

Eating Out Reading Comprehension Passage

What a British Person Should Know When Eating Out in America

Eating out may be a simple thing, but for British people who have just come to America, it could be an experience full of surprises. Here are five main differences a Brit should pay attention to when eating out in a restaurant in America.

Ordering Drinks

The first thing a waiter would ask when you sit down in an American restaurant is whether you would like bottled or tap water. If you choose bottled, you will then be asked whether you would prefer still or sparkling. Soon, the water you ordered will be brought to you. Coffee and soft drinks will also be gladly refilled. The waiter will proactively ask if you want another coffee or coke. In Britain, water and soft drinks must be requested and they are not free.

The Service

Waiters in American restaurants are more pleasant and attentive. They are always chatty and often come to your table during the meal to refill drinks and check everything is okay. In England, waiters are less likely to frequently check on customers. If you need something, you can raise your hand and waive at the waiter or else, you will be left alone for hours.

The Menu

In an American restaurant, picky eaters can customize the menu to suit their exact preferences by reeling off special requirements and substitutions. You can order salad but without tomato or with a special dressing to accommodate your diet. There is a friendly atmosphere that encourages you to have exactly what you want and satisfy your appetite. On the other hand, people in England tend to order a meal with all the options that come with it. It is less common for them to complain about the food or have the waiter send dishes back to the kitchen.

Picking up the Bill

In America, a waiter will bring you the bill even though you have not asked for it. This would be seen as very impolite by British customers, as it implies that they are being hurried out of the restaurant.

Tipping

Tipping in England is optional. You will tip if you are satisfied with the meal and service, which is generally about 10%. If you are dissatisfied, you do not need to tip and this is quite common. In America, a tip of 15-20% is generally mandatory. For American waiters, tipping is the main source of their income. Even if the service is bad you should still tip, but it makes sense to give a smaller tip.

Reading comprehension questions that go with the above reading passage.

- 1) What would a waiter ask first in an American restaurant?
 - A) Whether you would like water or soft drink.
 - B) Whether you would like bottled or tap water.
 - C) Whether you would like coffee.
 - D) Whether you would like a cocktail.

- 2) What is a waiter in Britain less likely to do?
 - A) Check on customers.
 - B) Ask for tips.
 - C) Bring the menu.
 - D) Take an order.

- 3) What are British customers less likely to do when eating out?
 - A) Order salad without tomato.
 - B) Order hamburger without mayonnaise.
 - C) Substitute the drink.
 - D) Substitute the menu.

- 4) How do customers pick up the bill in British restaurants?
 - A) Wait until a waiter come.
 - B) Put money on the table.
 - C) Raise a hand and waive.
 - D) Go to the cashier.

- 5) How much should you tip a waiter in America?
 - A) Less than \$10.
 - B) About 10%.
 - C) Between \$15 and \$20.
 - D) Between 15 and 20%.