



DINNERWARE CATEGORIES

Types and Characteristics

CHINA DINNERWARE

TYPE	CHARACTERISTICS	DISADVANTAGES	PRICE RANGE
CHINA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Strong -Translucent -Test-tap edge of a plate with a pencil and hear a clear, bell-like tone. -Resists scratching, chipping and staining. -Nonporous, won't absorb food or dirt. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Various grades - be sure to check workmanship. The thinnest indicates high quality. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Expensive
PORCELAIN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Looks more like glass than china and it has been vitrified by firing at a higher temperature than china. -Very strong. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Sometimes brittle. -Not to be used for daily meals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Expensive
BONE CHINA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Whiteness in color; bone ash has been added to basic mixture. -Strong -Translucent -Sometimes called English china. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Soft glaze 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Medium to high
CERAMIC CHINA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Nonporous -Translucent -Strong -Ovenproof -Resistant to chipping and cracking -Excellent for informal use. -Often comes with replacement guarantees for chipping, cracking or breaking under normal use. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Less expensive than fine china.

EARTHENWARE DINNERWARE

TYPE	CHARACTERISTICS	DISADVANTAGES	PRICE RANGE
SEMI-VITREOUS (Sometimes called SEMI-PORCELAIN)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Made of more selected clays than pottery. -Opaque -Somewhat porous -Fired at lower temperatures than china. -Fine earthenware is white and fired at higher temperatures than pottery. -Variety of color and patterns. -Durable when top quality. -Thinner than other types of earthenware but thicker than china. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Shows scratches because high gloss may be rather soft. -Not as greasy as porcelain. -When it chips, it will absorb food and dirt. -Won't resist extreme temperatures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Medium -Cost depends on amount of handwork and where it is made.

TYPE	CHARACTERISTICS	DISADVANTAGES	PRICE RANGE
STONEWARE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -High-fired -Nonporous -Greyish in color -Durable -Opaque -Harder than semi-vitreous ware -Dishwasher safe -Ovenproof (some) -Underglaze covered with clear overglaze -All patterns and colors permanent -Better grade of decorative pottery and tableware 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Because it is made from impure clays, it burns to a dark color and is usually covered with a salt or lead-in glaze. -Doesn't have delicacy, light colors or translucency of china. 	-Low to medium, depending on quality and design.
POTTERY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Thick -Heavy to touch -Opaque -Made of common clay -Fired at low temperatures -Porous -Variety of colors, designs and textures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Is not intended as a lifetime investment. -Breaks, chips, discolors. -Glazes craze form heat and use. -Sometimes poorly designed. -Cracked or chipped surface will absorb liquid and food stains. 	-Low to medium.

OTHER DINNERWARE

TYPE	CHARACTERISTICS	DISADVANTAGES	PRICE RANGE
METALS Silver Pewter Stainless Steel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Often used as serving pieces. -Stores easily. -Regular care with clean, warm, mild suds, wipe dry with soft cloth. -Unbreakable. -Keeps food hot. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Scratches -Silver and pewter tarnish. -Water spots. -Easily dented. 	-Medium to high. -Silver very high.
GLASSWARE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Many colors and designs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Not as versatile as china or earthenware. -Easily broken. 	-Low too high.
PLASTIC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Many colors, designs and shapes. -Many grades of quality on market. -Particularly adaptable to casual use. -Durable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -May crack and stain. -Lightweight-may cause spilling. -Won't stand heat or abrasives. -Knives sometimes scratch. 	-Low to medium.

Adapted from Dishes From All Occasions, North Dakota Cooperative Extension Service.

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7/97 Dinnerware Categories.wpd