

Customs

- 1.** Do you shake hands or bow when you meet someone? What's good about each?
- 2.** Do people in your country take off their shoes when they enter a house? What about you?
- 3.** Do you use chopsticks, a fork and knife, or your hands when you eat? What's easier?
- 4.** What do you say when you meet someone for the first time in your country? Do you say anything different to older people?
- 5.** When someone gives you a gift, do you open it right away or later? What do most people in your country do?
- 6.** What do you usually eat on your country's biggest holiday? Who do you eat with?
- 7.** Do you wear special clothes for any holidays or celebrations? What do they look like?
- 8.** Do people in your country celebrate birthdays with a cake and candles, or do they do something different?
- 9.** When you visit a friend's house, do you bring something? What do you usually bring?
- 10.** Do families in your country eat together every day, or only on special days? What about your family?
- 11.** Are there any numbers that are lucky or unlucky in your country? What are they?

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1. Have you ever traveled abroad? Where did you go?
2. Do you follow all of your country's traditional customs? Which ones do you follow and which ones do you skip?
3. What are some strange foreign customs that you have heard of?
4. How do people greet each other in your country? Has it changed from the past?
5. Do you enjoy learning about other countries' customs? If so, what types of customs do you like learning about?
6. What are some strange wedding customs in your country?
7. What do you do on New Year's Day in your country? Do you like those customs?
8. What do you give someone when you visit their home? Why?
9. What phrases do you try to learn when you visit a new country?
10. How do you show respect to older people in your country? Do you do it every day?
11. What do people usually wear to a funeral in your country? Is it different from other countries?
12. Do children in your country get money or gifts on special days? What are some examples?
13. Have you ever accidentally broken a custom or rule in another country? What happened?
14. What is the strangest greeting custom you have heard of? Tell me about it.
15. Have you ever been to a traditional wedding ceremony? What was different from modern weddings?
16. What gift would you never give someone in your culture? Why not?
17. What colors are lucky or unlucky in your culture? Why do people believe that?
18. What do people in your country usually do before they eat a meal? Why?
19. Is tipping common in your country? How much do people usually tip?
20. What is a common birthday custom in your country? How is it different from what you see in movies?

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1. If yes, where did you go and what was it like? What customs were different from your country's customs?
2. If no, would you like to go abroad? Where would you like to go and what do you think it will be like?
3. Do you think it is important to follow a country's customs when you visit there? Why or why not?
4. What are some of the most important customs of your country? How about Japan or China? How about America or Australia?
5. What customs in your country might visitors find strange? Why do you think they would find them strange?
6. What are some customs in your country that people should follow when they are eating? Do you think other countries have the same custom?
7. Do you prefer celebrating holidays with family or with friends? Why?
8. Should tourists follow local dress customs when they visit your country? Why or why not?
9. Do you think younger generations follow traditional customs less than older generations? How so?
10. What makes a custom important enough to keep? What makes one okay to let go?
11. Do you think customs around gift-giving create pressure or build relationships? Give me some examples.
12. What customs in your country do you think will disappear in the next 50 years? Why do you think so?
13. If you moved to a country with very different customs, which ones would be hardest for you to follow and why?
14. Should tourists always tip when they visit another country? Why or why not?
15. If you could add one new custom to your culture, what would it be and why?
16. Do you think it is rude to eat with your hands? Is it common in your culture or country?
17. Do you think business customs are becoming the same around the world? Is that a good thing or a bad thing?

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1. Compare wedding customs in your culture with those in another culture you know about. What do the differences reveal about each culture's values?
2. What are the advantages and disadvantages of maintaining strict customs around respect for elders in modern society?
3. How is the role of food customs in bringing people together different now compared to 50 years ago?
4. How do business customs (greetings, gift-giving, meetings) reflect deeper cultural attitudes about hierarchy and relationships? Give examples from different countries.
5. How do dress customs serve both to express individual identity and enforce group conformity? Give specific examples.
6. When immigrants bring their customs to a new country, how does that affect the local culture? Can you think of any examples?
7. How does tourism change the customs of a place? Are those changes mostly positive or mostly negative?
8. Why do some customs survive for hundreds of years while others disappear quickly? What factors keep a custom alive?
9. How are table manners and dining customs connected to social class in your country? Has that changed over time?
10. Many customs that were once considered essential are now disappearing. What is driving that change, and is anything lost when old customs fade?
11. How does living in a multicultural city change the way people think about their own customs? Do people hold on tighter or become more flexible?
12. Companies often adapt their products and marketing to local customs. When does that feel respectful, and when does it feel like they are just using a culture to make money?
13. Children often grow up following customs without questioning them, but at some point, they start deciding which ones to keep. What influences that decision, and how does it affect family relationships?
14. When people move abroad and raise children, they often face a tension between passing on their own customs and letting their children adopt local ones. How do families navigate that, and what gets lost or gained in the process?

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1. What are the implications when a country's customs conflict with international human rights standards? How should those tensions be addressed?
2. How do customs around politeness and directness reflect deeper cultural assumptions about truth-telling, harmony, and individual rights? What tensions emerge when these different value systems interact?
3. How do customs around death and funerals reveal what a culture values most - both in what they explicitly celebrate and what they conspicuously avoid or hide?
4. Why do customs around food, hospitality, and eating together persist across almost all cultures, even as so many other traditions disappear? What fundamental human needs might these customs address?
5. How do governments and institutions use customs (ceremonies, holidays, rituals) to build national identity and loyalty? At what point does cultural promotion become cultural manipulation?
6. Social media has made it easy for customs from one country to spread worldwide, like Halloween or Black Friday. How does that change the meaning of those customs, and what does it say about how culture spreads today?
7. When people travel more and experience other ways of life, they sometimes come home and reject customs they grew up with. Why does exposure to other cultures make some people abandon their own traditions while others come back and value them even more?
8. Some customs that started as practical solutions — like removing shoes indoors or fasting during certain seasons — now carry mostly symbolic or religious meaning. What happens to a custom when people forget why it originally existed? Does it become stronger or weaker?
9. When a country becomes wealthier, its customs often change — people eat out more instead of cooking together, hire professionals for ceremonies that families used to handle, and replace handmade traditions with purchased ones. What does this pattern tell us about the relationship between money and culture?
10. People often say they want to preserve customs, but when a custom requires real sacrifice — giving up a weekend, spending money they don't have, or doing something physically uncomfortable — many people quietly stop. Why is there such a difference between how much people value customs in theory versus in practice?