

# Do's & don'ts in Italy



## Don't:

1 ... underestimate **body language**. Italian people speak with their hands. If you do not 'give any sign of life', just stand there with your hands in your pockets while people are talking to you, they will think you are not interested / impolite / uncivilised. So at least nod your head when somebody is talking to you at look at him/her!

2 ... **drink** too much and don't suppose everybody pays each other's drinks in turn. Trying to prove that you are able to drink large quantities is not a common challenge in Italy. People will be really shocked when you are drunk.

3 ... get stressed when things are not organised the way you expected. If you **remain relaxed** Italian people will appreciate this and do all they can to help you.

4 ... laugh with hierarchy. The **boss** is still the boss, also in Italy, and he likes it when you show respect, do what you have to do & keep a distance.



5 ... laugh at **church**, religion, the pope, priests and nuns! Show respect. Older Italian people are religious and pay respect to church and religion. After all, the headquarters of the Catholic Church is in Italy!

## Do:

1 ... pay attention when crossing the street, even when it's green, and even on a zebra crossing. Not all **Italian drivers** are disciplined and stop for pedestrians (not all pedestrians wait until it's green to cross the street either).



2 ... pay attention to your clothes & try to be **elegant**! Italian men and women have an inborn sense of style (maybe different from yours, you may think some boys are dressed as girls, but that's only in your opinion!). Anyway, shabby or dirty clothes are not appreciated at all, even by young people, even in company workshops!

3 ... stand at **a bar**; it is often cheaper than sitting at a table. Also mind: when you invite girls to go out with you, then you are supposed to pay their drinks! So, think first...

4 ... **greet** other people all the time (even the busdriver!) Say *Buongiorno, Buenasera, Grazie*, etc. loud and clear and shake hands when leaving. Italian people appreciate when you smile and make eye contact. When you kiss on the cheeks: only twice (3 times = the Belgian way, 4 times = the French way).



5 ... realize that in a **restaurant**, you will always have to pay 1 or 2 Euros 'coperto' extra, this for the use of fork and knife & the bread on the table. A strange Italian habit, but there's nothing you can do about it...