

Social habits in Italy

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GREETINGS IN ITALY

When you're introduced to an Italian, you should say "good morning" and shake hands (a single hand is enough). "Hello" is used among close friends and young people, but it isn't considered polite when addressing strangers unless they use it first. Women may find that some men kiss their hand, although is rare nowadays.



When being introduced to someone in a formal situation, it's common to say "pleased to meet you".

When saying goodbye, you should shake hands again.

Good night is used when going to bed or leaving a house in the evening.

KISSING IN ITALY

Italian families and friends usually kiss when they meet, no matter their sex. If a woman expects you to kiss her, she offers her cheek. Between members of the opposite sex the kiss is deposited high up on the cheek, never on the mouth (except between lovers).

There are usually two kisses, first on the right cheek, then on the left. It's also common in Italy for male relatives and close male friends to embrace each other.

THE FORMAL FORM

When talking to a stranger, if particularly older, you should use the formal form «Lei». Don't use the familiar form «tu» or call someone by their name until you're invited to do so. Generally the older or (in a business context) senior person invites the other to use the familiar and first name.

The familiar form is used with children, friends or family, but never with work superiors. However, Italians are becoming less formal and younger people often use familiar form «tu» and first name with colleagues. It's common to use formal form in conversation with shopkeepers, servants, business associates and figures of authority for example the local mayor or the policemen.

Goodmorning



Goodmorning

INVITATION

If you're invited to dinner by an Italian family, you should take along a small present of wine, cakes or chocolates. Italians say «good appetite» before starting a meal. If you're offered a glass of wine, wait until your host has made a toast before drinking. Sometimes the Italian people invite friends to come after dinner for a coffee and for some small talks.

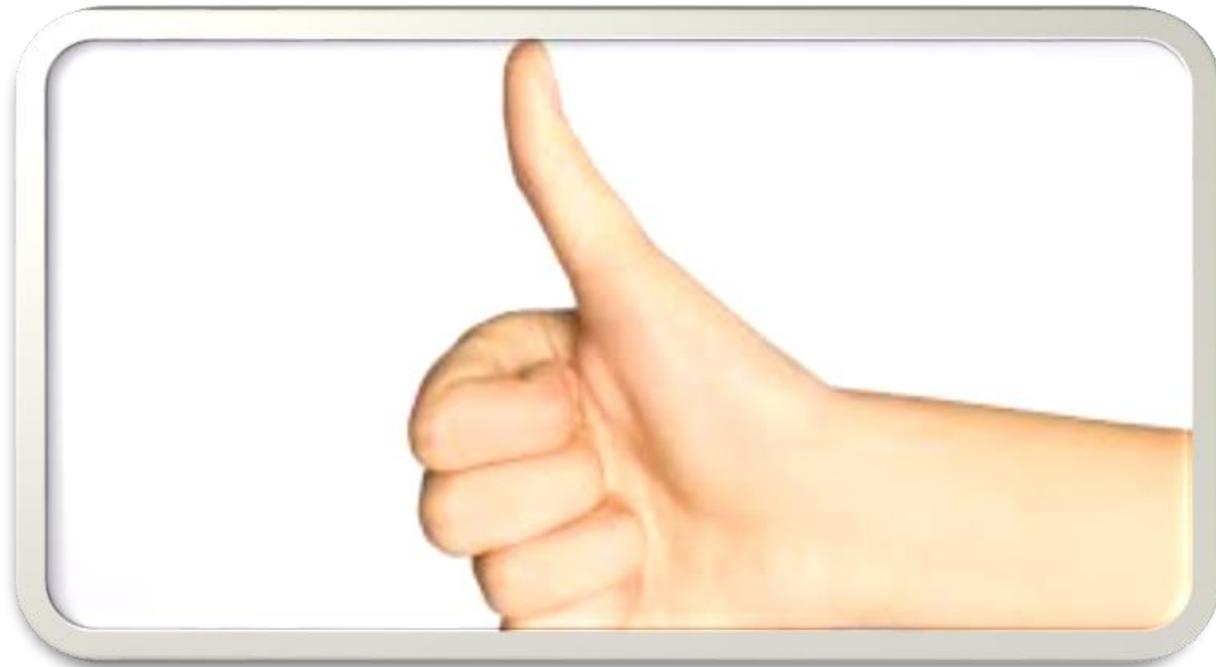


When Italians chat, hands and fingers do the talking



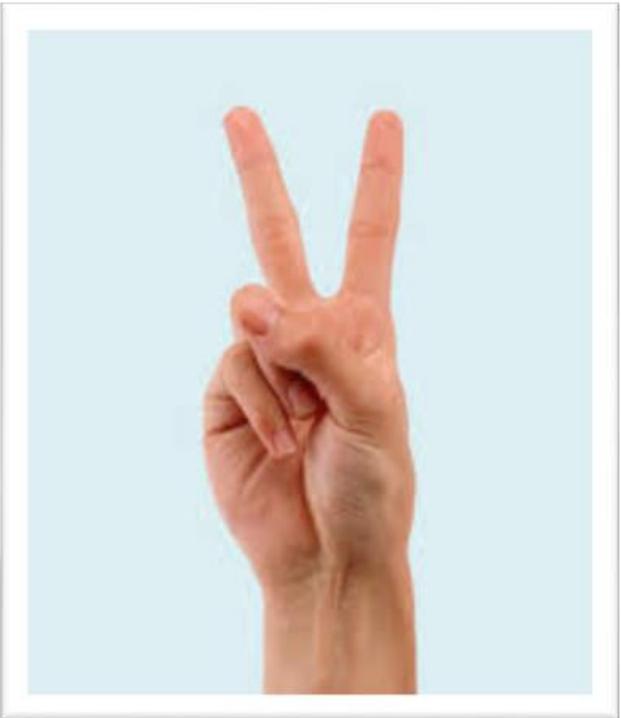
Italians often use their hands a lot while they are speaking. Often they do it to give more power to their words or simply to communicate without words.

This sign is used to say «ok» or «yes» and you can use it for a lot of situations, with friends or colleagues even when texting friends on the mobile phone. Another sign that is used to say an approval is the sign in the picture below.





The first gesture is used to deny or doubt a claim of other people, it is used with friends or as a joke.



The second gesture has two meanings: it can mean victory (the «v» of victory) and the other meaning is referred to peace.

Many times this gesture is also used in photos or «selfie».