

Hello everyone!

Welcome to American Social Skills for English Language Learners.

Our topic today is: Manners

Every society has rules of social contact which are called manners. What is considered good manners in one society, may be considered bad manners in another. Today we will discuss manners that are important in American society.

Activities:

QUIZ: Good manners vs. bad manners

Review: What manners are important in American society? What is expected of you?

Practice: Real life scenarios -- what should you do?





From the “Social Q’s” Column of the New York Times

A reader asks:

I recently moved into a studio apartment. There are three other apartments on my floor, and the occupants of two of them leave their shoes outside their doors. I find this bizarre and disgusting! It’s not a matter of space. Each apartment has plenty of closets. I can understand leaving muddy shoes or wet umbrellas in the hall, but I think personal belongings belong inside. Should I introduce myself and ask what’s up, or just get over it?

Good Manners or Bad Manners? Let’s discuss!

Take the Quiz!

Good Manners vs. Bad Manners in the U.S.?

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 appointments.
5. Hold the door open for someone behind you.
6. Belch (burp) 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.
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 with a stranger, ask if they are married and have children.
15. Bring your new boss a gift.

What manners are important in American society?

What is expected of you?

- Meeting people
- Personal Space
- Eating
- Punctuality
- Speaking



Meeting People

- Introducing yourself
 - What name do you use?
- How do you address other people?



- The Handshake
 - What is expected?



Meeting People

Introducing yourself



- What name do you use?
 - Informal social situations use your first name only: *Hi, I'm Susan.*
 - Formal social situations use your first and last name, and title if you have one: *Hello, I'm Susan Smith. Or Hello, I'm Professor Smith.*
- How do you address other people?
 - Informal social situations: using the person's first name is fine: *Hello Susan.*
 - Formal situations or when you want to show respect: *Mr., Miss, Mrs., Ms., Sir, Madam, Doctor, etc.*

The Handshake

- Shaking hands is an essential American mannerism.
- Used in formal and informal social interactions.
- Both adult men and women shake hands.
 - Children do not.

What is expected of you ?

- If someone extends their hand, it is expected you will accept the gesture and shake hands.
- It is impolite to refuse a handshake.

The Proper Handshake

- Let's review the steps of a proper handshake.
- 1. Grasp hand firmly but not too hard.
- 2. Have eye contact.
- 3. Shake with authority.
- 4. Only two or three pumps.



Four tips for a proper handshake

1. **Don't give a weak handshake:** If your handshake is weak or limp, you will be perceived as lacking confidence or strength of character.

2. Shake with the right hand only: When you add another hand, it appears fake.

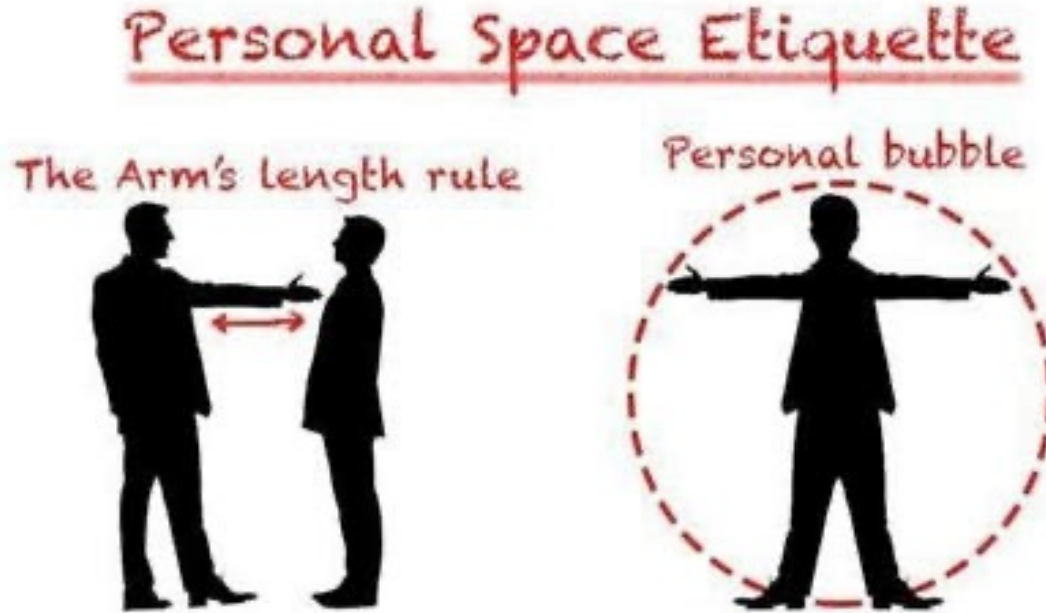
3. Make eye contact and smile: If you want to make a good impression when you are shaking hands, you also need to connect with the person through the eyes and the smile.

4. If you are not sure how firmly to shake, remember that the strength of your handshake should match the other person's strength. (Practice with a friend!)



Personal Space

- Americans like a lot of personal space.
- Most Americans stand about one foot apart from each other.



Don't stand too close to me!

Personal Space

- If you stand or sit too close to someone, they may think you are being overly aggressive or familiar.



Eating

Do:

- Chew with your mouth closed
- Use a napkin
- Wait for others to be served before you start eating

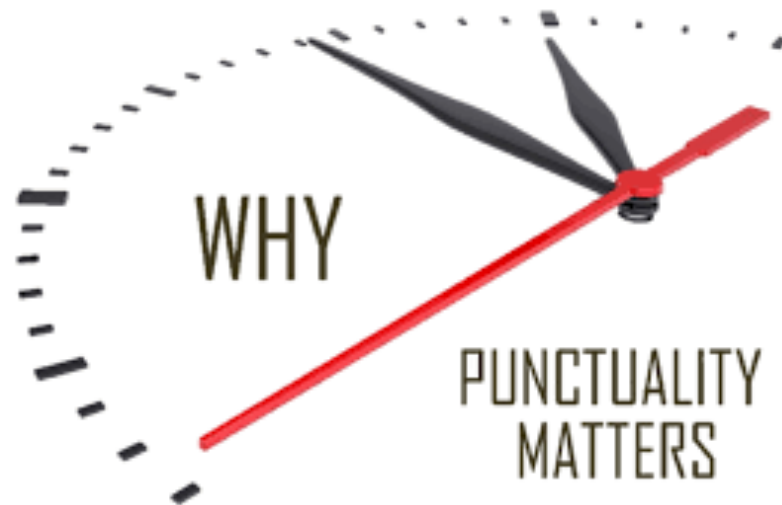
Don't:

- Chew with mouth open
- Wipe your mouth with your shirt or other clothing
- Make noises: burping, crunching, smacking lips, slurping
- Share utensils or drinking glasses, cups, bottles, straws
- “Double Dip”
- Pick your teeth in public



Punctuality

- Americans place a big importance on time management and punctuality.
- Delays and lateness tend to reflect badly on people, often interpreted as disrespectful or rude.
- However, lateness can be acceptable in some contexts (for example, when attending large parties or social gatherings).



Punctuality

- You should be on time for
 - Business meetings
 - Classes
 - Theater shows
 - Graduations
 - Funerals
 - Weddings



Punctuality

Exceptions to the rule!

- You are expected to be *a few minutes late* (up to 15 minutes) for certain casual social events such as:
 - Dinner at a friend's home (don't come early!)
 - Small Parties (fewer than 20 people)
- It is Ok to be over 30 min late to large events:
 - Big parties (galas, special events, etc.)
 - Sporting events
 - Large music concerts

exception
to the
rule

Speaking

- How to interrupt a conversation
- How to respectfully disagree with someone



How To Disagree Respectfully



How to interrupt a conversation politely

It is OK to interrupt someone speaking - if done politely

Use one of the following phrases:

Excuse me, may I interrupt you for a minute?

Do you mind if I just jump in really quick?

I don't mean to interrupt, but...

May I interrupt briefly?

Can I just add my two cents?

Can I quickly share an idea that just popped in?

Can I just add something here?

Strategies to respectfully disagree in English

- Don't make it personal.
- Listen to the other person's point of view.
- Avoid putting down the other person's ideas and beliefs.
- Use "I" statements to communicate how you feel and what you think.
- Stay calm.



Common Phrases to Respectfully Disagree in English

- I respectfully disagree.
- I see what you're saying, but I think...
- I understand where you are coming from but. . .
- I'm sorry I disagree with you on this.
- I'm sorry I just don't see it that way.
- Let's just agree to disagree!



Manners Real Life Scenarios – What should you do?

1. You were invited to a gathering at an acquaintance's house, and you really do not want to go. What should you say?
2. You are invited to a friend's house for dinner at 6:00pm. What time should you arrive? Should you bring something?
3. A new family just moved in next door. How should you welcome them to the neighborhood?
4. Your neighbor has many fruit trees on his property. He knocks on your door and gives you two large bags of figs. You hate figs. What should you do?

