

# GOING ABROAD

---

DO'S AND DON'TS



OLGA ZOERNEROVA

# Have you been abroad before?

---



What countries have you visited?

Have you ever been to Europe, the US or Australia?

Where are you going to do your research after you finish this programme?

# Every country is different

---

## This presentation **is**

- a collection of observations
- a handy guide to basic rules
- a list of things that may help you get used to staying abroad

## This presentation **is not**

- a complete list
- entirely universal
- an attempt to disregard your customs



# Presentation outline

---

**1. Communication**

**2. Eating etiquette (table manners)**

**3. Travelling and commuting**

**4. Meeting new people**

**5. Behaviour and customs**



# 1. Communication

---

greeting and addressing people

basic rules of politeness

gestures





# Greeting

---

appropriate greeting phrase

handshake (most Western countries)

kiss on a cheek (Southern Europe and France)

eye contact

no need to bow

eye contact is seen as positive



# We also greet people when...

---

... we enter a shop or a lift (elevator)

... we sit down in a restaurant

... we enter someone's office



# How do we greet and address people?

---

- with a smile
- with eye contact
- with an appropriate polite phrase
  - depends on the setting and the rank
  - if the person we are greeting is older/in a higher position than us, we should address them with an appropriate title
  - e.g. professor, doctor, mr/ms





# Magic words

---

Always say **PLEASE** and **THANK YOU**

In certain societies and circles it may seem as a great offence and bad manners if you don't use them while asking or receiving, as well as in other situations (in restaurants, when given right of way etc.)



THANK YOU



I'M SORRY



PLEASE



EXCUSE ME

# Watch your body language

---

gestures are not universal

what is seen as an acceptable sign  
in your country, may be terribly  
offensive elsewhere







# How (not) to show numbers

The Chinese system for showing numbers **doesn't work anywhere else** in the world.

In the West, you will have to **show the number of fingers** to demonstrate the number – or simply *say* the number.



## 2. Eating and table manners

---

communicating with  
waiting staff

amount of food ordered

cutlery v chopsticks

manners



# When addressing restaurant staff...

---

- greet
- be polite
- say please and thank you
- don't shout to them
  - a small wave is enough to attract their attention
  - in some countries, even waving is seen as impolite, and your only option is to wait





# How much food should I order?

---

In the West we usually order the amount of food and number of courses we are actually able to eat.

Leaving too much food uneaten at the end is seen as wasteful and impolite.

Unlike in some cultures, completely finishing a meal is common and seen as positive.

**DON'T ORDER TOO MUCH FOOD IF YOU ARE NOT ABLE TO EAT IT ALL**



# To tip, or not to tip?

---

Unlike in many Asian countries, tipping the waiting staff is a vital part of good manners in the West.

In the USA, tips are actually the main source of income of waiting staff.

The tip should be around 10% of the bill.



# Chopsticks v cutlery

---

Don't ask for chopsticks when eating Western food.

Use provided cutlery instead.



**STILL EATING**



**I'VE FINISHED**



# Appreciating food?

---

Slurping and burping are seen as very rude in the West!





# 3. Travelling and commuting

---

manners in public transport

(applies to buses, trains, planes, metro, and even lifts (elevators))



First get off, then get on

---





Don't push in or out of a train/bus  
ask 'excuse me' politely instead

---



# Don't stand right at the door

---



# Take off your backpack to make more space

---



# Offer your seat to old people and pregnant women

---





Let's watch a video about lift etiquette

---



# 4. Meeting new people

---

avoiding stereotypes

behaviour

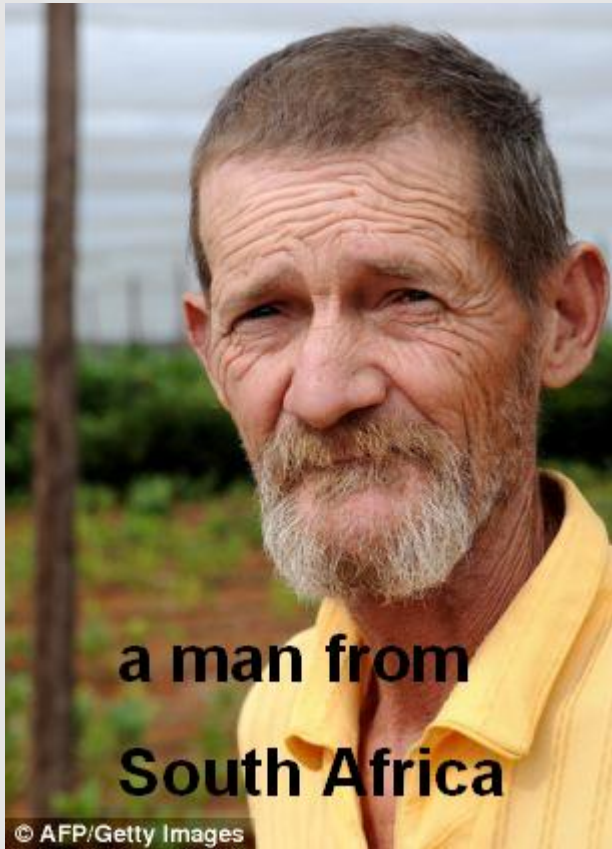
inappropriate topics





# Avoid stereotyping

---



# Be careful not to stare

---

- **to stare** = to look for a long time with the eyes wide open, especially when surprised, frightened, or thinking
- staring at people is considered extremely impolite in the West
- don't stare, even if you mean it well (e.g. you appreciate someone's clothing or hairstyle)
- when caught staring, the best thing to do is smile and look away quickly



# Comments not allowed

---

- commenting on people's looks, weight, clothes or hairstyle is considered very rude, and can be inappropriate even when it's positive
- don't comment especially if you don't know the person well
- comments to avoid even when talking to friends include weight issues and other personal matters, unless the person starts talking about it themselves



# Inappropriate topics to ask people about

---

- weight
- age (esp. middle aged people)
- salary
- rent
- boyfriend/girlfriend and other personal matters (with people you don't know well)





# 5. General behaviour and customs

---

Just a few tips and observations...



# Recycle!

---





# Spitting and throat clearing

---



When yawning and sneezing...

---



... cover your mouth.

# Squatting in public areas seen as strange

---



# Prepare for shorter lunch breaks!

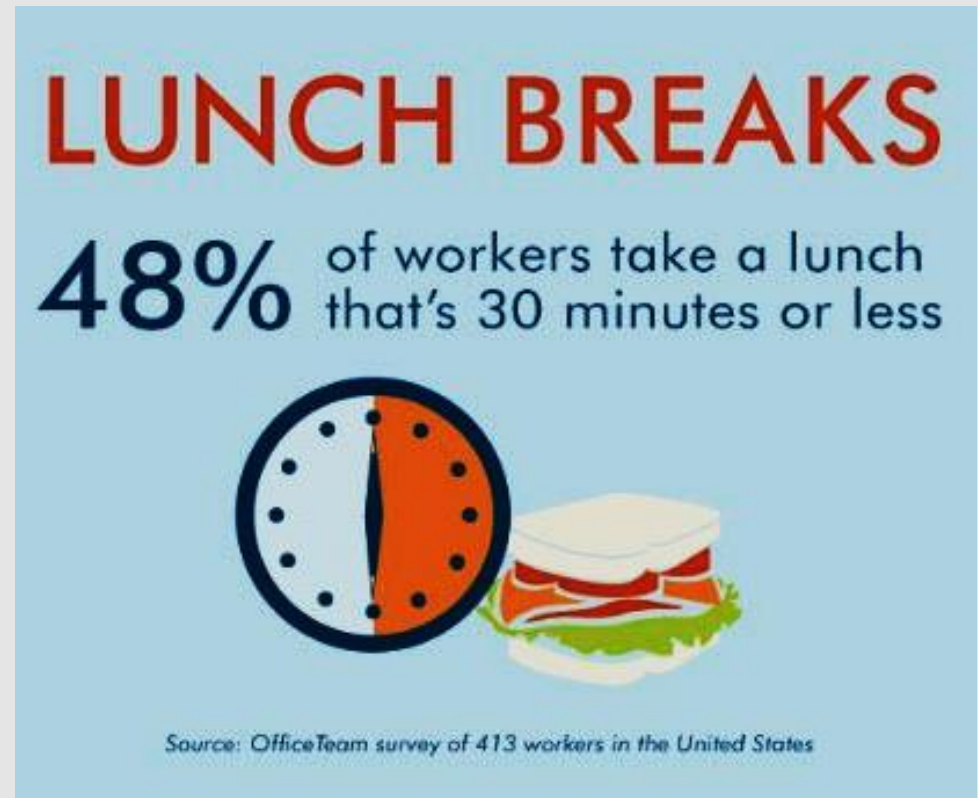
(no time for afternoon naps)

---

In Northern and Western Europe, lunch breaks usually last 30 – 60 minutes.

In Southern Europe they may be longer, and they're often called '*siestas*'.

However, in the USA it is often less than 30 minutes!





# Western toilets vs squatting toilets

---



Vs



THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!

---

*The End*

Any questions?