



SOCIAL CUSTOMS & BEHAVIOUR

Be very aware of local customs and standards of dress. Indonesia is a relatively conservative country where religious, family and social values are highly respected. Indonesians make allowances for western ways, especially in the main tourist areas, but there are a few things to bear in mind when dealing with people.

Handshaking is accepted between both sexes right across Indonesia, but a gentle squeeze as opposed to a knuckle-crushing grip is the way to go. To add warmth and sincerity, you'll find that many people follow the handshake with a touch of the heart. When meeting someone for the first time, Indonesians often shake hands and state their name at the same time.

Left-handedness in Indonesia is an anomaly and children are guided into using their right hand from an early age. The reason for this is that Indonesians use the left hand for cleaning themselves so it is good to get into the habit of using your right hand for passing items and eating.

Apart from shaking hands, physical contact between opposite sexes is minimal. However, contact between the same sexes is considered normal behavior and not to all sexual.

It is considered polite to bow your body slightly when walking across in front of somebody who is seated, or if interrupting people. At the same time you can say 'purr misi' (excuse me).

It has been said that touching someone's head is considered rude. This may be the case with an older person, but you will see people of the same age touching their friend's hair and people patting children on the head.

Talking to someone with your hands on your hips is impolite and considered a sign of aggression.

The correct way to beckon someone is with the hand extended and a downward waving motion. Gesturing with an index finger crooked upward won't be understood and is considered rude.

It is fine to point at something to indicate direction, but rude to point at someone – best to gesture with the whole hand.

Hospitality is highly regarded, and when food or drink is placed in front of you, it is polite to wait until invited to begin eating. It is impolite to refuse a drink even when not thirsty. When entering someone's house, it is polite to remove your shoes

While places of worship are open to all, permission should be requested to enter, particularly when ceremonies or prayers are in progress. Ensure you are decently dressed. Always remove footwear before entering a mosque. Sarongs are required when entering temples. Women should never enter a Balinese temple when menstruating.

Indonesians will accept any lack of clothing on the part of poor people who cannot afford them, but not for westerners.



QUICK REFERENCE of ESSENTIAL INDONESIAN

English:

- Hello
- Excuse Me
- Goodbye
- Please (if asking for help)
- Thank you
- Can you speak English?
- I (don't) understand
- Yes
- No
- Where is...?
- Hotel
- Train station
- Bus station
- Market
- How much is this?
- What's the time?
- Do you have a room?
- Today
- Tomorrow
- Yesterday

Indonesian:

- Salam
- Permisi
- Sampai jumpa
- Tolong
- Terima kasih
- Apakah anda bisa berbahasa Inggris?
- Saya (Tidak) mengerti
- Ya
- Tidak
- ...di mana?
- Hotel
- Stasiun Kereta api
- Stasiun bis
- Pasar
- Berapa harga ini?
- Jam berapa?
- Apakah ada kamar?
- Hari ini
- Besok
- Kemarin

Greetings: Time of day

- Good morning (sunrise-10am)
- Good day (10am-4pm)
- Good afternoon (4pm-sunset)
- Good evening (after dark)
- Good night (on retiring)

Goodbyes

- Farewell (when you're leaving)
- Farewell (when others are leaving)
- See you later

First Encounters

- What's your name?
- My name is...
- I'd like to introduce you to...
- I'm pleased to meet you
- How are you?
- Fine, and you?
- Left
- Right
- Straight
- Stop

- Selamat pagi
- Selamat siang
- Selamat malam
- Selamat malam
- Selamat tidur
- Selamat tinggal
- Selamat jalan
- Sampai jumpa
- Siapa nama anda?
- Nama saya...
- Kenalkan, nama dia...
- Saya senang bertemu dengan anda
- Apa kabar?
- Kabar baik, apa kabar?
- Kiri
- Kanan
- Terus
- Berhenti