

Handy things to know...

...about hand signs :) If you travel abroad as a tourist you should check the non-verbal communication etiquette of the country to avoid getting in trouble.. :) Vibes will show you some "do not"-s (no doughnuts LOL)



BRAZIL

The Okay sign. Most of us we use this hand sign to indicate everything is all right but in certain countries like in Brazil this is an insult, a particularly rude gesture.



GREAT BRITAIN

The V sign. Peace and love in some countries but believe or not, in the UK it is one of the rudest insult when displayed with the palm inward towards the signer. During the 100 years war the French would cut off the middle and index fingers of any English bowman so as they could never shoot again. The English would taunt the French by showing their fingers, so as to say "I can still shoot you!"



GREECE

The "Moutza". If you don't want to get in trouble in some countries like in Greece, Japan or Pakistan it's better not to show your palm to someone, as they interpret it as an offensive gesture.



JAPAN

When you hand something to someone (gift, business card.etc..) always use both hands as using only one is considered impolite.



IRAN

The "Thumbs-Up". It's better not to hitch-hike in Iran in the same way you used to do it in Europe as they consider thumbs-up as an insult. The sign is called *bilakh*. Unfortunately for the Western world, this sign is the equivalent of the "ok" sign and is often misunderstood and mistaken for the wrong thing.



LATIN-AMERICA

Snapping the fingers over and over can mean the person is trying to remember something he or she has forgotten. In some countries finger-snapping is offensive, especially when fingers are snapped close to another's face. In Latin America, a finger snap often means "hurry up!"



MALAYSIA

In Muslim countries the left hand is considered impure. It's better not to eat with your left hand in Malaysia, especially if you are eating from a common plate. Even if you are left-handed! Sorry :(



PHILIPPINES

The "Dog-call" In some countries means simply: "come here" in other countries it is considered insulting to ask someone to come towards you like this. In the Philippines this gesture is liable to arrest as it is used to call dogs and prostitutes.



TURKEY

The "fig sign" is either a wonderful good luck charm or the worst insult you could ever give someone. In ancient Rome, an image of a hand in the fig sign (*mano fico*) was worn as an amulet to protect against the evil eye. In modern Portugal and Brazil, many people still wear fig sign trinkets as jewelry. In places like Indonesia, China, Russia, and particularly in Turkey, the sign can have an insulting meaning roughly equivalent to "screw you." In the US this is a game that parents play with their children. They call it "I stole your nose". www.aol.com



THAILAND

Don't touch a Thai person's head or ruffle their hair. Apologize if you accidentally touch somebody's head. Of course there are some exceptions but as a Westerner it's best not to do it to avoid getting in trouble.