

Hello everyone!

The conversation topic for our June 18 class is: **American Social Skills**

In this class we will participate in four activities (if we have enough time :-)

1) Small group practice:

- Have you ever been confused in a social situation with Americans?
- What was your experience like? What did you learn?

2) Good Manners vs. Bad Manners **Quiz!**

3) A short presentation on American Body Language

4) Big Group: Wrap-up conversations

Below is the quiz, the content of my Power Point presentation, and a list of common American “every day” manners.

Take the Quiz!

Good Manners vs. Bad Manners in America

Write in the blank "GM" if good manners, "BM" if bad manners

1. Don't stand, or sit too close to someone. _____
2. Make eye contact when talking to someone _____
3. Eat with your mouth open _____
4. Be late to meetings and dates _____
5. Say "thank you" if someone offers you something. _____
6. Belch at the table. _____
7. Jump a line (queue). _____
8. Give up your seat to an elderly person on the bus. _____
9. Say "I'm sorry" if you have made a mistake, or offended someone. _____
10. Talk loudly on your cell phone while in public. _____
11. Cover your mouth when you cough. _____
12. Say "good morning (or afternoon, or evening) when greeting someone. _____
13. Interrupt when someone else is talking. _____
14. . When making small talk, inquire if married and have children _____
15. . Bring your new boss a gift _____

Slide #1

Today's Conversation Topic: [American Social Skills](#)

Content is posted on eslann.com

We will participate in four activities:

1) Small Group Practice:

Have you ever been confused by American social skills?
What was your experience?

2) Good Manners vs. Bad Manners Quiz!

3) American Body Language Presentation

4) Big Group: Wrap-up conversations



Slide #2

Today's Conversation Topic: [American Social Skills](#)

Body Language –do you know:

1. Eye contact is the most important

2. “Personal Space” is super important too!



Slide #3



American Body Language

Eye Contact Most Important

Good Eye Contact Means:

- Respect
- Confident
- Interest
- Trust
- Truth

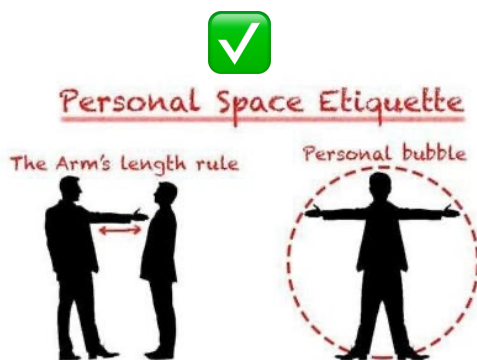
Poor Eye Contact Means:

- Lack of respect
- Lack of confidence
- Not interested
- Untrustworthy
- Lying

Slide #4

American Body Language

Don't stand so close to me!



Here is some information about common American “everyday” manners:

Eye Contact: In the United States, most people consider it polite, and a demonstration of sincerity, to look each other directly in the eye, at least in intervals, when having a conversation. They may not look at you in the eyes for the entire conversation – just part of it. If someone talks to you and you will not look at them in the eyes, they may think you are trying to hide something or being secretive.

Personal Space: Observe a "personal space" around people. When talking to someone, do not stand very close. Americans do not touch much and it is not considered polite to touch a person on the shoulder or arm to gain attention. People from the southern U.S. will often hug (embrace) old friends when meeting or departing but it is probably safer to just shake hands. Persons of the same sex do not hold hands in public.

Greetings/Parting Company: Generally, when people who are not well acquainted with each other meet or part company, it is considered polite to shake hands. Refusing to shake an offered hand is likely to be interpreted as rude. When shaking hands, a firm but not tight grip is preferred. Simply placing your hand in the hand of the other person is considered to be an ill-mannered and insincere handshake. Also, kissing the cheek of an American is may take them off-guard and lead to major awkwardness.

Say “hello” when you meet new people: When you meet someone for the first time, Americans typically say, “Hello” or, “Hi, nice to meet you.” If you have someone else with you, it is polite to introduce that person as well. The next time you meet the person, you can say, “Nice to see you again,” or, “I remember meeting you last month. How are you?”

Say “please”: Most Americans say “please” when they want something. For example, if you are ordering food at a restaurant, you might say “I will have the soup, please”. If you ask for something and don’t say “Please”, Americans will think you are rude.

Say “thank you”: Americans say “Thank you” a lot. In some cultures, people only say “thank you” for significant events. In the United States, it is common to say “thanks” even for small gestures. For example, if you hand someone a book, they might thank you. Try to remember to say “Thank you,” especially to anyone who is helping or try to help you.

Say “sorry”: Americans also say “sorry” more than people in other cultures. For example, if someone accidentally bumps into you on the street, they may apologize with “excuse me” or “sorry.” Americans, especially American women, sometimes use the word “sorry” to express sadness for something that happened to you, even though they were not involved in the event. For example, you may tell someone that you were sick over the weekend or that a friend died. To be kind and polite, they might respond, “I’m so sorry.”

Be on time: promptness is considered polite. If you are going to be late it is best to call and let people know.

Personal Hygiene: Bathing or showering is done every day by virtually all U.S. natives. Personal odors are not acceptable. Ninety-some percent of Americas use deodorant under the arm after each bath. (It is found in a drug store (apothecary) or near the toothpaste in all stores.

Lining Up (Forming a Queue): In the United States, forming a line is most common for counter service where food, tickets, or services must be bought and multiple people must be served at once. It is customary to form a line in

front of the register and wait one's turn to be served: pushing past others and jostling in a free for all is not acceptable, nor is cutting in front of someone who is waiting.

Cover your mouth when your burp or cough: Many Americans consider it impolite to make bodily noises in front of other people. They try not to pass gas, burp, or make other bodily noises in public or in front of people they do not know well. Some people will excuse themselves to the bathroom if they need to burp. If you do fart or burp, it is polite to say, "Excuse me."

Table Manners & Restaurant Etiquette: When dining, people consider it rude for a guest or dining partner to belch or burp, eat with an open mouth, smack, or lick your fingers. Napkins, generally provided are available at every meal and should be placed in one's lap and then used throughout the meal to clean one's fingers and mouth.

Tippling: If you are eating in a restaurant, you will be expected to add a 15 to 20 % tip for the server to your bill. In America, wait staff might occasionally stop by your table to ask how your meal is, which is considered good service. They will also bring you your check when it seems reasonable that you are finished with your meal, however this is not necessarily an indication that you must leave right away (Do not be too embarrassed to ask for the check either: waiters and waitresses cannot read minds.) Take your time to finish your meal, and unless there is a line of people waiting at the door, it is not considered rude to linger at your table for as long as you like.

Cell Phones: When making or receiving a call in a public place, with the exception of some public transportation, it is polite to move away from people who can hear the conversation. It is seen as very inconsiderate to carry on telephone conversations in a loud voice in public, in particular restaurants, offices, museums, and shops. In places like theatres, concerts, or cinemas it is customary to turn off one's cell phone altogether: patrons who do not abide by this rule may be asked to leave, and management will not refund your ticket.

Smoking: Only about 14% of the American public are smokers. Smoking bans and restrictions exist in every state in all enclosed places. That includes airports, hotels, stores, concert halls, etc. Americans have little tolerance for smokers who violate the smoking bans due to concerns about second hand smoke dangers. Smokers are also often restricted from being within 15 feet (4.5 meters) of an entrance to a building. Smokers often are found standing some distance from an entrance smoking. American smokers almost never walk while smoking. Walking with a lit cigarette is considered rude. Always ask if it is ok to smoke in a crowded area before lighting up.

Hold the door open for other people: Most Americans will hold a door open for you when you are entering/exiting a building. Whether you are a man or a woman, it is polite to hold the door for the person behind you.

*If you have any questions or comments on this content, please feel free to contact me at: annhillen.esl@gmail.com
I enjoy hearing from you!*