



# Social Etiquette in Ukraine

- 1 How important is social etiquette for you? Which rules of social etiquette do you never break, and which do you have a more relaxed attitude about?

## Reading

- 2 Look at the title of the text, the pictures and read the headings. How does each picture relate to each section? Read to find out.

## Social DO's and DON'Ts in Ukraine

Ukrainian traditions of social behaviour don't differ too much from Western standards. An average Ukrainian perceives the world around them in just the same way as other Europeans do. However, every nation is unique and has a variety of national peculiarities in its lifestyle, public behaviour and etiquette.

### GREETING PEOPLE

- Shaking hands is mostly done by men; women rarely, if ever, shake hands with each other. It is extremely inappropriate to shake hands with your gloves on in Ukraine, even when it's freezing cold.
- Hugging or kissing a friend or close acquaintance on the cheek is perfectly acceptable. When congratulating someone or if it is a special occasion, Ukrainians kiss each other on the cheek three times.



### PAYING A VISIT

- Since Ukrainians do not normally wear shoes in their home, it shows good manners to leave your footwear at the entrance when you visit someone's home. Your host may offer you a pair of slippers so that you don't walk around barefoot.
- It is always polite to bring a gift for your hosts. A drink, a cake or flowers are good ideas. Remember though: the bouquet you offer must have an odd number of flowers. According to Ukrainian belief, an even number of flowers is only given at funerals. If there is a young child in the house, a small gift for him or her as well will be highly appreciated.
- Some things are thought to bring bad luck in Ukraine so you'd better avoid them when you're a guest at someone's house. Examples of these include shaking hands right over the threshold, opening an umbrella or whistling indoors.



### 3 Read the text again and complete the sentences with the missing information.

- 1 It is mainly men who .....  
when they meet each other.
- 2 Greeting a .....  
with a kiss on the cheek is very common in Ukraine.
- 3 As soon as Ukrainians enter their house, they take off  
.....
- 4 It is recommended that guests bring a gift for the hosts'  
.....
- 5 When visiting someone it's bad luck to shake hands  
.....
- 6 On the bus or the train you should offer your seat to mothers  
and their children as well as to people who are old, .....

## OUT AND ABOUT

- When using public transport, you are expected to give up your seat for mothers with children, the elderly, ill or disabled people.
- Make sure you are facing the people sitting in your row at the cinema or the theatre when you want to pass in front of them. Ukrainians consider it very impolite to pass with your back towards the other person.



### CHECK THESE WORDS !

standards, perceive, unique, peculiarity, etiquette, inappropriate, hug, acquaintance, manners, slippers, bouquet, odd, even, funeral, appreciate, threshold, whistle, disabled, row

## Vocabulary

### 4 Choose the correct word. Use the other words to make sentences based on the text.

- 1 **Whistling/Hugging** a tune inside the house is thought to bring bad luck.
- 2 Your hosts will **perceive/appreciate** it if you bring them a small gift to thank them for having you over.
- 3 Social **peculiarity/etiquette** is a set of unwritten laws showing us acceptable ways of behaving in different settings.
- 4 People in Ukraine don't like shaking hands across the **threshold/row** of their house.
- 5 Your hosts will be happy to provide you with a pair of **slippers/bouquets** to wear around their house.
- 6 When you offer flowers to your hosts, make sure the bunch has a(n) **odd/disabled** number.

## Speaking & Writing

### 5 **ICT** Work in pairs. Look up information online on five more social do's and don'ts in Ukraine and write a quiz. Ask your partner to tell you whether each piece of information is true or false. If they believe the information is false, they should correct it.

A: *Breaking a plate by accident is believed to bring bad luck.*

B: *False. It is supposed to bring good luck.*

### 6 **THINK!** What rules of etiquette would you suggest people your age specifically should follow? Why? In three minutes, write a few sentences. Read your sentences to the class.