



British customs

A famous saying is 'When in Rome do what the Romans do'. This means that when you visit a country, you should copy the customs of the people who live there. Imagine you are going to Britain. How well do you know what the British do? Try this quiz and find out.

1 You are introduced to your classmate's friend, Chris.

Do you ...

- a) kiss him on both cheeks?
- b) shake* his hand?
- c) just say 'How are you?' or 'Hi'?

2 You're a guest at someone's house. You've never been there before. You need to go to the toilet.

Do you say ...

- a) 'Can I use your bathroom?'?
- b) 'Where's your toilet, please?'?
- c) 'I need to go to the toilet.'?

3 You are invited to your friend's house for dinner.

Do you ...

- a) take nothing – a gift isn't expected*?
- b) take a small gift such as a bunch of flowers or a small box of chocolates?
- c) take a large present, such as a big box of chocolates, or a cake?

4 You want to buy some stamps in the Post Office.

There are some people waiting. Do you ...

- a) decide where the queue* ends and stand there?
- b) go to the window and try to get the attention of the clerk?
- c) ask loudly, 'Who is last?' and stand behind them?

5 You have to be at a friend's house at 10 o'clock.

You're going on a day trip with his family. Do you ...

- a) turn up at twenty to ten to show you are keen*?
- b) turn up just a few minutes early?
- c) turn up at twenty past ten as it's rude to be on time?



6 You accidentally bump* into someone. Do you say ...

- a) 'Sorry!'?
- b) 'Oh, dear!'?
- c) 'Pardon!'?

7 You arrive at someone's house. Do you ...

- a) take off your shoes and walk into the house in your socks?
- b) wipe* your shoes well on the mat but keep them on?
- c) take off your shoes and put on the slippers your host offers you?

8 You are going to bed. Do you say ...

- a) 'Goodbye'?
- b) 'Good night'?
- c) 'Good evening'?

Count up your score and read the results.

1 a1 b2 c3 2 a3 b2 c1 3 a1 b3 c2 4 a3 b1 c2
5 a2 b3 c1 6 a3 b1 c1 7 a1 b3 c1 8 a1 b3 c1

17-24 Wow! Are you sure you aren't British? You will fit in perfectly*!

11-16 Not bad. You may make a few gaffes*, but you won't upset people.

0-10 Oh dear! Every country has its ways of doing things. You need to learn them before you go!

The best answers have a score of 3. Compare these customs with your own country. Which ones are the same or similar? Which ones are different?