

Royal Retaining 101

Standing and Waiting

While attending the Royals, stand close enough that you can hear Them if They call for you, or request something. Though, do not close enough that you are part of Their conversation... unless, of course, you are part of Their conversation. Be aware that there will be times when you will not be a part of the conversation. If you happen to be well acquainted with the Royals you are attending, you will find that there will be time to chat. This is fine, just keep in mind that The Royals will have many duties to attend to. You may not want to stand so that you appear to be monopolizing The Royals' time. Unless They ask you to!

Taking a Break or Switching Off Retainers

Make sure you are on time, ready to go when you need to be. If you are relieving someone, be sure to ask if there is anything you need to be aware of: messages, meetings, schedule changes or other requirements. Remember, do not leave the Royals unattended—if you need to take an emergency break, flag down the Royalty Liaison, Chamberlain, Head Retainer, or another retainer to help you,.

Attending the Royals: Court

Have water and goblets at the Thrones. See that any needed notes are set in place. If there are to be awards given, see if there are any circlets, arm bands, rings, medallions, or other items for distribution and have them at-the-ready. If you are to stand in attendance with The Royalty, see that you have a beverage as well. It is useful to bring a fan.

Final Thoughts

Most of what is critical in retaining comes down to a few things:

- Be polite.
- A courteous demeanor goes a great distance.
- Be mindful of yourself, your surroundings, and the royals.

Again, thank you very much for helping in this important capacity. Your service is greatly appreciated!

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First and foremost, THANK YOU for volunteering to retain! We hope this booklet is helpful to you in this important role.

What to do. How to do it. And why.

Your principle purpose is to enable the royalty (or whomever you happen to be retaining for) to do Their job. There are tasks that the royalty must do that no one else can. The retainers shoulder some of the work that enables the royalty to have time to fulfill Their duties and obligations. The retainers also allow our recreation to look and feel “real.”

In an important way, you have just become essential to the “show”.

This is the overall function of the retainers. But how the royal retainers do their jobs is as important as what they do. The way in which the retainers are seen to interact with the royalty sets the tone for how others will treat the royalty as well. The ways that the royal retainers interact with the populace represents the royalty, and will, for good or ill, form many people's first impression of who the royalty are. Often the retainers are quite formal with the royals, with guests, and with each other. They are formal with each other in order to maintain an overall formal ambience, they are formal with guests and the royals in order to:

*Make the show look correctly regal, and
Give the royals a greater opportunity to look gracious*

An important note: As a royal retainer you may see or hear matters of privacy or confidence. By accepting the honored position of Royal retainer you are promising to keep in strictest confidence all that you may see or hear. As you value your honor, do not break this confidence.

Knowing the Language: Royalty

As a general rule, the royalty are not addressed by name alone, nor are they referred to with a pronoun (him, her, or they). (Note: The royalty use only Their first names for the duration of Their reigns).

King: Your Majesty, My Lord King, Sire (if in direct fealty), King Ragnvaldr, His Majesty

Queen : Your Majesty, My Lady Queen, Queen Arabella, Her Majesty

Prince: My Lord Prince, Your Highness, Prince Dag, His Highness.

Princess: My Lady Princess, Your Highness, Princess AnneMarie, Her Highness.

Knowing the language: Visiting Royalty

There are times when royalty from another Kingdom will attend an event (or The Midrealm Royals will attend one of Their events) so it's useful to know how to handle those situations.

While in the Middle, a Silver Crown is a Prince/Princess and Gold is a King/Queen. This may not be true for all kingdoms. If you happen to know the Kingdom the Royal is from, you may address them as "Your Highness of the East" or, if you know their name, "Your Highness Thorvald."

If you can find an attendant of the foreign royalty, then you might inquire of them for what information would be useful. If you do not happen to know the foreign royalty, you may ask, "My sincere apologies, most noble Lord/Lady. May I have the honor of knowing to whom I am speaking?"

No matter who the royalty is, what kingdom They are from, or what your personal feelings about Them may be, your job is to be a kind and welcoming host.

Knowing the language: Peers and members of the populace

There may be a few people who would like to speak with the Royalty.

Dukes/Duchesses (Coronets have strawberry leaves) – "Your Grace"

Counts (Coronets are embattled) – Addressed as "Your Excellency"

Baron/ Baronesses (Coronets have pearls: gold is landed, silver is of the court)

– addressed as "Your Excellency"

Knights – Sir (even the women Knights tend to prefer sir)

Masters of Arms – Master

Order of Defense – Master/Mistress

Laurels/Pelicans – Mistress/Master

And My Lord or My Lady, as appropriate to gender, is always correct. If you are uncertain of someone's title, you may always embellish these, such as, "My Noble Lord" or "My Gracious Lady."

Knowing the language: More formal speech.

A few simple rules of courteous discourse, to set a more formal tone.

Use proper titles (see above)

Do not refer to royalty by proper name without title

Do not refer to royalty with pronouns (him, her, they)

Speak in complete sentences

Begin or end every sentence with the proper title "Your Highness, Your meeting is..." or "If it please Your Majesty, the court herald requests a moment..." and "Thank You, Your Majesty."

Stay on mission.

Do not raise your voice.

Respond to discourtesy with greater courtesy.

Attending

The Royals should not be left unattended. They may, however, go to the bathroom alone, or sit alone if They need time to themselves...just make sure you know where They are, what They might need, when They might need it, and when you can escort Them to Their next function. If They are in a room (in a meeting or alone) and you are right outside that room (and They know you are there), They are attended.

"The Basket" or "The Satchel"

There will probably be a basket or bag available for the retainers that will discretely hold a few items useful to a retainer. Examples may include the following items. tissues or handkerchief, a brush or comb, medication, a book for note taking (or for collecting names of those giving gifts to Their Majesties), a writing instrument, cell phone, water, a drinking cup (make sure you have one too!), some food items preferred by the Royals, a timekeeping device, a fan, the day's schedule, the names of other retainers and their duties/schedule, duct tape, and any personal items the royals may need. If instructed, you will carry this bag. You may also need to carry an umbrella (which you will hold over Her Majesty's head when outside if She desires it), any gifts given to the Royals, and so on. For this reason, you shouldn't bring a large bag or basket of your own when you report for your retainer shift, because you'll find it hard to juggle everything.