

SOME DO'S & DONT'S IN NEPAL

With its diverse ethnicity and traditional beliefs, Nepal has numerous cultural practices that may appear different to a person on his/her first visit to the country. However, to enjoy your stay in this remarkable Himalayan country, it is important to take into consideration of the varieties of the cultural and other aspects of the country as ***Do's & Dont's in Nepal.***

FUNFACT: Nepalese calendar follows Bikram Samwat, meaning it is 56.7 years ahead of the Gregorian calendar. So yes, when it's 2016 in the west it's 2073 in Nepal.

The common meal here is rice, vegetable, and soup dish known as Dal Bhat. It is eaten in very large quantities at least twice a day.

DO'S IN NEPAL:

- To show gratitude and respect, use both of your hands rather than one when giving or receiving something, even money. It is seen as a gesture of respect.
- Do walk around Stupas clockwise, so that the outer walls are always on your right. If you encounter a stone wall covered with Tibetan inscriptions, do the same. Walk past with the wall on your right (and don't take any of the stones).
- Do get a receipt of authenticity when purchasing an antique replica, otherwise, you will not be allowed to take it out of the country.
- Do Support the Non-Plastic Initiative. The issue of single-use plastic bags and plastic bottles is a big problem in Nepal (arguably worse as Nepal doesn't have the proper means to tackle waste disposal). You can help by drinking water from your own water bottles, carrying a re-usable bag with you and avoiding using single use plastic as much as possible.
- Do Carry a torch/flashlight with you at all times to be always prepared in case of power cut.
- Nepalese will quite often consider someone they have respect or care for as a close relative of theirs. Commonly used a word like "Didi" means "older sister", "Dai" means "older brother". Do say "Dhanyabaad" which means "Thank You" which conveys the meaning of gratitude.
- Small white taxis can be found that can comfortably seat 3 people and hold your luggage in their trunk or roof. It's quite probable that when you're visiting places and public buses/minibuses aren't easily found, you'll want to take a taxi. If you do, do insist that the driver uses the meter. Also, note that the fare is usually double after 9pm.

DONT'S IN NEPAL:

- Remember not to point with a single finger but use a flat extended hand especially to indicate a sacred object or place.
- In Nepal, people especially women, do not normally shake hands when they greet one another. Instead, they press palms together in a prayer-like gesture known as “Namaste”. And “Namaste” is widely preferred among the Nepalese.
- Don’t buy ivory or fur from endangered species since your purchases encourage the trade in such illegal goods, and you won’t be allowed to bring them back home anyway.
- Don’t eat with your left hand. People consider it an uncivilized act to use the left hand for eating.
- Wear full, long-sleeved dresses. Avoid dresses that are provocative and revealing. While Kathmandu is a little different than remote areas in Nepal in terms of accepting modern clothing. It is considered offensive to expose your knees, shoulders and chest at all times and especially in any place of worship. Remember that the more remote you travel, the more this advice should be heeded.
- Never eat beef in front of Hindus & Buddhist. Beef is strictly prohibited among both Hindus and Buddhists. Cows are sacred in Nepal.
- Try not to step over or point your feet at another person, a sacred place or a hearth.
- Remove your shoes when entering a home, temple or monastery (and leather items in Hindu temples) and avoid smoking and wearing a scant dress in religious settings. Remember, some of the entrance of the temple may be prohibited for non-Hindus.
- It is better not to touch offerings or persons when they are on way to shrines, especially if you are non-Hindu.
- Don’t offer food to a Nepalese after tasting it, nor eat from a common pot. And, avoid touching a shared drinking vessel with your lips.
- The sight of men holding hands is common, but men and women holding hands, and general acts of affection, are frowned upon. Do not do something that is totally alien to Nepalese culture.

- Don't lose your cool. Raising your voice or shouting is seen as extremely bad manners in Nepal. And it only worsens the situation leading to problems.
- Don't give in to children who ask for just one rupee. Although a rupee is a small amount that anyone can spare, successful begging leads young children to drop out of school and take up panhandling as their trade. If you want to help, give to a trustworthy charity or a school.
- Don't take photographs of locals, holy shrines & temples unless they have clearly given their consent.

In conclusion, there are certain things you need to consider while trying to blend with people here. These are the general list of things you can and cannot do while in Nepal. But it is completely subjective and also, depends on where you visit. If you spend your time at Kathmandu valley, or at Pokhara you will find locals much westernized that your activities may not affect them.