

## SERVANTS FAQ

- How much of the population was in service?
- How did you find a servant/find work?
- How much did servants *really* make?
- When were servants paid?
- Who wore uniforms and when?
- How were servants addressed?
- What was the household hierarchy?
- On the subject of being beneath the Under Footmen, what about sex?
- How were servants disciplined?
- What is the Butler's Pantry? And the Servants' Hall?
- Were there slaves in England?

### MALE SERVANTS *Perks in italics.*

- Butler –the COO of the household. *Wine, candles, playing cards.*
- The man cook. *Leftover meat and fat.*
- Valet *clothes.*
- Coachman. *Old carriage and harness parts.*
- Hall porter. *Vails?*
- Footman. *Vails*

### FEMALE SERVANTS *Perks in italics*

- Housekeeper *tips from guided tours when family away (e.g., Lizzie Bennet's visit to Pemberley).*
- Lady's maid *clothing.*
- Cook (female) *leftover meat and fat.*
- Kitchen maid/under cook.
- Upper house maid
- Under house maid
- Laundry maid.
- Scullion/scullery maid. Servant of all work.

The Household Establishment of a respectable Country Gentleman, with a young family, whose Net Income is from £16,000 to £18,000 a Year, and whose expenses do not exceed £7,000:

Housekeeper	24 gns. per year	French Man Cook	80
Female Teacher	30	Butler	50
Lady's Maid	20	Coachman	28
Head Nurse	20	Footman	24
Second Nurse	10	Under Footman	20
Nursery Maid	7	Groom	Liveries and a gratuity
Upper House Maid	15	Lady's Groom	12
Under House Maid	14	Nursery Room Boy	Clothes and a gratuity
Upper Laundry Maid	14	Head Gamekeeper	70 + 13sh./week board-wages and fuel
Under Laundry Maid	10	Under Gamekeeper	10
Dairy Maid	8	Gardener	40 + 13sh./week board-wages and fuel
Second Dairy Maid	7	Assistant Gardener	12sh./week
Still Room Maid	9	Men receive a Pot of Ale per day, and the Women a pint, besides table-beer. <i>Source: Adams (1825)</i>	
Scullion	9		

Faithful Retainers, Doddering Butlers, and Pert Housemaids? (Janet Mullany)

**The Adams's suggestion of household staffing needs (1825):**

<b>Income £</b>	<b>Family</b>	<b>Staff</b>
100	Widow/unmarried lady	Young Maidservant (5 - 10 gns/year)
150-180	Married couple	Servant Maid (10 - 12 gns/year)
200	Married couple	Servant Maid of all work (12 - 14 gns/year)
300	Couple + 1 - 3 children	Two Maidservants
400	Couple + 1 - 3 children	Cook, Housemaid, and Nursery Maid or Boy, and occasional Gardener
500	Couple + 1 - 3 children	Cook, Housemaid, Nursery Maid, Boy (Groom and help in house and garden), occasional Gardener
500-600	Couple with children	Cook, Housemaid, Nursery Maid/other female servant, male Livery servant (Groom/Footman), occasional Gardener
600-750	Couple with children	Cook, Housemaid, one other female servant, Footman, Groom (help in garden), occasional Gardener
1000-1500	Couple with children	Cook, two Housemaids, Nursery Maid/other female servant, Coachman, Footman, male servant (stable and garden)
1500-2000	Couple with children	Cook, Housekeeper, two Housemaids, Kitchen Maid, Nursery Maid/other female servant, coachman, Groom, Footman, Gardener, assistant for garden and stable
2000-3000	Couple with children	Cook, Lady's Maid, two House Maids, Nurse, Nursery Maid, Kitchen Maid, Laundry Maid, Butler, Valet, Coachman, two Grooms, Footman, two Gardeners
3000-4000	Couple with children	Housekeeper, cook, Lady's Maid, Nurse, two House Maids, Laundry Maid, Kitchen Maid, Nursery Maid, Butler, Coachman, two Grooms, Valet, two Footmen, two Gardeners, Laborer
4000-5000	Couple with children	Housekeeper, Cook, Lady's Maid, Nurse, two House Maids, Laundry Maid, Stillroom Maid, Nursery Maid, Kitchen Maid, Scullion, Butler, Valet, House Steward, Coachman, two Grooms, one assistant Groom, two Footmen, three Gardeners, Laborer
Income Breakdown, in percent: 33 Household expenses, including provisions 25 Servants and equipage (carriages, horses, liveries) 25 Clothes, education of children, medical assistance, entertainment 12.5 Rent, tax, repairs of home and furniture 4.5 Reserve against emergencies		

But how much did things *really* cost then?

Item	1810 price	2007 US\$
Flannel (yd)	2s. 3d.	11.72
Cambric muslin (yd)	4s. 6d.	23.44
Figured cambric muslin (yd)	4s. 6d.	23.44
Checked muslin (yd)	7s. 0d.	36.48
Poplin (yd)	4s. 3d.	22.14
Women's cloth gloves	4s. 0d.	20.84
Men's leather gloves*	10s. 6d.	54.70
Cost of having wool cloak made	10s. 0d.	54.70
Pair silk stockings	12s. 0d.	65.52
Pair cotton stockings	4s. 3d.	22.14
Meat (lb)	8d.	3.48
Butter (lb)	12d.	5.24
Cheese (lb)	9 1/2d.	4.12
Salmon (whole fish, lb)	2s. 9d.	14.32
4 small soles	6s 0d.	31.26
Gold locket	18s. 0d.	93.78
Book of music lessons	6s 0d.	31.26
Retail price of <i>Pride &amp; Prejudice</i>	18s. 0d.	93.78
Piano for Chawton	30 guineas	3,282.32
Pair of coach horses	60 guineas	6,564.66
Quartern (4 lb loaf)	2s. 6d.	13.02
Quartern (1800-1804)**	11 3/4d.	6.34

Prices based on Austen's letters and \**Emma* in Feldman, James, "How Wealthy Is Mr. Darcy--Really?" *Persuasions*, 1990, Vol. 12; \*\*Porter (see bibliography).

Data from [www.measuringworth.com/calculators/ppoweruk](http://www.measuringworth.com/calculators/ppoweruk) calculated to 2006 GBP and then doubled to reach approximate dollar value.

***"It's so difficult to get good help..."***

It often happens that Servants sent on Messages, are apt to stay out somewhat longer than the Message requires, perhaps, two, four, six, or eight Hours, or some such Trifle, for the Temptation to be sure was great, and Flesh and Blood cannot always resist: When you return, the Master storms, the Lady scolds; stripping, cudgelling, and turning off, is the Word: But here you ought to be provided with a Set of Excuses, enough to serve on all Occasions: For Instance, your Uncle came fourscore Miles to Town this Morning, on purpose to see you, and goes back by Break of Day To-morrow: A Brother-Servant that borrowed Money of you when he was out of Place, was running away to Ireland: You were taking Leave of an old Fellow-Servant, who was shipping for Barbados: Your Father sent a Cow to you to sell, and you could not find a Chapman till Nine at Night: You were taking Leave of a dear Cousin who is to be hanged next Saturday: You wrenched your Foot against a Stone, and were forced to stay three Hours in a Shop, before you could stir a Step: Some Nastiness was thrown on you out of a Garret Window, and you were ashamed to come Home before you were cleaned, and the Smell went off: You were pressed for the Sea-service, and carried before a Justice of Peace, who kept you three Hours before he examined you, and you

## Faithful Retainers, Doddering Butlers, and Pert Housemaids? (Janet Mullany)

got off with much a-do: A Bailiff by mistake seized you for a Debtor, and kept you the whole Evening in a Spunging-house: You were told your Master had gone to a Tavern, and came to some Mischance, and your grief was so great that you inquired for his Honour in a hundred Taverns between Pall-mall and Temple-bar. *From Advice to Servants by Jonathan Swift; more at <http://www.ourcivilisation.com/smartboard/shop/swift/servant.htm>*

If a Duke gives me Dinner four Times a Week, his Footmen would pocket as much of my Money as would serve my Expense at a Tavern for a week. *Baron de Pollnitz, 1738.*

Servants are not to be corrected, or even spoken to, but they immediately threaten to leave their service. *Another unhappy foreign visitor, 1808.*

The management of all domestic affairs is certainly the proper business of woman--and, unfashionably rustic as such an assertion may be thought, it is not beneath the dignity of any lady, however high her rank, to know how to educate her children, to govern her servants ... Make yourself, therefore, so thoroughly acquainted with the most proper method of conducting a family, and with the necessary expense of every article. *Lady Pennington, writing to her daughter in 1770.*

I went after a place at a gentleman's just come from Paris ... I met him in the passage as he was going to his chair. I told him that I heard he wanted a servant. "Who did you live with last?" I told him. He agreed with me for fifteen guineas a year, and half a guinea a week, and said: "Come in the morning." He desired his valet to give directions to Mr Bocquet the tailor, and he measured me for two suits of clothes directly. When I got the livery, he rang the bell for me, and gave me twelve pairs of silk stockings in a parcel to wear; and said: "I like my servants to go genteelly." A few days after he asked my name. *John MacDonald's Memoirs.*

I have been so driven at work I have had hardly any time for anything for myself. I am up at half past five and six every morning and do not go to bed till nearly twelve at night and I feel so tired sometimes I am obliged to have a good cry.... I have saved a small piece of plum pudding for you and will save some mince pies and I thought you would like a little dripping so I have sent all. *Maid-servant's letter home, 1870.*

I hear from Mrs. Hunt that you are wishing for a situation as Cook in Beckenham and shall be glad to hear full particulars from you. Can you make good clear and thick soups, fry and serve fish in other ways also? Can you make good entrees, puff paste, creams and jellies? Roast before the fire and serve and dress all kinds of poultry? Are you an early riser? Wages £25. All found 5 in family, 4 servants (cook, parlourmaid, housemaid, Valet and companion housekeeper). *Letter from prospective employer, 1896.*

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FICTION

- Mrs. Gaskell. *Cranford*
- Thompson, Flora. *Lark Rise to Candleford*

MOVIES

- Gosford Park*
- Princess Caraboo*
- Far from the Madding Crowd*

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