



Welcome Pack 1

How to be a polite, respectful member of
the UK (United Kingdom of Great Britain
and Northern Ireland)



Greetings

- “Hello”, “Hi”, “Hey”
- “Good morning”
- “Good afternoon”
- “Good evening”
- “I’m pleased to meet you” when meeting someone new
- Smiling

These are all polite common greetings

Greetings

Some people like to shake hands when meeting new people. If you shake someone's hand, you should look in their eyes.

If two people know each other well, they might hug or kiss each other on the cheek. This is just friendly, but you do not need to do this.

Many English people will ask if you are "alright". This is another polite greeting and - unless you know this person well - they often are just saying hello and do not want you to answer honestly. Instead, you could say "I'm good" or "fine, thank you".

Greetings

English people like to talk about the weather. If someone says “it’s gross outside” or “it’s a bit wet” or talks about the sun, it is polite to agree and say “yes it is”.

When you are on public transport, people probably won’t want a conversation and might not reply to you. This is because people in the UK value privacy and space and like to travel alone.

People will also often close their doors for privacy and quiet. It is polite to knock on the door or ring the bell and wait for someone to welcome you in.

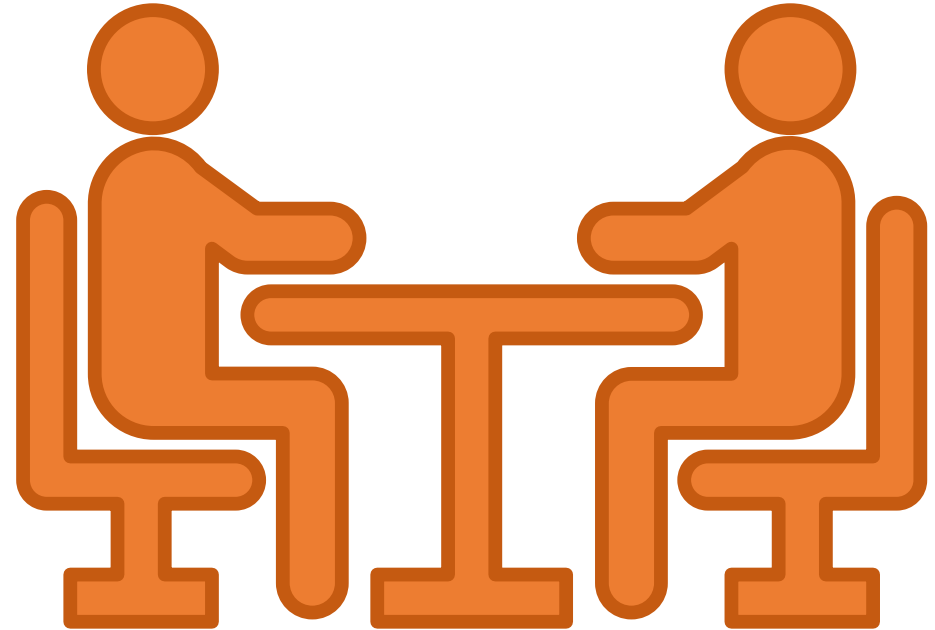
Please and Thank You

If someone asks you if you would like something, you should reply with “yes, please” or “no, thank you”.

If you ask someone for something, you should say “please” or “may I”. For example: “May I have some water?” or “Could I have some water, please.”

Punctuality

- You should try your best to be on time to any appointment or meeting. It is disrespectful to be late because you have left the other person waiting.
- If you are going to be late somewhere, it is polite to call the person you are meeting and let them know how late you are going to be – even if it is only 5 minutes.



Weekends and Quiet time

The Weekend. Most people do not work on either of these days.

Saturday and Sunday

Most people in the UK will sleep between 10pm and 7am and so you should try to be quiet in those hours to be respectful of your neighbours.

10:00 PM and 7:00 AM

Sunday

On Sunday, shops close earlier than usual or do not open at all.

Public toilets

- Public toilets for men and women are available in big supermarkets, train stations and big car parks.
- You should sit on the toilet so that the seat remains clean.
- Once you have finished, you should flush. If there is a toilet brush near the toilet, you should use this to clean off any marks you have left in the bowl.
- You should then wash your hands with soap so that they are clean.



Religion

England is a Christian country, but everyone is allowed to practice any religion they want to.

Everyone must be accepting that other people may have a different belief to them. It is illegal to discriminate against someone because of their religion.

44.7% of Greenwich are Christian, 39.7% either have no religion or chose not to identify, 8.5% Muslim, 4% Hindu, 1.7% Buddhist, 1.1% Sikh, and 0.2% Jewish.

Freedom of Speech

This allows people in the UK to express opinions about the government, the church, and anything else – but they must not discriminate, threaten or seriously insult anyone.

In work, it is sometimes good to criticise someone and tell them how they could do better, so that they can improve.

Relationships and Public affection

It is common for couples, both same and different genders, to hold hands, kiss or hug in public.

It is normal and should be ignored. Staring is considered rude.

Homosexuality is legal in the UK and harassing or discriminating against someone for their sexuality is illegal.

Clothing

People in the UK will often wear shorts, t-shirts, short skirts and cropped tops, especially when it is warm.

Near a beach or pool, people will be wearing swim-wear which often shows a lot of skin.

Litter

- If you are outside and have any litter, it is important that you find a bin to put it in – even if you have to hold onto it for a while.
- There are often litter bins in train stations, on the side of the road, at bus stops and in parks.



Recycling

People in the UK recycle their rubbish by using different coloured bins:

Black bins:
General Waste

Blue Bins:
Cardboard, paper, cans,
foil, glass, clear plastic
bottles and containers

Green Bins:
Food Waste

Alcohol

Drinking alcohol is common when eating a meal or at a social event, but it is okay to say no if someone offers you alcohol.

It is illegal to drive after you have been drinking alcohol.

Alcohol is available in all convenience stores and supermarkets.

You must be over 18 to buy alcoholic drinks and you may be asked to prove your age.

Smoking

Smoking is not allowed in most public spaces such as shops, train stations, cafés.

Most places will ask you to sit or stand outside if you want to smoke.

Smoking near people who are not smoking, children or pregnant women is considered rude.

Emergency

If someone is in danger, you should try to help them by calling for help and using first-aid.

If you are in danger or see someone else in danger, you should call **999**. You will be asked if you want police, fire brigade or ambulance.

- If there is a fight, theft, or sexual harassment, ask for **the police**.
- If there is a fire in your home, ask for **the fire brigade**.
- Only ask for an **ambulance** if there is a medical emergency (for more information on different medical services, see the healthcare welcome pack).