**When to Wear it and When to Not**

Hats aren't the essential article of clothing they once were but are still worn by both sexes for fashion and for function. Knowing when to remove a hat is as important as wearing the right hat for the occasion. If you were a medieval knight who failed to remove his helmet or lift his visor and identify himself the consequences could be fatal. Throughout history hats identified social standing and removing a hat was a gesture of respect. In the "old days," men took off their hats in Christian churches, when they entered someone's home, when greeting a boss, and always in the presence of a lady. Ladies were entirely exempt from "hat rules," wearing them whenever and where ever they wished. While some of these customs are now historical footnotes, even in today's casual culture men and women still remove their hats as a sign of respect. Here's when it's fine to wear your hat and when it's not:

## Men – Hats can be left on…

- Outdoors
- At athletic events (indoors or out)
- On public transportation
- In public buildings such as post offices, airports, and hotel or office lobbies
- On elevators

## Men – Take hats off, including baseball caps …

- In someone's home
- At mealtimes, at the table

- While being introduced, indoors or out (unless it's frigid!)
- In a house of worship, unless a hat or head covering is required
- Indoors at work, especially in an office (unless required for the job)
- In public buildings such as a school, library, courthouse, or town hall
- In restaurants and coffee shops
- At a movie or any indoor performance
- When the national anthem is played
- When the flag of the United States passes by, as in a parade

## Women – Fashion hats (not baseball-style caps) can be left on…

- In someone's home
- At luncheons, weddings, garden parties
- At religious services
- At a movie or any indoor performance
- When the national anthem is played
- When the flag of the United States passes by, as in a parade

## Women — Take your fashion hat off…

- Anytime it blocks someone's view, such as at a wedding or in a theater
- Indoors at work

## Women — Remove baseball-style (unisex) caps…

- In someone's home
- At mealtimes, at the table
- While being introduced
- In a house of worship, unless a hat or head covering is required
- Indoors at work, unless required for the job
- In public buildings such as a school, library, courthouse, or town hall
- In restaurants and coffee shops
- At a movie or any indoor performance
- When the national anthem is played
- When the flag of the United States passes by, as in a parade

(Cancer patients are exempt from hat rules. They may keep their hats or caps on at all times if

they wish.)