

Specification for Table cutlery

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Committees responsible for this British Standard

The preparation of this British Standard was entrusted by the Furniture and Household Equipment Standards Committee (FHM/-) to Technical Committee FHM/17 upon which the following bodies were represented:

- British Hotels and Restaurants and Caterers' Association
- British Telecom
- Consumer Standards Advisory Committee of BSI
- Cutlery and Allied Trades Research Association
- Cutlery and Silverware Association
- Department of the Environment (Property Services Agency)
- Local Authorities Management Services and Computer Committee
- Metal Finishing Association

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Foreword

This revision of this British Standard has been prepared under the direction of the Furniture and Household Equipment Standards Committee. This edition, like that published in 1978, is concerned only with quality and does not include requirements for design, size, type of finish, blade flexibility or similar characteristics which are matters of personal choice or which can be readily assessed by the purchaser at the point of sale. This standard supersedes BS 5577:1978 which is withdrawn.

In this first revision of the standard, the alternative grades of silver plated cutlery specified in 1978 and designated “standard grade” and “restaurant grade” have been redesignated “standard thickness” and “special thickness”. To distinguish between them “standard thickness” silver plated cutlery is marked with one star and “special thickness” cutlery is marked with two stars. In addition, the minimum average thickness of silver present on the piece may also be marked on the cutlery in micrometres. These changes have been made to allow more scope for manufacturers to produce cutlery with greater than the specified minimum silver deposits. The method of defining silver deposits in this standard relates to each and every item, in contrast to traditional methods which relate to an average 12 or 24 pieces among which some items may have a significantly lower thickness of silver coating than others.

For cutlery with nonmetal handles the requirements for satisfactory performance in use, particularly in machine washing, have been improved.

Methods of test are described in Appendix A.

Guidance to purchasers and users on selection and care of cutlery is provided in Appendix B.

Date of implementation of star marking system. The star marking system referred to above does not become a requirement until 12 months from the date of publication of this standard. This is to allow manufacturers to use up stocks of blanks and part processed pieces. This period refers only to the date of manufacture as retail stockholding may lengthen this considerably for items on sale to the general public.

Certification. Attention is drawn to the certification facilities described on the inside back cover of this standard.

A British Standard does not purport to include all the necessary provisions of a contract. Users of British Standards are responsible for their correct application.

Compliance with a British Standard does not of itself confer immunity from legal obligations.

Summary of pages

This document comprises a front cover, an inside front cover, pages i and ii, pages 1 to 12, an inside back cover and a back cover.

This standard has been updated (see copyright date) and may have had amendments incorporated. This will be indicated in the amendment table on the inside front cover.

1 Scope

This British Standard specifies material and performance requirements for cutlery that is intended for use at the dining table. It includes knives, forks, spoons, carving sets, ladles and other serving pieces.

Requirements are specified for stainless steel cutlery and silver plated nickel-silver or silver plated stainless steel cutlery. This standard does not cover cutlery made of precious metals, aluminium, non-stainless steel or that made entirely of plastics, nor does it cover gold plated or chromium plated cutlery except for chromium plated sharpening steels. However cutlery incorporating sterling silver caps and ferrules or unplated nickel-silver rivets and caps are within the scope of this standard.

Composition limits are specified for steels and non-ferrous metals for cutlery.

Requirements are specified for nonmetal handles made from the more commonly used materials (see 3.3), but not those made from exotic materials such as ivory or mother-of-pearl. The standard includes requirements for cutlery with nonmetal handles for use in a dishwashing machine.

In the case of silver plated cutlery, two minimum average thicknesses are specified, a "standard thickness" and a "special thickness" with a thicker deposit of silver.

NOTE The titles of the publications referred to in this standard are listed on the inside back cover.

2 Definitions

For the purposes of this standard the following definitions apply.

2.1

place settings

cutlery that is individual to each person sitting at the table. This includes such pieces as table knives, dessert knives (sometimes known as cheese knives), tea knives, table forks, dessert forks, cake or pastry forks, dessert spoons, soup spoons, porridge spoons, teaspoons, coffee spoons, fish eaters, fruit spoons and grapefruit spoons

2.2

serving cutlery

cutlery that is used for serving. This includes such pieces as table spoons, ladles, gravy spoons, salad servers, pie and tart servers, cake slicers, fish servers, butter knives, cheese serving knives, carving knives, carving forks, sharpening steels, sugar spoons, mustard spoons and salt spoons

2.3

significant surfaces

those parts of the cutlery that contact a flat horizontal surface upon which they are laid, whilst, in the case of spoons, forks and ladles, the concave face of their bowls or fork prongs are uppermost; in the case of knives, both sides are regarded as having significant surfaces

2.4

unsharpened knives

knives that do not have a sharpened blade because they are intended for use with soft foods such as fish, butter, tart and cake and whose blades are therefore not made of martensitic stainless steel

3 Materials and their applications

3.1 General. Table cutlery shall be made from materials that enable the finished cutlery to meet the performance requirements of clause 6 and shall be in accordance with 3.2 and 3.3 as appropriate.

3.2 Metals

3.2.1 The composition of metal parts of steel table cutlery shall be as given in Table 1.

The composition of nickel silver for spoons, forks, ladles, unsharpened knives, handles of knives, carving forks, sharpening steels, caps, ferrules and rivets shall be as follows:

Cu	60.0 % min.
Ni	9.0 % min.
Mn	0.50 % max.
Fe	0.30 % max.
Pb	0.05 % max.
Total impurities	0.50 % max.
Zn	remainder

Silver coatings, caps and ferrules shall be a minimum of 92.5 % Ag.

NOTE Some of the British Standard materials that meet the relevant composition requirements are given in Appendix C.

3.2.2 Any parts of table cutlery made of nickel-silver (copper-zinc-nickel alloy) shall be silver plated in accordance with clause 5 except that caps and rivets made from nickel-silver as specified in 3.2.1 need not be plated.

3.2.3 Any parts of cutlery made of stainless steel and claimed to be silver plated shall be in accordance with clause 5.

NOTE The non-stainless steel parts of sharpening steels may be chromium plated.

Table 1 — Steels for table cutlery

Applications	Materials	Chemical composition						
		C	P (max.)	S (max.)	Cr (min.)	Ni (min.)	Mo (max.) (see note)	V (max.) (see note)
Spoons, forks, ladles, unsharpened knives, handles of knives, carving forks and sharpening steels. Guards and prongs of carving items. Caps, ferrules and rivets	Austenitic stainless steel	% 0.15 max	% 0.045	% 0.030	% 16.0	% 6.0	% 4.0	
	Ferritic stainless steel	0.10 max	0.040	0.030	16.0		1.30	
Guards and prongs of carving items	Martensitic stainless steel (low carbon)	0.16 min	0.040	0.030	12.0		1.30	0.40
Knife blades. Handles of monobloc knives	Martensitic stainless steel (higher carbon)	0.26 min	0.040	0.030	12.0		1.30	0.40
Blades of sharpening steels	High carbon steel	1.10 min	0.035	0.035				
NOTE Additions of Mo and V are optional.								