
Section D. Wardroom Etiquette

Introduction	This section describes the proper wardroom etiquette for Auxiliaries.
D.1. Wardroom Customs	The wardroom is where the ship's officers eat. Enlisted personnel eat on the mess deck. If invited to dine in the wardroom and the occasion calls for a sit down meal, expect the Captain, the Executive officer, or other senior ship's officer to be the presiding Coast Guard officer at the mess. Presiding Coast Guard officers will invite the other Coast Guard officers who are members of the mess, plus those guests aboard invited to use the mess to be seated at the table when they are ready for the meal to be served. It is not customary for anyone to sit at the table without being invited to do so by the presiding Coast Guard officer. Custom also dictates that if it is necessary to leave the table before the meal is finished and the presiding Coast Guard officer has not risen, ask for permission before leaving the table by asking, "May I be excused, sir (or ma'am)?" Certain subjects are normally taboo during mealtime. Among these subjects are politics, religion, or shop talk. If in doubt, always let the presiding Coast Guard officer guide the conversation. Frequently, when several guests are aboard, it may be necessary to have the seating in the Coast Guard officers' wardroom mess in groups, particularly if the guests are going to be aboard for several days. Usually, a list will be posted indicating the Coast Guard officers and wardroom guests of each seating group to be seated. Do not wear headgear in the wardroom or other indoor spaces. Do not place hats on eating tables. As a hint, there are usually hat pegs just outside the wardroom or in the passageway.
D.2. Officer's Country	Officer's country is a semi-restricted area where officers work, eat, and berth. This area is normally off limits unless invited by the host. The wardroom is considered part of "officer's country".
D.3. Chief Petty Officer's Mess	On larger vessels, the Chief Petty Officers (CPOs or simply chiefs) have their own mess. This is a privileged area and guests do not enter at any time unless specifically invited by a CPO of the chief's mess. The same is true of the Captain's quarters (also known as "the cabin"). It is customary not to enter the crew's quarters unless invited to do so, or if it is necessary to pass through that area in your movement from one part of the ship to another.
D.4. Authorized/Restricted Areas	In some instances, shipboard hosts may indicate areas that may be frequented and may also point out other areas that will be restricted. Respect these areas. This is a sign of a courteous guest. Always observe the ship's rules. If in doubt, ask the host.
