

Eight things to not talk about at a cocktail party
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We have all been in a situation at a party where we find ourselves scrambling for things to talk about, but we have also been in situations where we find ourselves with more than enough to say. With summer in full swing, don't forget to brush up on your cocktail party etiquette. Remember: a party is meant to be fun where people go to enjoy themselves and some topics of conversation will never allow for this so you should know which ones to avoid.

These include but are not limited to:

1. **Someone else.** Be it your ex-anything, your mom, a guest at the party, or (and this one is a big no-no) the host(ess) themselves. Just don't do it. If someone tries to engage in gossip and mistakes the party for a gossipfest, try to change the subject. If that doesn't work, excuse yourself, which will end the conversation.
2. **Your pets.** Don't show people a slideshow of images ranging from their birthday party to what you dressed them up as for Halloween because they don't care, especially if they don't have pets themselves. Yes, tell a funny story but I don't need to hear about how you shared an ice cream cone after a walk last Sunday.
3. **Complaining in any way, shape, or form.** It's in poor taste and just bad manners; no one likes a wet towel. If you've had a bad day, week, month or are just in a bad mood – leave it at the door. Sad sacks are never invited back.
4. **Sad stories.** No one wants to hear about your taxes or talk about death, and everyone is not interested in your most recent breakup. Girls, this means no crying in the bathroom. It's not the time or the place to share your tragedies with others; they're not in a position to care at that moment.
5. **Your child(ren).** This topic is similar to pets, unless the person you're engaging with also has them; they're not going to care. Don't boast about your child, not only is it not good form but you run the risk of making another parent feel bad if their child is underperforming. Don't get me wrong, yes you can talk about your children but please, don't waste my time trying to convince me that they're the next Mark Zuckerberg.
6. **Politics.** Don't get me wrong, there is nothing like a good political debate. But I find those are best left for smaller groups or one-on-one situations. It's my experience that people's opinions aren't likely to be swayed on this touchy

subject from other's alcohol-infused rants. If someone does start off on a tangent, simply excuse yourself politely.

7. **Religion.** This is similar to politics in the sense that someone's deeply rooted beliefs system isn't likely to be changed over a few glasses of vino. I find this to be one of the trickiest subjects and the one that's always to be avoided unless someone is directly inquiring about your place of worship.
8. **Your job.** No one wants to stand there and listen to you talk about yourself excessively; no matter how "cool" you think your job is. So just don't.

As with everything, there are always exceptions and it's more about how the conversation is handled versus what it is actually about. As a general rule, don't boast and try to keep the conversation 50/50. Be perceptive and take cues from those around you in the room, and if you do happen to offend someone (it can happen - no one is perfect!), just apologize.

So when you're out and about this summer, strutting your stuff at cocktail parties, remember to channel your inner Emily Post and work it!