

## Culture & People.- Go paperless.

### Situation

Karen Faulkner, a colleague from the office has invited the girls over for dinner on Saturday evening. Lourdes and Susana are excited since this will be a good opportunity for them to get to closer to British culture, however, they are kind of worried since they don't know what they have to say or do.

### Think about it

And you? Would you know how to behave at Karen's house? Read the following text to learn about it.

#### What to do when you are invited to somebody's home.

The English are said to be reserved in manners, dress and speech. They are famous for their politeness, self-discipline and especially for their sense of humour. However, they are famous for being really good hosts and it is quite common for them to invite you over for dinner.

However, you should be very careful with expressions like “ **Drop in anytime**” and “come see me soon” since these idioms are often used in social settings but seldom meant to be taken literally. It is wise to telephone before visiting someone at home. If you receive a written invitation to an event that says “ **RSVP**”, you should respond to let the person who sent the invitation know whether or not you plan to attend.

Never accept an invitation unless you really plan to go. You may refuse by saying, “Thank you for inviting me, but I will not be able to come.” If, after accepting, you are unable to attend, be sure to tell those expecting you as far in advance as possible that you will not be there.

Although it is not necessarily expected that you give a gift to your host, it is considered polite to do so, especially if you have been invited for a meal. Flowers, chocolate, or a small gift are all appropriate. A thank-you note or telephone call after the visit is also considered polite and is an appropriate means to express your appreciation for the invitation.

If you are invited to someone's house for dinner at half past seven, they will expect you to be there on the dot. An invitation might state “7.30 for 8”, in which case you should arrive no later than 7.50. However, if an invitation says “sharp”, you must arrive in plenty of time.

When you get to your guest's home it is **proper** to shake hands with everyone to whom you are introduced, both men and women. An appropriate response to an introduction is “Pleased to meet you”. If you want to introduce yourself to someone, extend your hand for a handshake and say “Hello, I am...”. Hugging is only for friends.

Dealing with food, if you accept a dinner invitation, tell your host if you have any dietary restrictions. He or she will want to plan a meal that you can enjoy. The evening meal is the main meal of the day in most parts of Britain.

Food may be served in one of several ways: “family style,” by passing the serving plates from one to another around the dining table; “buffet style,” with guests serving themselves at the buffet; and “serving style,” with the host filling each plate and passing it to each person. Guests usually wait until everyone at their table has been served before they begin to eat. Food is eaten with a knife and fork and dessert with a spoon and fork.

And remember, the main thing is to show that you appreciate the invitation, be careful not to offend your host!

Adapted from: <http://www.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk/customs/behaviourfood.html>



**Materiales formativos de FP Online propiedad del Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte.**

[Aviso Legal](#)



## 1.- Now you put it into practice.



### Now it's your turn

**Answer the following questions:**

**If someone invites you over for dinner....**

- you should go as it is considered impolite to reject an invitation.
- you don't need to go as British people always invite you to come over, but they don't really mean that.
- you should say "thank you very much" and arrive on time.

**If you accept an invitation and at the end you cannot attend...**

- make sure you tell your host in advance.
- send a "thank you note" to your host.
- you don't need to do anything unless you got a "RSVP" invitation.

**if you are planning to attend an invitation for dinner...**

- get to your host's at least 30 minutes in advance.
- get to your host's whenever it is possible for you.
- get to your host's on time. A few minutes later can be considered impolite.

**If you have a dietary problem...**

- don't tell your host since he/she may think you are rejecting his/her food.
- tell your host in advance.
- tell him/her to plan another meal for you.

**At the table...**

- wait for everyone to sit down before starting to eat.
- use your fork and knife.
- try your food first and say thank you to your host.

### Think about it

What about here in Spain? How do you have to **behave** when you are at somebody else's house for dinner? Is it very different from what you just read about England? Enter the forum and tell your partners what you think.

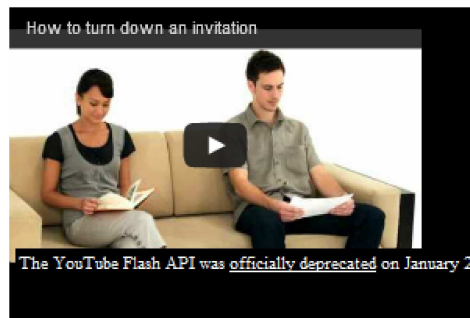
## 1.1.- How to turn down an invitation.

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When someone you really get on well invites you over for dinner or something of the kind, you may be pleased to accept the invitation, however, when it is someone you cannot stand the invitation may become a [nightmare](#). Watch this video on how to turn down an invitation.



How to [turn down](#) an invitation.



[Text summary](#)

### A step ahead

You can read the transcript [here](#).

[How to turn down an invitation.](#)

## 1.2.- Getting to Know British culture.

Music is an essential part of Western culture. The need and appreciation for music is evident in our everyday lives since it is heard in movies, on television and throughout all forms of [audio media](#). Pop music is an important part of British culture, not just as an expression of Englishness, but as an indicator of the multi-cultural nature of Britain today. For this reason, we could say that listening to the Beatles is also a good way of getting to know British culture. This famous rock band was an [icon](#) in the 1960's and they are still very famous today.



Listen to one of The Beatles' most famous songs: Help!



### Think about it

Did you like the song? Why? Why not? Enter the forum and tell your classmates about it.

### Think about it

Now that you have listened to The Beatles, it is time you learn something about their lives: Surf the net for the following information:

1. Where was the band formed? When?
2. How many people were there in the band? What were their names?
3. What was the name of their first Single? When was it released?
4. What instrument did Paul McCartney play in the band?
5. What happened to John Lennon in 1980? Who did it?

## Appendix I.- How to turn down an invitation.

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### How to turn down an invitation.

#### Transcript.

**Man:** Oh no!

**Woman:** What is it?

**Man:** "Josh and Henrietta would like to have the pleasure of your company at a drinks party, next Saturday evening..."

**Woman:** Oh no – Josh and Henrietta...they're not that couple who...

**Man:** Yeah exactly! And it gets worse...

**Woman:** How?

**Man:** "Formal dress..."

**Woman:** Argh....it means you've got to wear a suit....

**Man:** At the bottom it says "RSVP." ...what does it mean?

**Woman:** You've got to reply.

**Man:** But I don't want to go...so...what can I say?

**Woman:** Tell them you've got a dentist's appointment.

**Man:** Josh is my dentist!

**Woman:** Tell them it's your grandmother's 100<sup>th</sup> birthday party.

**Man:** What... they know my granny died ages ago.

**Woman:** Tell them your dog's sick and you've got to take him to see the vet.

**Man:** It's no use – I'll just have to tell them the truth...

**Woman:** The truth? "I'm not coming to your birthday party because I think you're boring and stupid?"

**Man:** Maybe not then...

**Woman:** Tell them this: "I'm unable to attend because I have a prior engagement."





**Man:** "Prior engagement"?! Erm...they won't be offended?

**Woman:** Absolutely not.

**Man:** Perfect!

## Appendix.- Licenses of resources.

### Licenses of resources used in "Culture & People".

Resource (1)	Resource information (1)	Resource (2)	
	<p>By: jsharktank (Marlon E).            Licence: CC by-nc 2.0.            From: <a href="http://www.flickr.com/photos/sjsharktank/6231724304/">http://www.flickr.com/photos/sjsharktank/6231724304/</a></p>		<p>By: Maximal            Licence: CC            From: <a href="http://www.fl">http://www.fl</a></p>
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