate or rank of a military person whom you are presenting: "Mrs. Smith, may I present Chief Petty Officer Downs" or "Lieutenant Smith, may I present Mr. Brown."
- When greeting persons you have met in the past but whom you do not see often, reintroduce yourself as you greet them. This puts people at ease in case they do not remember your name. Also, by stating your name, they will be cued to say their name, too, in case you have forgotten as well.
- As a final suggestion, in addition to rate, rank, or title, it is also helpful to include information about the person in the introduction. Examples: "This is CDR Smith, my CO" or "This is Mrs. Smith, my CO's wife and our hostess" or "This is John, my office mate" or "This is Sally. She works/volunteers with X organization." The brief comment about the person you are introducing helps to provide context about them, puts people at ease, and allows others to find common ground.

PROPER FORMS OF ADDRESS FOR U.S. NAVY OFFICER PERSONNEL

Position	Official Envelope	Social Envelope	Invitation	Place Card	Salutation	Close	Introduction	Conversation
Admiral	Admiral James D. Lee, U.S. Navy Position/Title	Admiral and Mrs. James D. Lee	Admiral and Mrs. Lee	Admiral Lee Mrs. Lee	Dear Admiral Lee,	The closing for all is "Sincerely Yours,"	Admiral Lee	Admiral Lee
Vice Admiral	Vice Admiral James D. Lee, U.S. Navy Position/Title	Vice Admiral and Mrs. James D. Lee	Vice Admiral and Mrs. Lee	Vice Admiral Lee Mrs. Lee	Dear Admiral Lee,		Vice Admiral Lee	Admiral Lee
Rear Admiral	Rear Admiral Mary Lee, U.S. Navy Position/Title	Rear Admiral Mary Lee and Dr. John Kay	Rear Admiral Lee and Dr. Kay	Rear Admiral Lee Dr. Kay	Dear Admiral Lee,		Rear Admiral Lee	Admiral Lee
Captain	Captain Mary Lee, U.S. Navy	Captain Mary Lee and Mr. John Lee	Captain Lee and Mr. Lee	Captain Lee Mr. Lee	Dear Captain Lee,		Captain Lee	Captain Lee
Commander	Commander James D. Lee, U.S. Navy	Commander and Mrs. James D. Lee	Commander and Mrs. Lee	Commander Lee Mrs. Lee	Dear Commander Lee,		Commander Lee	Commander Lee
Lieutenant Commander	Lieutenant Commander James D. Lee, U.S. Navy	Lieutenant Commander and Mrs. James D. Lee	Lieutenant Commander and Mrs. Lee	Lieutenant Com- mander Lee Mrs. Lee	Dear Commander Lee,		Lieutenant Commander Lee	Commander Lee
Lieutenant	Lieutenant Mary Lee, U.S. Navy	Lieutenant Mary Lee and Mr. John Lee	Lieutenant Lee and Mr. Lee	Lieutenant Lee Mr. Lee	Dear Lieutenant Lee,		Lieutenant Lee	Lieutenant Lee
Lieutenant junior grade	Lieutenant, junior grade Mary Lee, U.S. Navy	Lieutenant junior grade Mary Lee	Lieutenant, junior grade Lee	Lieutenant, junior grade Lee*	Dear Lieutenant Lee,		Lieutenant, junior grade Lee	Lieutenant Lee
Ensign	Ensign James D. Lee, U.S. Navy	Ensign James D. Lee	Ensign Lee	Ensign Lee*	Dear Ensign Lee,		Ensign Lee	Ensign Lee
Chief Warrant Officer	Chief Warrant Officer James D. Lee, U.S. Navy	Chief Warrant Officer and Mrs. James D. Lee	Chief Warrant Officer and Mrs. Lee	Chief Warrant Officer Lee Mrs. Lee	Dear Chief Warrant Officer Lee,		Chief Warrant Officer Lee	Mr. Lee or Chief Warrant Officer Lee

** Guest of the service member: Mr. or Ms. Last Name*

PROPER FORMS OF ADDRESS FOR U.S. NAVY ENLISTED PERSONNEL

Position	Official Envelope	Social Envelope	Invitation	Place Card	Salutation	Close	Introduction	Conversation
Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy	Master Chief Petty Officer Karl Lee Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy, U.S. Navy	Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy and Mrs. Karl Lee	Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy and Mrs. Lee	Master Chief Petty Officer Lee Mrs. Lee	Dear Master Chief Lee,	The closing for all is "Sincerely Yours,"	Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy Lee	Master Chief Lee
Command Master Chief	Command Master Chief Petty Officer Karl Lee, U.S. Navy	Command Master Chief Petty Officer and Mrs. Karl Lee	Command Master Chief Petty Officer and Mrs. Lee	Command Master Chief Petty Officer Lee Mrs. Lee	Dear Master Chief Lee,		Command Master Chief Petty Officer Lee	Master Chief Lee
Fleet Master Chief, Force Master Chief, or Master Chief Petty Officer	Master Chief Petty Officer Gail Lee, U.S. Navy	Master Chief Petty Officer Gail Lee and Mr. Jack Lee	Master Chief Petty Officer and Mrs. Lee	Master Chief Petty Officer Lee Mrs. Lee	Dear Master Chief Lee,		Master Chief Petty Officer Lee	Master Chief Lee
Senior Chief Petty Officer	Senior Chief Petty Officer Karl Lee, U.S. Navy	Senior Chief Petty Officer and Mrs. Karl Lee	Senior Chief Petty Officer and Mrs. Lee	Senior Chief Petty Officer Lee Mrs. Lee	Dear Senior Chief Lee,		Senior Chief Petty Officer Lee	Senior Chief Lee
Chief Petty Officer	Chief Petty Officer Karl Lee, U.S. Navy	Chief Petty Officer and Mrs. Karl Lee	Chief Petty Officer and Mrs. Lee	Chief Petty Officer Lee Mrs. Lee	Dear Chief Lee,		Chief Petty Officer Lee	Chief Lee
Petty Officer First Class, Second Class, or Third Class	Petty Officer First Class Gail Lee, U.S. Navy	Petty Officer First Class Gail Lee	Petty Officer First Class Lee	Petty Officer First Class Lee*	Dear Petty Officer Lee,		Petty Officer First Class Lee	Petty Officer Lee
Seaman, Seaman Apprentice, or Seaman Recruit	Seaman Recruit Karl Lee, U.S. Navy	Seaman Recruit Karl Lee	Seaman Recruit Lee	Seaman Recruit Lee*	Dear Seaman Lee,		Seaman Recruit Lee	Seaman Lee

** Guest of the service member: Mr. or Ms. Last Name*

ENTERTAINING

Entertaining events in the Navy are the same as in civilian life. You are free to host events that you choose. Your desire to entertain should be purely social and for the pleasure of making friends and enjoying their company. However, it is important to always keep in mind who your guests are and ensure the event is appropriate to its audience.

Entertaining can be informal and simple, such as potlucks and casserole dinners, or formal and elaborate, such as cocktail parties and several-course dinners. The important thing is to get together and to make people feel welcome in your home. By entertaining, you will find that you grow as close to your service friends as you are to your own family.

Tips for Entertaining

- If the entertaining is too complicated, then it is no fun for you and no one feels comfortable.
- Organization is a key to success; using detailed lists helps a lot.
- The internet is a wonderful resource with vast information on the subject of social entertaining.
- Limit your entertaining to what you can afford. This includes money, time, and energy.
- Use the things that appeal to you and your life-style. Whether you use china, pottery, or paper products is not important.
- The more entertaining you do, the easier it becomes. A great way to try something new is to experiment with friends and family.
- The RSVP is extremely important. As a guest, it is a courtesy and reflective of polite manners. As a host/hostess, an accurate count is vital for planning, purchasing food as well as drink, and ensuring proper space accommodations.

Entertaining Senior Personnel

Couples often wonder if they should entertain senior personnel and their spouses. The answer is yes; however, they certainly neither need nor want to be lavishly entertained. They enjoy the company of younger people and will appreciate your having been thoughtful enough to include them.

Base Clubs/Restaurant Social Affairs

Some social affairs involving the command have large numbers of people and must be held at a club or restaurant. In these cases, guests may be asked to indicate acceptance and to pay their own way. It is necessary to financially honor your reservation. Those in charge of making the arrangements with the club or restaurant will have obligated themselves to the management for a certain number of people and will have to pay for the "no shows." If something happens at the last minute to prevent you from attending an affair for which you made a reservation, contact the person in charge. Explain that you will not be able to attend and, if you have not already paid, indicate that you will settle the money situation as soon as possible.

ATTIRE GUIDELINES

You will receive invitations to various social events, both military and civilian. Accept, if at all possible, as this will give you an opportunity to meet new and interesting people. The attire for these invitations is usually specified and can range from informal to formal depending upon the time of day and geographic location.

Very Formal Occasions
Occasionally, a very formal evening event, after 6:00 p.m., will require full dress evening wear specified as "White Tie." This is very seldom worn except by flag officers or those in the diplomatic corps. When required, white tie is worn to evening dances, weddings, dinners, receptions, and on state occasions.

Military: Formal dress uniform.
Civilian: Gentlemen wear a tuxedo or a tailored suit with matching trousers, collared shirt and bow tie. Ladies wear very formal evening gowns.

Daytime Formal Occasions
For a formal daytime function such as a wedding, the following applies:

Military: Seasonally appropriate Service Dress Uniform.
Civilian: Gentlemen wear cutaways/morning suits. Ladies wear dresses or suits appropriate to the occasion as styles dictate.

Evening Formal Occasions
The attire specified for a formal evening function is "Black Tie." This may be worn to formal events after 6:00 p.m. such as dinners, receptions, dances, or weddings.

Military: Seasonally appropriate Dinner Dress Jacket Uniform.
Civilian: Gentlemen wear dinner jackets or tuxedos. Ladies wear formal evening gowns.

Ceremonial Occasions
For occasions of state, ceremonies, and solemnities, parades and reviews, military personnel participating wear the specified ceremonial uniform.

Military guests: Seasonally appropriate Service Dress Uniform.
Civilian: Gentlemen generally wear dark business suits. Ladies wear dresses or business suits appropriate to the occasion, as styles dictate.

Informal Occasions
Business and informal occasions in the afternoon such as luncheons, receptions, or dinners will call for "Informal Attire" or "Civilian Informal."

Military: Seasonally appropriate Service Uniform.
Civilian: Gentlemen wear dark business suits. For daytime events, ladies wear afternoon dresses or business suits and for evening events, they wear dressy dresses, business suits, or long skirts appropriate to the occasion, as current styles dictate.

Casual Occasions
Casual functions may include dinner parties, picnics, barbecues, sporting events, etc.

For gentlemen, "casual attire" may range from an open collar shirt or sweater to a sports coat. For ladies, attire may range from slacks or dressy capri pants to casual skirts and dresses. (Shorts and jeans are inappropriate unless specifically indicated by the host/hostess.)

Note: In many areas of the country, dress requirements can vary for "casual" social occasions. For example, in one part of the country, "casual" may mean shorts and sandals, and in another area it may mean dressy slacks or skirts. When in doubt, inquire as to the local custom or ask your host/hostess.

Aloha Attire/Key West Casual
When you live on an island, you may receive an invitation that calls for "aloha attire" or "Key West Casual." There are several types of aloha attire, including aloha casual, aloha formal, and aloha crisp.

Aloha attire for men usually means casual wear, such as a button-down shirt, polo, or aloha shirt with shorts and shoes. Appropriate attire for women would be a dress, mu'u mu'u (aloha print dress), or blouse with skirt, capris, or pants and sandals.

"Aloha formal" is roughly the equivalent to military casual. For men, this usually means khakis and a button-down collared shirt. Dress sandals may be appropriate depending on the event. If the invitation calls for "aloha crisp," dress is similar to "aloha formal," but with a shirt tucked in, belt, and closed-toed shoes.

"Key West casual" generally means casual dress for men and women. For men, this is khaki style shorts or pants with a short-sleeved, button down shirt or a polo/golf style shirt, and sandals or casual shoes. Shirts may be tucked or untucked. For women, this is a casual dress / sundress or a top with a skirt or capri pants, and sandals.

When in doubt, call your host or someone who has been to a similar function to ask what is appropriate to wear.

Retired Military Personnel
Retired military personnel, not on active duty, may wear the prescribed military uniform to military functions as considered appropriate. Such occasions may include commissioning ceremonies, military weddings, or receptions in which military guests are expected to be in uniform.

DINING TABLE ETIQUETTE

According to Emily Post, "Table manners have evolved over centuries to make the practice of eating with others pleasant and sociable." To help with the basics, these are the Top Ten Table Manners to keep in mind while you eat.

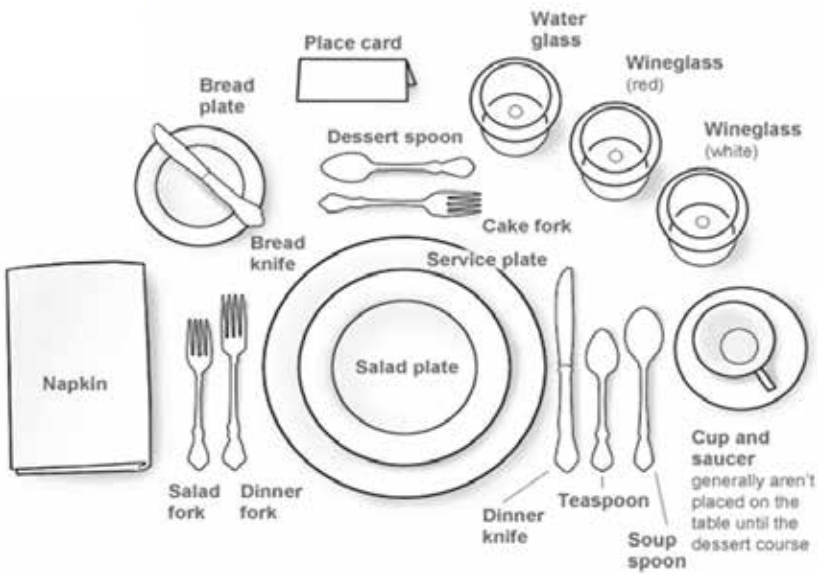
- Chew with your mouth closed.
- Keep your smartphone off the table and set to silent or vibrate. Wait to check calls and texts until after finished with the meal and away from the table.
- Do not use your utensils like a shovel or stab your food. Eat small bites at a moderate speed.
- Do not pick your teeth at the table.
- Remember to use your napkin. In the United States, place your napkin on your lap. If you leave the table, place the napkin on your chair.
- Wait until you are finished chewing to sip or swallow a drink. (Choking is clearly an exception.)
- Cut only one piece of food at a time. Also keep your elbows down while cutting your food.
- Avoid slouching and do not place your elbows on the table while eating (though it is okay to prop your elbows on the table while conversing between courses, and always has been, even in Emily Post's day).
- Instead of reaching across the table for something, ask for it to be passed to you.
- Take part in the dinner conversation.

In addition to the ones noted by Emily Post, here are a few additional basics to keep in mind.

- If you are someone's guest, wait for the signal to be seated.
- Use your utensils from the outside in toward the plate. Utensils are placed in the order of courses that will be served. Desert utensils are above the plate.
- Do not apply make-up while sitting at the table.
- If you need to blow your nose or are having a significant episode of coughing or sneezing, you should excuse yourself and go to the powder room.
- When you have an item, offer to the person on your left, but always pass to the right.
- Always pass the salt and pepper together.
- Do not eat until all at the table have been served. And, if you are a guest, wait for your host to begin eating.
- Never spit a piece of bad food or tough gristle into your napkin. Remove the food from your mouth using the same utensil it went in with. Place the piece of food on the edge of your plate. If possible, cover it with some other food from your plate.
- Never place your utensils on the table. Keep them on your plate.
- If you do not want something, simply say no thank you. It is acceptable to turn your coffee cup upside down on the saucer to indicate you do not want coffee.

- Do not slurp soup from a spoon. Spoon the soup away from you when you take it out of the bowl and sip it from the side of the spoon. If your soup is too hot to eat, let it sit until it cools; do not blow on it.
- If you drop a utensil, pick it up if you are able to easily reach it, hand it to the server and request a new one. If you cannot reach it, just request a new utensil.
- Expect to be served from your left side.

FORMAL TABLE SETTING



MYNAVY FAMILY APPLICATION

Available for download at AppLocker.Navy.mil, Apple App Store and Google Play Store. This is an official U.S. Navy mobile application, produced by the Navy PMW 240 Program

The MyNavy Family application is the first tool by the U.S. Navy developed for Navy spouses and Sailors' families that combines authoritative information from more than 22 websites into a single, convenient application. Available information and resources cover a wide variety of topics within the following categories:

- New Spouse
- Mentorship & Networking
- Employment & Adult Education
- Parenthood
- Special Needs Family Support
- Moving & Relocation
- Service Member Deployment
- Counseling Services
- Recreation, Lodging & Travel
- Family Emergencies
- Transition & Retirement
- Military Installation Search
- MyNavy Career Center

The MyNavy Family app was developed by a Spouse Advisory Tiger Team that included Navy spouses, along with the Ombudsman-at-Large, Navy organizations that provide services to Navy families, and several nonprofit organizations. The app is part of a larger effort by the Navy to improve the experiences of spouses and families in order to promote strong Navy families and support them in every way possible.

NAVAL SERVICES FAMILYLINE

Naval Services FamilyLine is a non-profit organization of Navy family volunteers whose mission is to empower sea service families to meet the challenges of a military lifestyle with education, resources, and mentoring. FamilyLine provides the following courses, workshops, and publications free-of-charge to Navy commands and families.

NAVAL SERVICES FAMILYLINE PILLARS

COMPASS

COMPASS is a team mentoring program developed *by spouses, for spouses.* It is held several times a year in locations worldwide. This unique course will help spouses understand and meet the challenges of the Navy lifestyle. This 12 hour program (presented in three four-hour sessions) provides spouses with realistic expectations they need to succeed. COMPASS covers Naval history, customs and traditions; benefits and services; finances; moving; deployment; healthy communication; and exploring your community.

Command Spouse Leadership Course (CSLC)/Command Master Chief Spouse Leadership Course (CMCSLC)

This spouse-led course, held in Newport, Rhode Island, is an intense one-week, executive level course for spouses of Commanding Officers, Command Master Chiefs and Chiefs of the Boat en route to their first command tour. It includes lessons in situational leadership, values, ethics, conflict resolution, stress, and crisis management. In addition to in-depth discussions of the Ombudsman Program and the Command Support Team, attendees will also have an opportunity to learn form the real-life experiences of former Commanding Officers, Command Master Chiefs, Chief of the Boat, Command Senior Chief and spouses

Continuum of Resources and Education (CORE)

CORE is a world-wide volunteer network of seminars and events dedicated to enriching all sea services spouses and those in leadership roles, supporting families, and promoting the ever changing military lifestyle. ***Anchors Aweigh*** is an online tool to provide spouses, parents and loved ones a brief overview of what to expect of the Navy life with eight informative sections. Look for this fantastic new educational tool on **www.nsfamilyline.org** under CORE or on MyNavy Family app.

PUBLICATIONS

Sea Legs: A Handbook for Navy Life and Service
Sea Legs contains useful information on matters such as family support services, benefits and privileges, healthcare, social customs and protocol, changing duty stations, and deployments. The Navy's history, its mission and structure, a naval terms glossary, and a very useful list of resources are also included.

Social Customs and Traditions of the Sea Services
This book acquaints spouses with the social customs, traditions, and organizations that are part of the sea service communities. It also addresses sea service etiquette and protocol, entertaining, ceremonies, and attire guidelines.

Are You Ready? Guidelines for Navy Family Emergency Preparedness
This handbook includes valuable information on creating a Family Emergency Plan, completing Emergency Contact Cards, and compiling a Basic Emergency Supply Kit. Additionally, there is detailed information regarding what to do before, during, and after various types of emergency situations.

Guidelines for the Spouses of Commanding Officers and Executive Officers
This book is an invaluable aid in defining the spouse's role as a member of the Command Support Team. It was written by Navy spouses who have experienced the command tour. This guide is also an excellent supplement to materials provided at the Command Spouse Leadership Course.

Guidelines for the Spouses of Command Master Chiefs and Chiefs of the Boat
This book helps to define the important role of the CMC/COB spouse as a member of the Command Support Team. It also includes information relating to deployments, support resources and emergency guidelines. This guide is also an excellent supplement to materials provided at the Command Master Chiefs Spouse Leadership Course.

Guidelines for the Spouses of Chief Petty Officers
This book is an excellent source of information for spouses of new Chief Petty Officers as they navigate their way through the CPO training season. It offers answers to many common questions and provides guidance on the training season and beyond.

Guidelines for Navy Reserve Families
This guide is designed to provide Reserve members and their families with information that will assist them in preparing for their military lives. It includes helpful material written by personnel from the Fleet and Family Support Program, Navy Reserve Forces Command, and experienced Reserve spouses.

More information about Naval Services FamilyLine's courses, workshops, and publications can be found at ***www.nsfamilyline.org***.

Naval Services FamilyLine's Mission Statement

Our mission is to empower sea service families to meet the challenges of a military lifestyle with education, resources, and mentoring.

CITATION NOTES

For General Reference:
Naval Services FamilyLine
www.nsfamilyline.org

US Navy Regulations 1990
http://bit.ly/USNavy_Regulations

US Navy Social Usage and Protocol Handbook (incl. Lone Sailor Table)
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OPNAV Instructions
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http://bit.ly/SM_Etiquette3

Dining Table Etiquette, page 34-35
http://bit.ly/Top10Table
http://bit.ly/DiningEtiq

Acknowledgements

Social Customs and Traditions of the Navy was written to introduce spouses to the customs, protocol and etiquette unique to the Navy.

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Disclaimer

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