

HOW THREE RULES FOR USING A KNIFE ORIGINATED

1. WHY SOME PEOPLE BELIEVE IT IS WRONG FOR A KNIFE TO BE USED WHEN EATING A SALAD

Long ago, knives were made of steel. If you cut a piece of salad with a steel knife, the acidity from the salad dressing could tarnish the knife. Now that the knives used for eating today are made of sterling silver or are silver plated, you may cut any food (one piece at a time, please) except for linguini, spaghetti, or fettuccini.

2. WHY THE "AMERICAN" STYLE OF DINING INCLUDES RESTING YOUR KNIFE BETWEEN BITES

Unlike the "Continental" style of dining in which the fork and the knife remain in your hand as you are eating, the Puritans created the rule that the knife should be placed across the top of your plate between bites. The reason: to prove that the meal would be safe - without a duel.

3. THE REASON THE SERRATED EDGE OF YOUR KNIFE ALWAYS SHOULD BE FACING YOU

During medieval times, when two opponents were eating at the same table, if one opponent had his knife facing the other, that meant that battle would soon be taking place.