Curiosity Tables in the Pantry in Conor's Bar & Lounge

The Victorian era was characterised by the 'eat, drink and be merry' attitude, with the main part of their diet based around meat consumption.

Mrs Beatton wrote in her *Book of Household Management:*

"The kitchen is the great laboratory of the household, and much of the 'weal and woe' as far as regards bodily health, depends on the nature of the preparations concocted within its walls."

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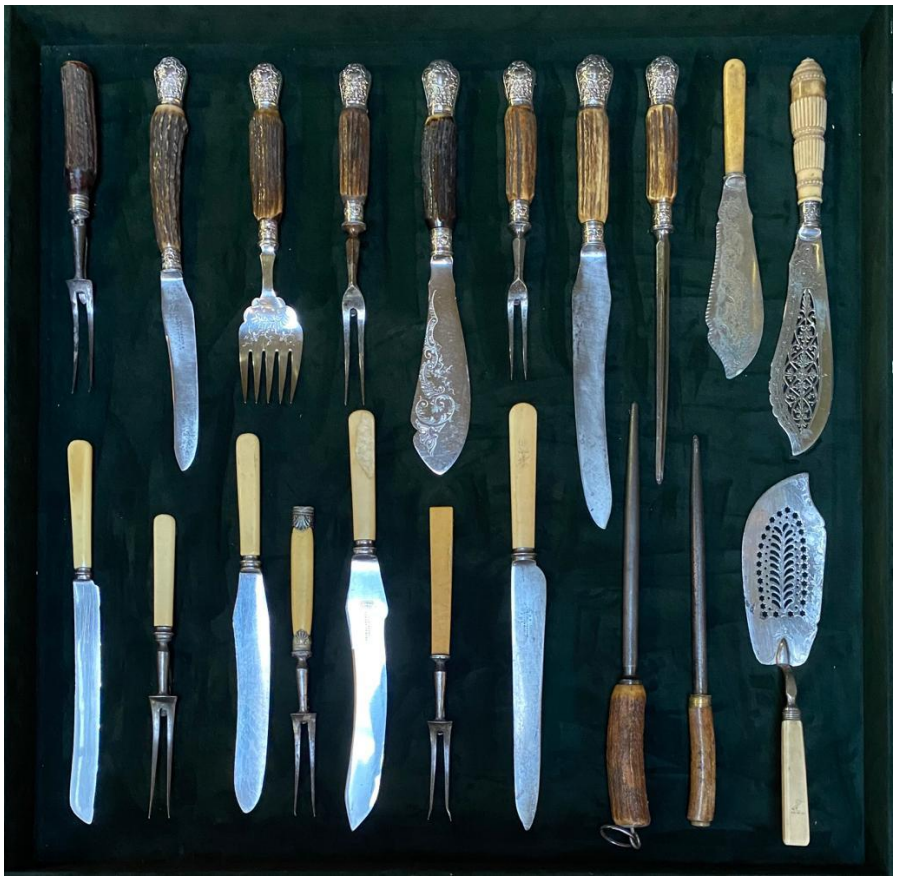
Serving



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Victorians consumed a significant amount of meat. Not one single part of the animal was wasted, with the animal divided in terms of cuts and their tenderness. The upper classes bought large feasting joints, the bigger the better, for their three meals per day, each of which were based around meat.

During the medieval period it became common practise among the elite to carry knives intended for both eating and fending off possible aggression around the dinner table. By the Victorian era, expertise with a carving knife had become a mark of breeding and refinement among the European middle classes.

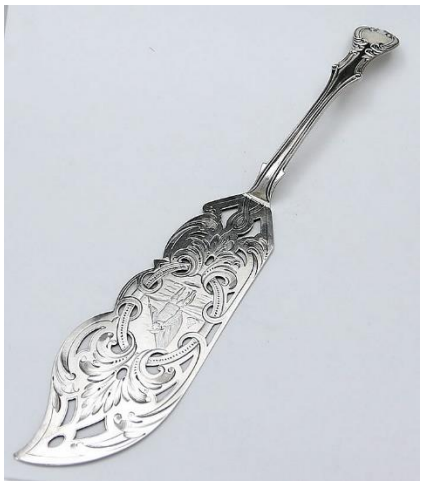
Frederick Bishop, in his 1852 book "The Illustrated London Cookery Book", wrote about the importance of proper carving in the 19th century:

"Carving presents no difficulties; it requires simply knowledge. All displays of exertion or violence are in very bad taste; for, if not proved an evidence of the want of ability on the part of the carver, they present a very strong testimony of the toughness of a joint or the more than full age of a bird: in both cases they should be avoided. A good knife of moderate size, sufficient length of handle, and very sharp, is requisite; for a lady it should be light, and smaller than that used by gentlemen. Fowls are very easily carved, and joints, such as loins, breasts, fore-quarters, etc, the butcher-should have strict injunctions to separate the joints well."

Another author, William Goodman, highlights in his book "The Social History of Great Britain During the Reigns of the Stuarts" that the ability to offer guests their favourite piece of a roast shows *"some dexterity, and his or her good breeding in a very polite art"*.

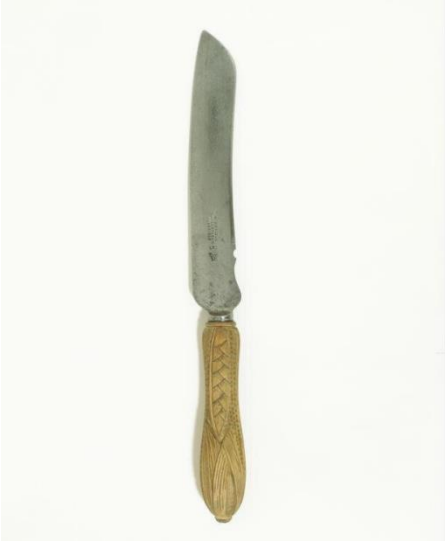
Writing in 1843, he also emphasises the importance of a full understanding of carving techniques, stating that *"if carved properly, a large shoulder of mutton can offer seven different flavours of meat".*

Today's breeding and farming techniques mean that animals raised for slaughter will consistently taste of a high quality.



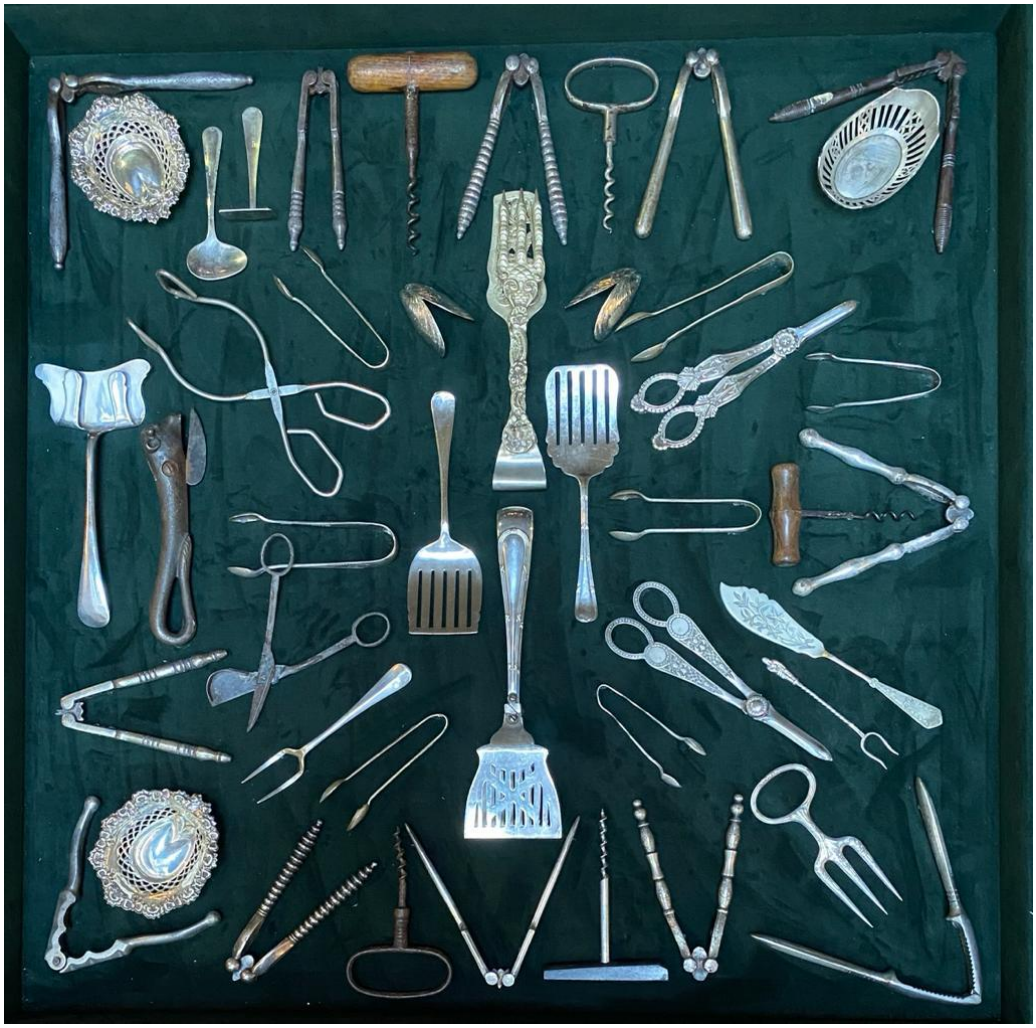
Fish servers are a flat bladed carving implement, often with matching five pronging fork, were designed for serving fish at the dinner table. The earliest examples of fish servers date from the 1740s. From the 19th century these were asymmetrical with curved blades. Frequently fish servers include finely pierced and engraved decoration with fish motifs.

Knife sharpeners were an important serving tool. Animals were bred differently and therefore, the

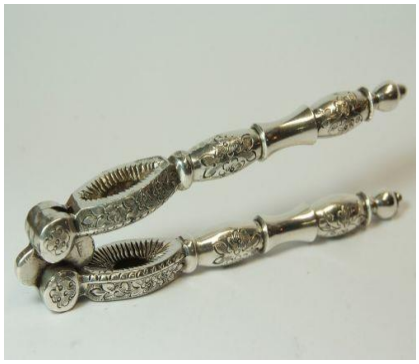


Bread knives are large, sturdy specialist knives for cutting bread at the table or sideboard first appeared in the 19th century. Bread boards and platters became popular in the Victorian period, and bread knives, often with ornately decorated handles, may have been developed to accompany them. While today, bread knives have a serrated edge, this was not the case in the Victorian period.

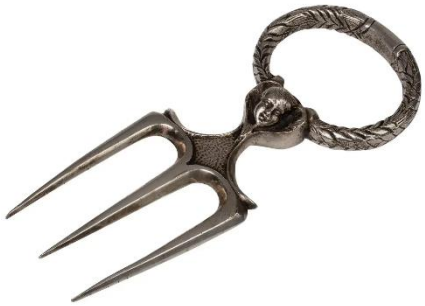
Serving



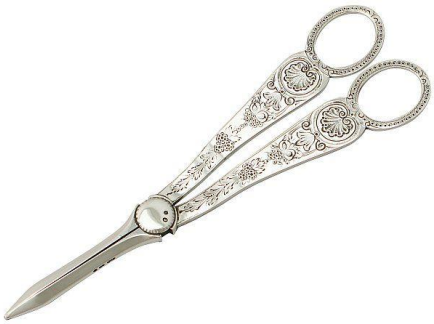
Dining etiquette was an important part of the Victorian code of polite society. The Manners and Tone of Good Society, first published in 1879, outlined the correct conduct of the dinner party but focused on the complicated and changing use of cutlery. With a few exceptions (such as for eating bread and some fruit), touching food with the fingers was frowned upon, and diners were presented with an alarming and growing range of specialist utensils for eating particular foods. It was important to be able to recognise items such as nut picks, sardine tongs and grape scissors, and to know how to use them correctly.



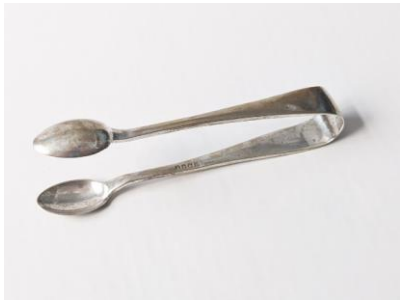
Nutcrackers - The oldest known metal nutcracker dates to the third or fourth century B.C. and is shown in a museum in Tarent, Italy. Even Leonardo DaVinci expended some brainpower on the concept of how best to crack nuts—one solution he came up with was a large, horse-powered press. During the 19th century, nutcrackers became ornate and highly decorative pieces.



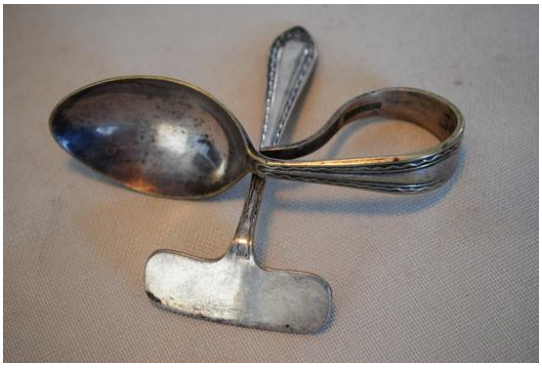
Bread forks was used to serve sliced bread or rolls from a breadbasket or tray. Specialised dining utensils became essential at a time when touching food was frowned upon except in a few instances, such as eating bread rolls, cheese, and some fruit. It would, however, have been impolite to serve yourself from the breadbasket or to pass bread without the bread fork.



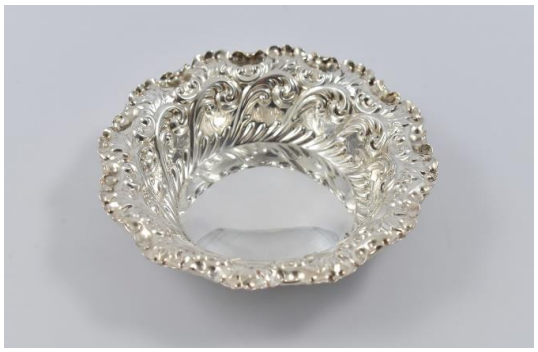
Grape scissors were used during the dessert course of a dinner. After the grapes had been correctly cut, it was permissible for the diner to use his or her fingers. *The Manners and Tone of Good Society* advised: "When eating grapes, the half-closed hand should be placed to the lips and the stones and skins adroitly allowed to fall into the fingers and quickly placed on the side of the plate, the back of the hand concealing the manoeuvre from view."



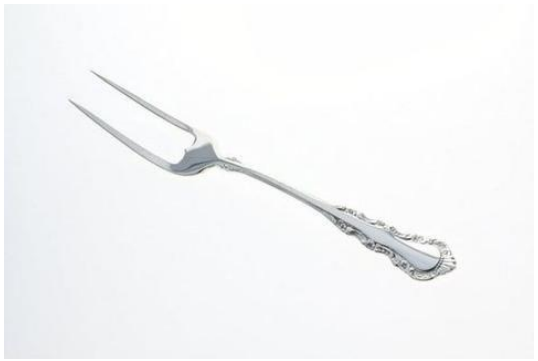
Sugar tongs -For as long as tea has existed in the Western world, it has been sweetened with sugar. So much so, in fact, that by the end of the 17th century, British imports of sugar were estimates at around 70,000 tonnes. Sugar tongs were initially based on fire tongs, having slender arms and curved ends.



Food Pushers were common in Victorian society when it was rude for anyone, even children, to touch food with their hands. The spoon and pusher are held in each hand and the pusher is used to 'push' food onto the spoon. The spoons curved handle meant the spoon could be held more easily and spoon head itself limited spills.



Silver sweet dishes these dishes would be placed within reach of the fingertips and filled with bonbons.



Baked potato fork was used only for lifting and serving baked potatoes. It was not used for eating potatoes.

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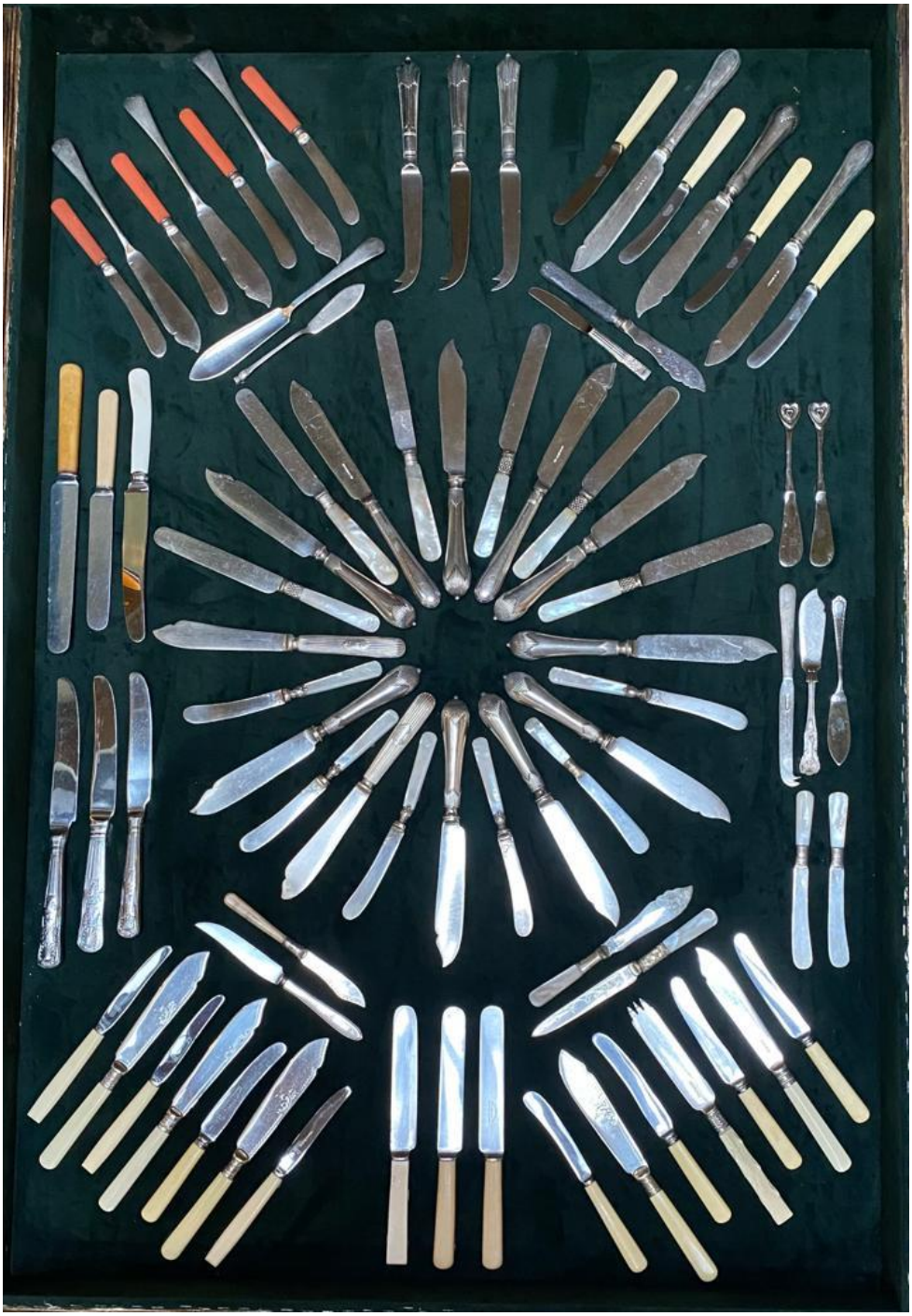
Knives



In the 21st Century, we have no patience for such uni-taskers, but in the Victorian era, each morsel at the table had its own utensil.

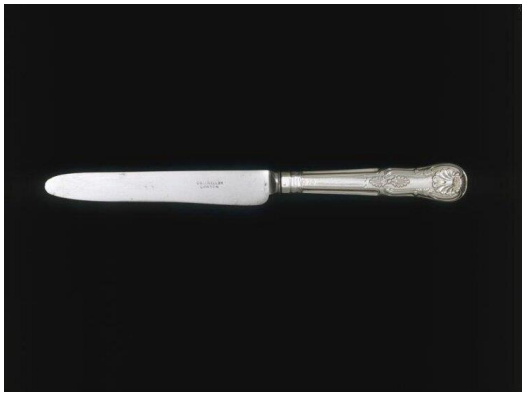
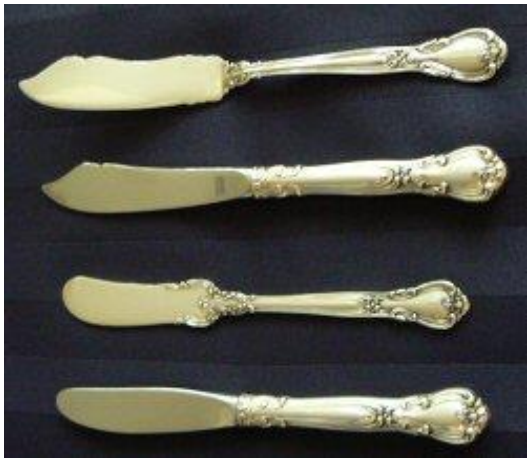
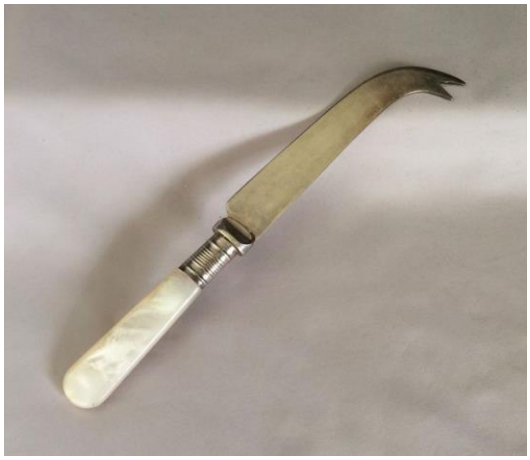


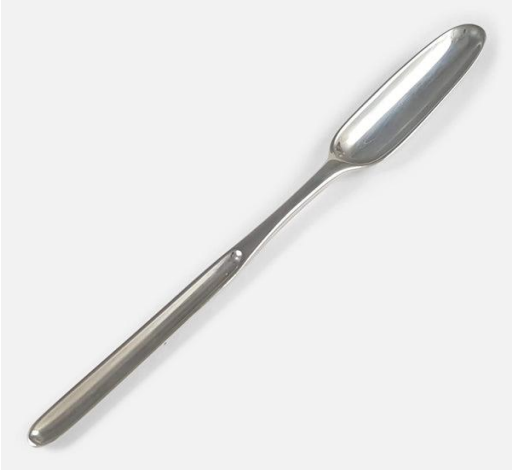
Table knives evolved from the personal knives used before the 18th century. It was designed to be used at dinner as part of a matching cutlery set. Table knives became larger, with longer blades, to cut the meats and vegetables of the main courses of the meal.



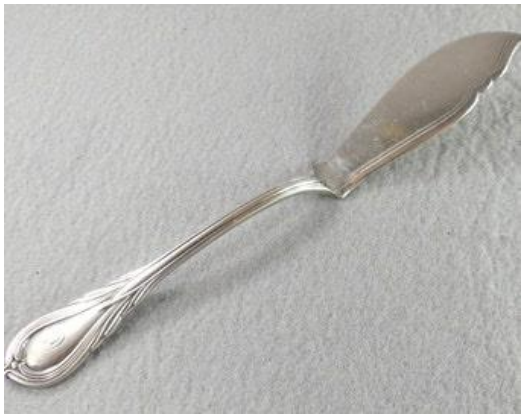
Butter knives came in four different varieties. From top to bottom: Solid sterling master butter knife, hollow handle master butter knife, solid handle individual butter spreader and hollow handle individual butter spreader. Butter spread knifes are used to add butter to your bread plate and feature sharp edges to slice through butter. Butter spreaders have rounded ends to avoid biting bread and are used to apply butter on bread after it has been placed on the plate



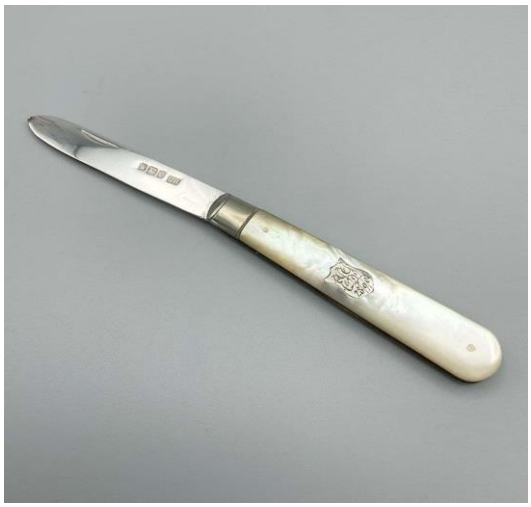
Cheese knives come in many designs. The hook at the end is for spearing bits of cheese so they can moved around once cut. For example, it could be used the hook the cheese and move it onto a cracker without having to touch food.



Marrow scoop The Victorians had a "top to tail" approach eating meat. A marrow scoop consists of two scoops of different size, joined by a stem, which are designed to remove the marrow jelly from bones. They seem to have emerged as a distinct type of flatware in around 1710: seventeenth-century scoops were in fact spoons with a scoop-shaped stem.

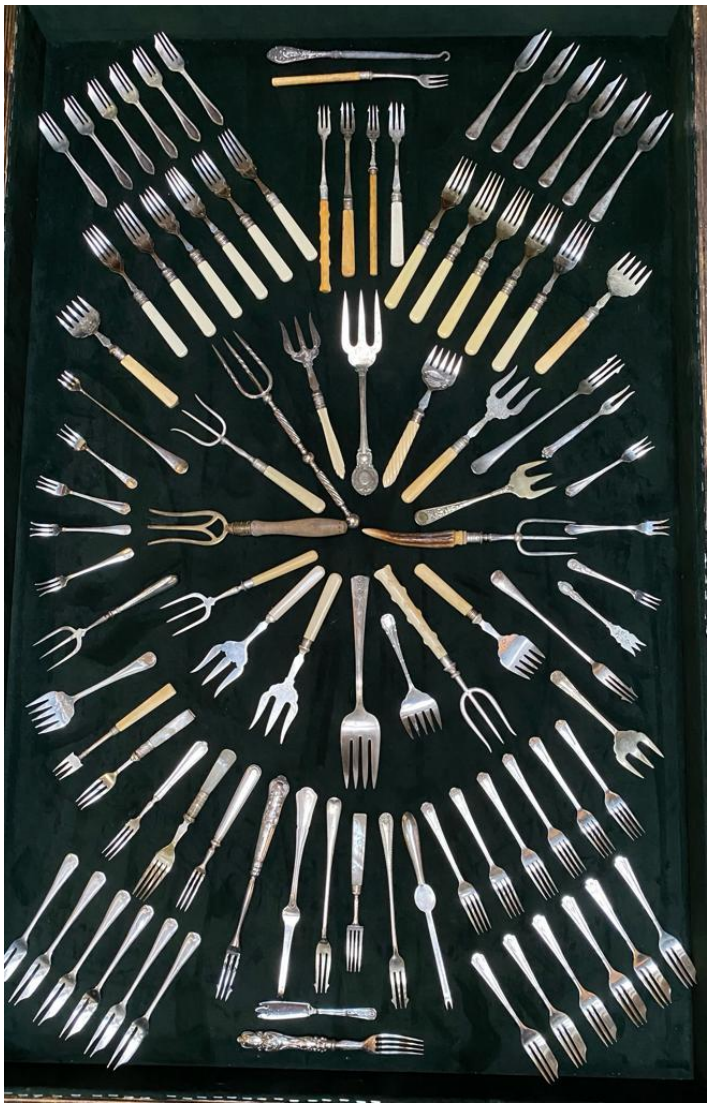


Fish knives are approximately 8 inches long with a wide blade and a pointed end. It is useful for removing bones from fish. The wide blade also makes this knife perfect for spreads or for use with a cheese plate.

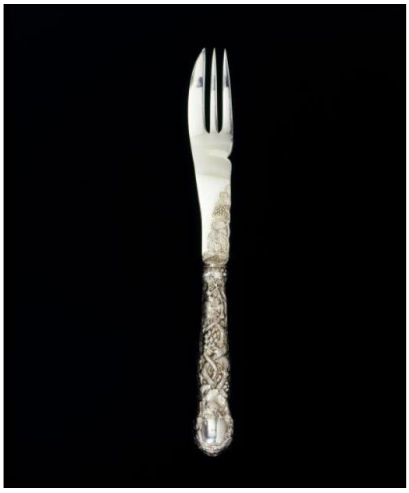


Fruit knives, popular during the Victorian era, are still made in most modern silver patterns. They are small with pointed blades, have either hollow or solid handles, and are 6 to 7 inches long. Fruit knives originally were made to use with a fruit fork to peel and segment a piece of fruit at the table. Orange knives are slightly larger, 7 to 8 inches, and have a straight blade with a blunt end. Both smaller knives make a very nice dessert service.

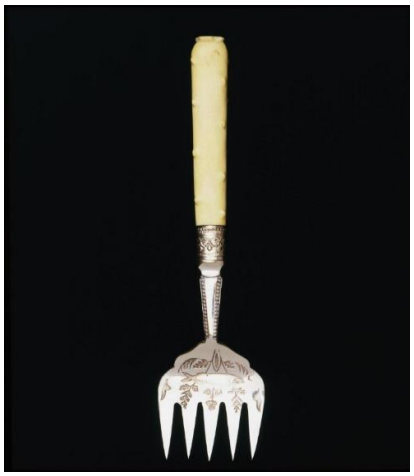
Forks



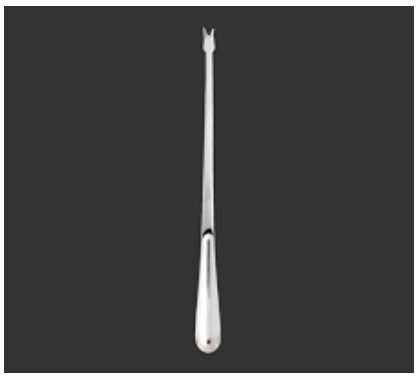
The fork is thought to have appeared in Italy around the year 1000, in Venice, and in addition to its recorded use as a cutting aid, it is also said to have been used to eat the first pasta. As of the Middle Ages, utensils resembling two-pronged forks were mentioned in several French Kings' inventories. The fork acquired its current physiognomy during the 17th and 18th centuries. The very straight and very sharp two-pronged model remained a serving cutlery item. It was used to hold food to be cut and to serve the pieces.



Pastery forks was a Victorian invention. Pastry-based desserts were always eaten with a fork. The Habits of Good Society, written around 1859 to give guidance on etiquette, was adamant on the use of a fork for this purpose. ' What! A knife to cut that light, brittle pastry? No, nor fingers, never. Nor a spoon - almost as bad. Take your fork, sir, your fork!' Pastry forks had one broader prong (or tine) with a sharper, blade-like edge for cutting. Dessert forks have a similar design but do not have the wider tine for cutting pastry.



Sardine forks were part of the complicated dining etiquette of the Victorian period which encouraged the development of specific utensils for eating and serving particular foods. Sardine forks were a Victorian refinement for serving the expensive and popular tinned fish.



Crab or lobster pick or forks are a long, narrow food utensil used to extract meat from joints, legs, claws, and other small parts of a lobster.

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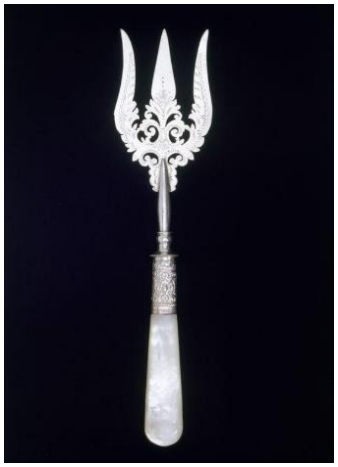
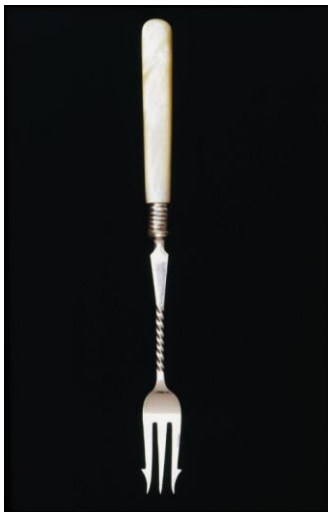
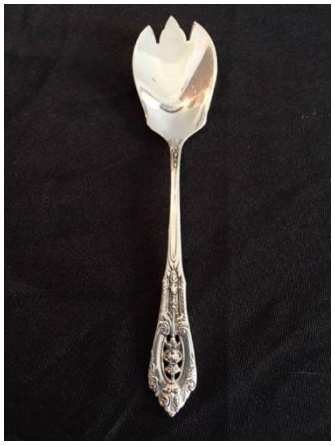


Pickle forks, initially designed for use with shallow pickle trays, did not develop a long handle until about 1860, when the trays were replaced by large cut-glass pickle jars in metal frames. Typically, the outer prongs (or tines) of this new server are barbed to grasp the pickle more firmly. Pickle forks could be designed to match the standard popular cutlery patterns and bought as part of a dinner service. More individual designs with ivory or mother-of-pearl handles were available in silver and electroplate, and boxed sets containing two silver pickle forks formed suitable wedding gifts. A silver pickle fork could cost nearly twice as much as one in electroplate.

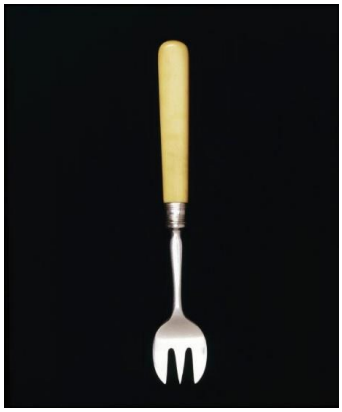


Bread forks were used to serve sliced bread or rolls from a breadbasket or tray. Bread forks have a short handle and are generally three-pronged, in a trident style, with curved outer tines (prongs).

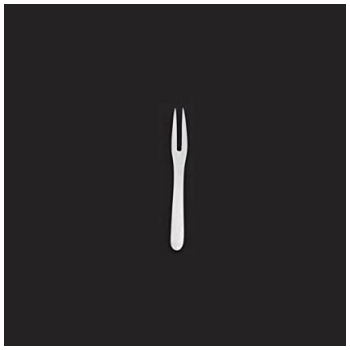
Fish fork - In 1838 a book of etiquette for ladies recorded that, 'in first rate society, silver knives are now beginning to be used for fish: a very pleasing, as well as decided step in the progress of refinement.' People no longer used steel knives and forks, as the steel was said to react with acids in the fish sauces and taint the flavour of the food. Fish knives and forks were commonly called 'fish eaters' or 'fish-eating knives and forks'.



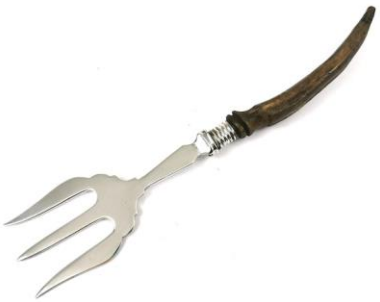
Ice cream fork is of medium size that has a bowl-shaped or blade-shaped end terminating usually in three short tines and is used for eating ice cream or sherbets.



Osyter forks evolved in the 18th century as a specialised item of cutlery for eating raw oysters or clams from their shells. It is smaller than the table fork and may have three or four pointed prongs for spearing the slippery shellfish, although some later Victorian models, such as this one, have a spoon-shaped bowl.



A **relish fork** is an eating utensil designed to fit into small containers of relish and other condiments so that diners can extract a small serving with which to dress their food. It is also sometimes referred to generically as a condiment fork.



Cold cut forks were designed specifically for serving cold meats. The design features flat pointed tines designed for serving meats.

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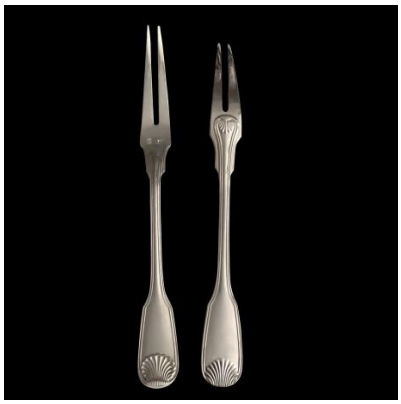
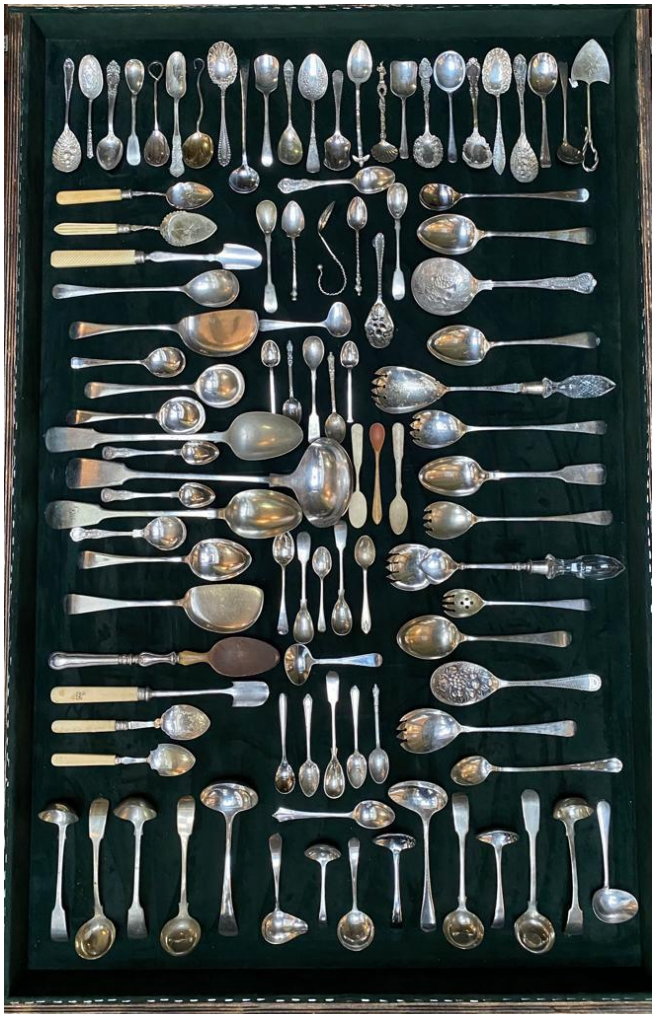


Snail forks – Known by some as “wall fish”, eating snails was commonplace in the Victorian period. The slim two-pronged fork allowed of the snail to be held in one hand and the snail meat could be plucked out of the shell with the other.

Spoons



Historians can't determine the exact time the spoon was invented, but archaeologists can point to evidence around 1000 B.C. of spoons from Ancient Egypt, made from wood, ivory, flint, and stone, and adorned with hieroglyphics or religious symbols. These utensils were strictly owned by Pharaohs or other deities. In other parts of the world, spoons from the Shang Dynasty in China were generally made of bone. The Ancient Greeks and Romans, specifically the wealthy ones, began fashioning spoons using bronze and silver. This continued up until the Middle Ages, where spoons would be crafted out of cow horns, wood, brass, and pewter. If it could be shaped, it could be a spoon.

The earliest mentions of the spoon in England can be dated back to 1259 where King Edward I's wardrobe accounts make mention of spoons. Not only were spoons used as eating utensils during that time, but much like Ancient Egypt, spoons carried significance in ceremonies as a sign of wealth and power. During the coronation of a new British king, the newly appointed sovereign would be anointed with a ceremonial spoon.

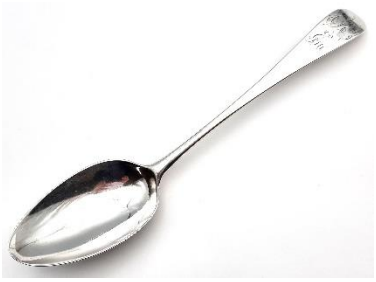
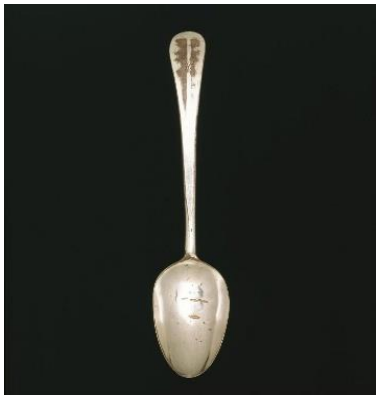
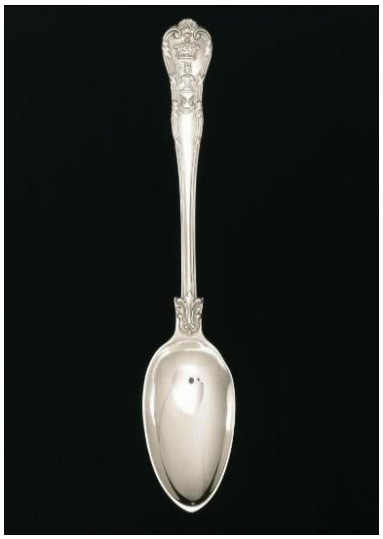


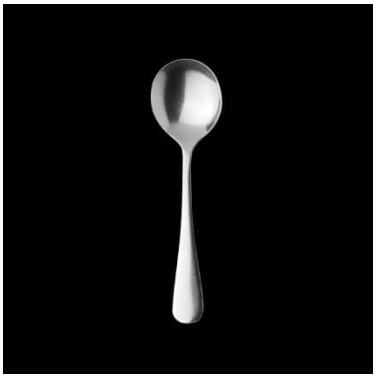
Table spoon - Originally a multi-purpose item, but also used for serving, or in sets of six as soup spoons. The title of "table" is generally only applied to this size spoon from the end of the 17th Century, when dessert, tea, basting spoons etc. came into general use.



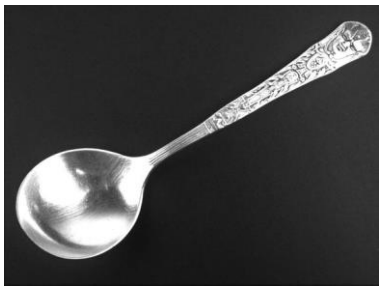
Dessert spoons were not commonly used until the early 18th century, when matching sets of cutlery became standard, with table spoons used for soup and smaller spoons for eating the fresh and candied fruits of dessert.



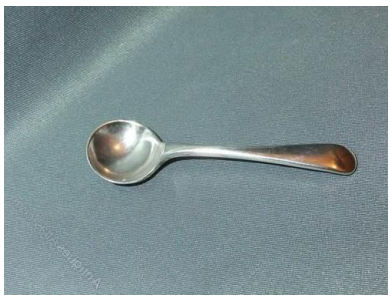
Teaspoons evolved in the late 17th century as spoon types generally became more diverse. The idea of a formal afternoon tea, taken by family and friends at about 4 o'clock, emerged as people began to dine later in the evening. In the mid-18th century fashionable society dined between 3 and 4 o'clock, but by the early 19th century 7 or 8 o'clock was the rule. Afternoon tea provided welcome refreshment and an added social engagement between lunch at 1 o'clock and the later dinner hour. Apart from tea, thin bread and butter, cake and fresh fruit would be offered. Tea could also be served at other afternoon events, such as the more elaborate 'at home' teas, which combined refreshment with entertainment, or at a later, more substantial 'high tea'.



A bouillon spoon is intended for soup, traditionally for clear, broth-based soups, as its name implies, and for jellied soups such as a madrilene. It is a round-bowled spoon, rather than oval-bowled, its curve designed to fit the rounded edge of a soup bowl.



The **cream soup spoon** is approximately 6 inches long. It is made with a round bowl to fit the shape of the cream soup bowl. To reach into the depth of the cream soup bowl, the cream soup spoon is made with a longer handle than a teaspoon. Because the bowl of the cream soup spoon is too wide to fit the mouth, pureed soup is sipped from the side of the spoon.



Salt cellars are reserved for formal dinners, but when provided, **a salt spoon** is placed in a salt cellar before and after use.

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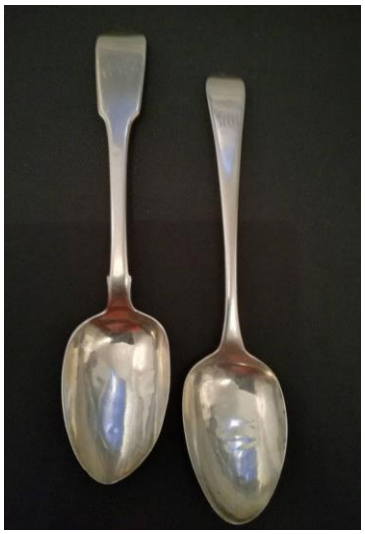
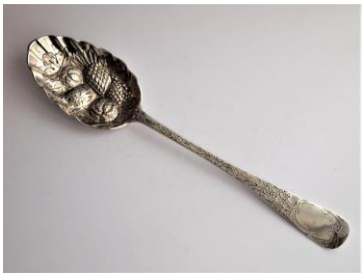
A **sugar spoon** is a piece of cutlery used for serving granulated sugar. This type of spoon resembles a teaspoon, except that the bowl is deeper and often moulded in the shape of a sea shell. Sugar spoons are sometimes called "sugar shovels" because of their rectangular shape and deep bowl. Sterling silver sugar spoons are used with formal silver coffee or tea sets.

The **iced-beverage spoon**, also known as an iced-tea spoon, is used to stir sugar in cold beverages served in a tall glass. The iced-beverage spoon is the longest spoon in a set of flatware, a utensil made with a small bowl and a long handle, approximately 7 to 10 inches in length. It is used only for informal dining. At formal affairs, water, wine, and demitasse are served, and iced-beverage spoons are not needed.

Jelly spoon -With its pointed tip and shallow bowl, this spoon-shaped utensil is used to slice and serve moulded jellies like tomato aspic, which first appeared on European tables in the late 18th century.

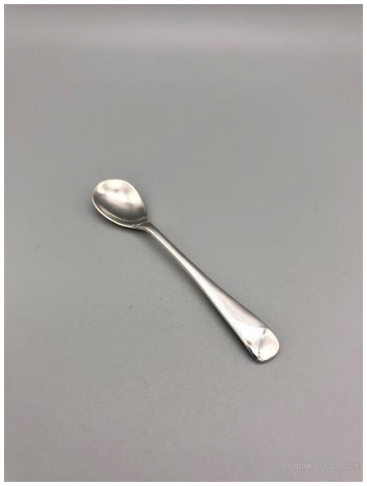


Serving Spoon - There are several names given to this elegant, long handled (usually in the region of 12"+) silver spoon; basting or serving stuffing. or gravy. They have been manufactured from the late 17th century onwards with the first examples being the Canon handled type, and ever since they have followed the form of the standard patterns.

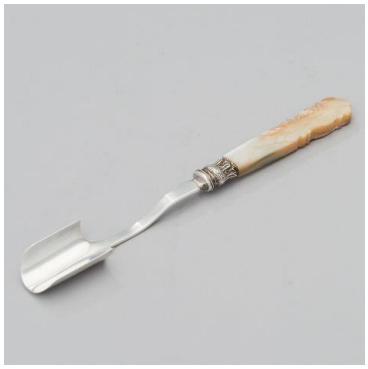


Berry spoons were generally used for serving soft fruits. The bowls are elaborately embossed with fruits, the stems are often engraved and are either wholly or partly gilded to protect the silver from the corrosive effects of fruit acids.

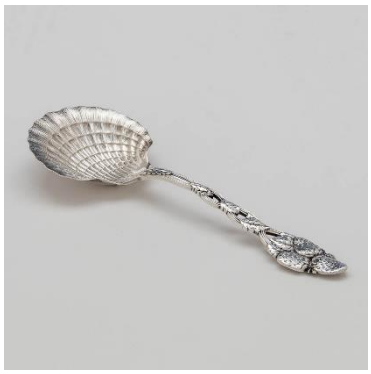
Egg spoon - Generally smaller in size to a teaspoon and become progressively smaller through the 19th and into the 20th Century. The bowls are either shield-shape or have a little indenture to the bowl on either side of the handle.



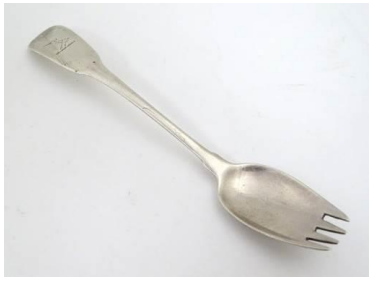
The **mustard spoon** is often confused with the salt spoon. The bowl of the mustard spoon is always elongated to form a scoop, whereas the bowl of a salt spoon is round and deep and conveys the salt like a ladle They date from about 1760 and have tended to become much smaller in size from the late Victorian era.



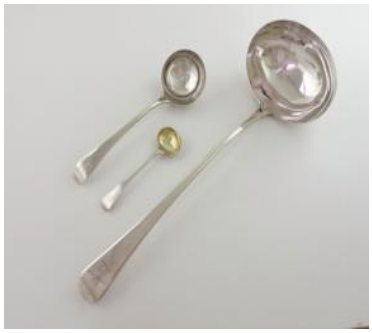
Stilton or cheese spoon - This serving implement was designed for elegantly scooping an individual portion from a large block of cheese, such as a Stilton.



Strawberry ladle – A spoon designed specifically for lifting fruits, specifically strawberries. The design of the spoon allows the unevenly shaped fruits to be lifted.



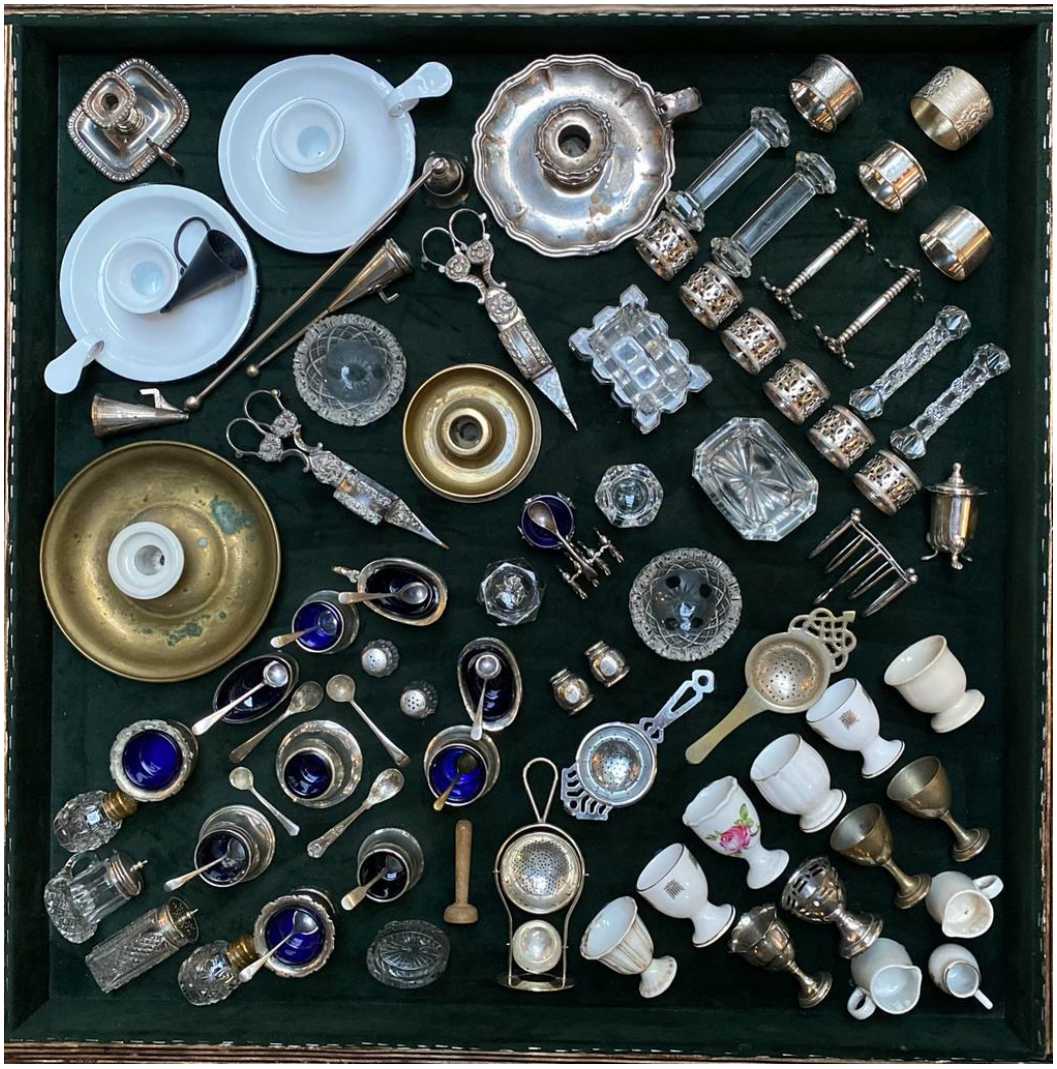
The runcible spoon is often a mystery. They are about the length of a sugar shovel, but their bowls have three or five times. The combination between a spoon and a fork gives it the alternative name of "spork". Their intended use was for serving pickles and chutneys, but as with all spoons they are multi-functional.

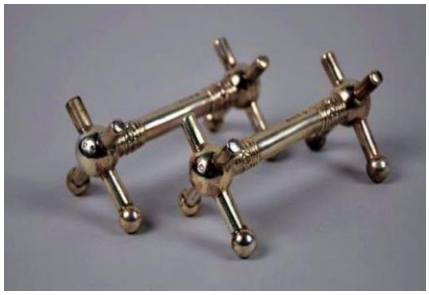


Ladles - The largest standard serving item is the soup ladle. Early examples from the mid-18th century have fluted or shell shaped bowls, later pieces have either round or oval bowls. Irish ladles from the mid-18th Century can sometimes be found with a hooked terminal. Soup ladles from the late 1700's conform to the standard patterns and are an integral component to a canteen. The smallest size was used by each person to serve themselves gravy in the correct portion.

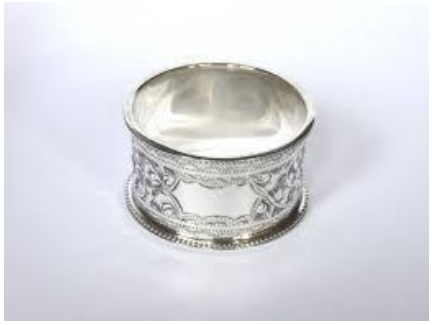
Grapefruit spoon - A grapefruit spoon, also referred to as a citrus or orange spoon, is a special utensil intended to help carve and scoop grapefruit flesh from the rind with ease and precision. Roughly the same size as a standard teaspoon, a grapefruit spoon features a more tapered head lined with sharp, serrated teeth.

Setting the table

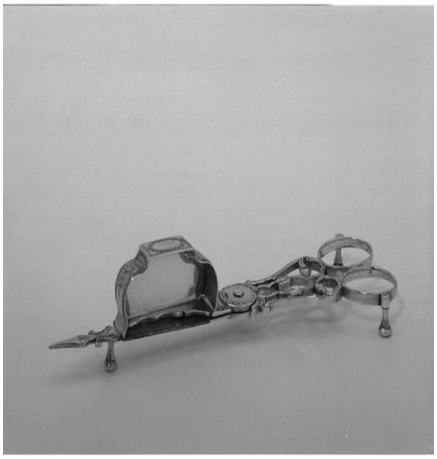




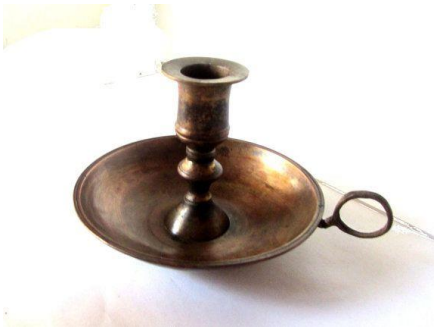
Knife rest – This was used to hold cutlery between courses. the knife rest helped to prevent the tablecloth from becoming soiled between courses rather than merely saving the servants the extra trouble of washing more utensils. These were made of every metal you can think of as well as crystal and glass, pottery, mother-of-pearl, ivory, and horn



Napkin rings are a peculiarly Victorian invention to hold the linen napkin tidily in place on the table. Introduced in the mid-nineteenth century, napkin rings were often personalised with numbers or initials for each member of the family.

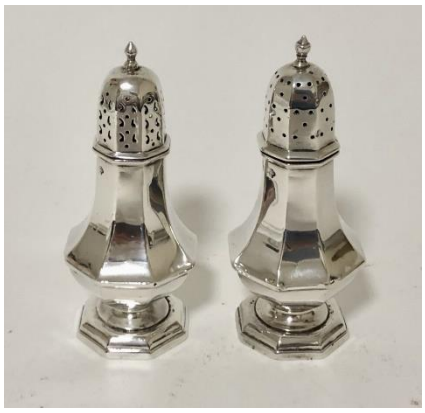


Snuffers were first invented to cut off and retain the burned wicks of candles when the wax around them had melted; they were not necessarily used to extinguish the candle's flame. When the candle wick didn't burn down at the same time as the candle it could droop over onto the side of the candle and risked putting the candle out, or much worse, causing fires. They are first recorded in the 15th century. Candle snuffers usually have blades to cut the wick and a small box on the side of the blades to catch the hot wick. Snuffers were often made to match candlesticks and could be finely decorated with heraldry or engraved decoration.

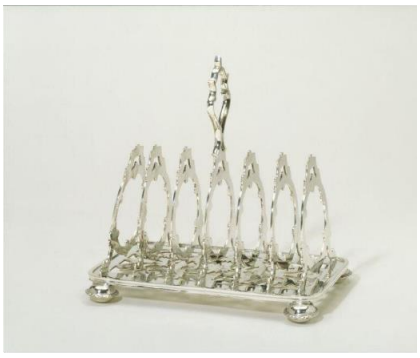


Candlestick holders were designed to hold candles. They served many purposes. The most elaborate were used for decoration and as a centrepiece for a table. Before electrification, all were used for

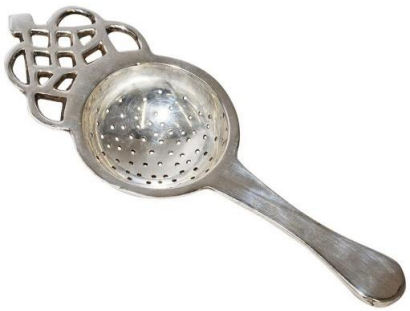
Salt cellars an article of tableware for holding and dispensing salt. Salt cellars can be either lidded or open, and are found in a wide range of sizes, from large, shared vessels to small individual dishes. Styles range from simple to ornate or whimsical, using materials including glass and ceramic, metals, ivory, and wood. From about 1825 pressed glass manufacture became an industry and thrived; because they were easy to mould, salt cellars were among the earliest items mass-produced by this method.



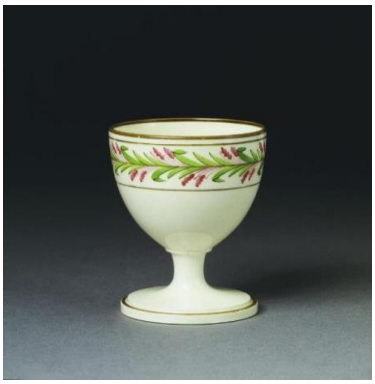
Saltshakers began to appear in the Victorian era, and patents show attempts to deal with the problem of salt clumping, but they remained the exception rather than the norm. It was not until after 1911, when anti-caking agents began to be added to table salt, that saltshakers gained favour and open salts began to fall into disuse.



Toast racks, for holding slices of toasted bread on the breakfast, tea or dinner table, has been used in Britain since the late 18th century. Toasting forks, for browning the slices of bread over the fire, exist from the 16th century. In the 18th century 'toast machine' was another name for the toast rack. Toast racks were made in a variety of styles, from the more ornate, architectural form of this example to simple wire loops on a wire base.



Tea strainer - During the Tang Dynasty in China, a small book called “Classic of Tea” was written describing tea utensils, and they were made to help Buddhist monks keep living things (such as small bugs) out of the drinking water. A strainer is simply used to catch loose tea when pouring your brew. Here, you steep the loose tea leaves in a pot or cup, letting them naturally infuse and float around in the water. When you pour, the strainer catches all the leaves and stops them from entering your cup



Egg Cup - Early egg cups were discovered amidst the ruins of Pompeii from 79 AD. Later, during the French Revolution, it is said that King Louis XV helped to popularize egg cups when citizens of the republic tried to imitate their king's ability to “decapitate an egg at a single stroke.”.