

Language Links

Culture Corner

DO'S AND DON'TS IN VIETNAM

Vietnam is a friendly and safe place to travel and filled with hidden charm. However, every country has its own special customs and behaviors, and Vietnam is no exception. With a sprinkling of common sense, your trip should be memorable, smooth, and trouble free. Do not be overly concerned, generally, Vietnamese people are very appreciative if they see you trying to abide by their customs, and quite forgiving if you get it wrong or forget. If you make the effort, you will be rewarded. With a cool head and sensible planning, one can avoid these problems and the advice below will help you to have a perfect trip while in Vietnam:

Inside this issue:

Culture Corner 1

Learning Strategies 2

Here's the Answer 3

Bits and Pieces 4



By Piyaporn



- Travelers are advised not to wear revealing clothes that show off too much skin, as you may become the target of stares by locals, particularly when you visit a local pagoda, temple or other religiously sensitive places. Also don't forget to leave your shoes at the front door when entering someone's house.
- Always ask for permission before taking any photo of people. When you want to take a picture of someone, do not forget to ask for his/her permission first. In case they say no, do not insist on taking the picture, just respect their choice.
- Avoid public displays of affection with a member of the opposite sex. Anything beyond holding hands is seriously frowned upon.
- Use both hands to pass things, and do not pass anything over someone's head.



- Do not rush as you cross the street. Be aware of where you can cross and the surroundings.
- Do not cause Vietnamese to "lose face". The concept of "saving face" is extremely important in East Asian social relationships. Avoid behavior could cause embarrassment to another party, and hold back on behavior that can be misconstrued as overly aggressive.
- Do not lose your temper in public or markets, particularly when you are negotiating a price, as it is considered a serious loss of face for both parties. In all situations, you are strongly advised to maintain a courteous and happy demeanor. If you treat everybody well, you will be well-treated in return.
- Do not give handkerchiefs, anything black, yellow flowers or chrysanthemums as gifts; they are symbols of sadness and funerals. Bring fruit, sweets, flowers, or incense as a gift if invited to a Vietnamese home.
- When taking a ride by motorbike taxi make sure your bag, if any, is not on display or easy to grab. Bag snatching, although rare, is probably the most likely crime a tourist would encounter, and it raises the probability greatly if you are tailing a camera or a laptop in the wind.



Learning Strategies

How to Study English Effectively

Here are some tips to successfully help as you study English.

Study English Every Day

It's important to study English every day. However, don't exaggerate! Study for thirty minutes every day instead of two hours once a week. Short and steady practice is much better for learning than long periods on an irregular basis. This habit of studying English every day will keep English in your brain fresher.



Using Different Methods to Learn

Don't just use one way to study English, try to use a variety of methods, which will use all the parts of your brain; multiple intelligences. For example, if you are learning new vocabulary, create a word map, describe a picture, make a list and study that way. Also type out the words five times. All of these methods together help to reinforce your learning.

Study English by Finding Some Friends

There is nothing like having a few friends to study English together with. You can practice the exercises together just by having a conversation, in English of course, and, as you study English together, you can help each other with exercises that you might not understand by yourself.



Choosing Topics That Interest You

One of the most important things to do is find topics that you enjoy. This will motivate you because you will also be learning about a topic you find interesting while you study English.

By Traisuda

Here's the Answer

How to Break the Ice in English

To **“break the ice”** is an English idiom, which means to start a conversation with someone you have not met before. Breaking the ice is important in many situations and will lead to more productive, more comfortable conversations. No matter what ice you're trying to break, this column has a few ideas you can try!

Make yourself approachable

It is important that you make yourself approachable. Have that inviting look in your eyes and your body language. Be friendly. Smile. Maintain eye contact. Laugh at peoples jokes. Don't be too shy. The list of ways to be approachable could go on and on and on, but just remember this simple step, be the kind of person you'd want to get to know.

Open by Asking Questions

This is a great way to start a conversation in almost any situation. You can use the weather, your situation, or a request you may have, such as asking for directions or assistance, *“Is it always this hot in February?”* or *“Do you know the best route to downtown?”*.

Make a Comment

Pay attention to what's happening around you and you will easily find things to comment on. You can make comments about your surroundings, *“I love the artwork in here. Do you know the artist?”*. You can also say something more personal, *“I was just admiring your earrings. Did you buy them here?”*. By making statements about surroundings or events, you establish a common bond that will help to promote further dialogue.

Share a Fact

Facts can be entertaining and interesting and a great ways to break the ice at social and business events. You can use anything and everything from the weather, *“I hear today is going to be a record-breaker!”*, to things about your city, *“We're famous for our barbecue sauce”*, and also current events, *“CNN has come out with a new format”*. Please avoid sensitive topics like religion and politics.

Show interest

When you're trying to break the ice with someone new, it is important that you show an interest with your body language and voice. Some safe topics include work, hometowns, pets and music. Make sure you don't get too personal too quick, save that for another time.

Avoid complaining

No matter what you do, avoid complaining. Try to keep the conversation as positive as you possibly can, and if the conversation starts to become negative politely excuse yourself from the conversation.

<http://allwomenstalk.com/10-tips-to-break-the-ice-with-someone-new/>
<http://www.rd.com/advice/relationships/how-to-break-the-ice-and-meet-new-people/>
<http://www.wikihow.com/Break-the-Ice>



Bits and Pieces

Avocado



The Healthiest Way to Prepare Avocados

Many avocado recipes that you'll find in cookbooks and on the Internet include avocado as an ingredient in its raw, unheated form. In the World's Healthiest Foods recipes, they also favor this approach. One simply cannot think of a better way to preserve the health benefits made possible by avocado's unique fats. If you do plan to use avocado in a recipe that calls for heat, it's recommend that you use the lowest possible temperature and the least amount of cooking time that will still work with your particular recipe. The purpose in making this



recommendation is to help you minimize damage to avocado's unique fats. One research study showed that approximately 40 seconds of microwave heating on medium heat is a heating method that doesn't significantly change the fatty acid profile of avocados. Sometimes it's nice to add avocado

to a dish that has been cooked. This is a similar approach to some traditional Mexican recipes. For example, in Mexico they add sliced avocado to chicken soup after it is cooked. The avocado warms and mingles well with the soup but retains its nutritional concentration since it is not cooked.



12 Proven Benefits of Avocados

1. Avocados are incredibly nutritious food.
2. They contain more potassium than bananas.
3. Avocados are loaded with heart-healthy monounsaturated fatty acids.
4. Avocados are packed full of fiber.
5. Eating avocados can lower cholesterol and triglyceride levels.
6. People who eat avocados tend to be healthier than those who don't.
7. The fat in them can help you absorb nutrients from plant foods.
8. Avocados contain powerful antioxidants that can protect your body.
9. Avocados may help prevent cancer.
10. Avocado extract may help relieve symptoms of arthritis.
11. Eating avocados may help you lose weight.
12. Avocado is delicious and easy to incorporate in the diet.



By Pimravee