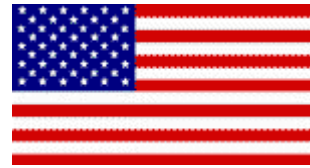
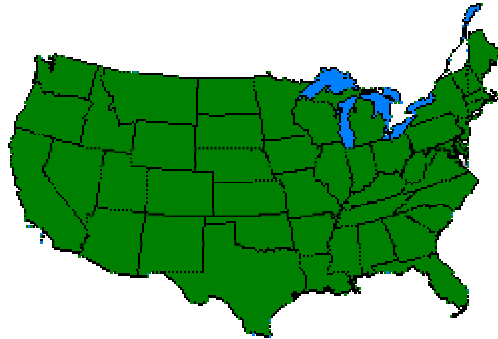


United States of America



Introduction

The population of the United States is over 250 million people of mixed races and heritage. Although the population is predominantly of European descent, the country has been a welcoming beacon to immigrants from virtually every country and culture in the world. English is the predominant language, although languages from many foreign countries are spoken within cultural enclaves throughout the U.S. The majority of American's (U.S.) are Christian.

The United States of America consists of 50 states governed on a federal level, as well as a state level. Laws are written at both levels, and when doing business in the United States one must make sure to meet the requirements mandated by these laws. The country is very litigious so legal resources are available and specialists can be found to assist with any transaction.

The culture and geographic location of an area will influence how business is done. Traditionally, the East Coast is more conservative and formal in their dress and manners than the West Coast. That is not to say a West Coast meeting carries any less importance. The climate and lifestyle are just more relaxed, which is reflected in the pace and informality.

Fun Fact

Many years ago business was conducted predominantly by men. A woman's role was to maintain the family and home responsibilities. Evening events and dinners were strictly for social enjoying with family and friends. Social registers were maintained so only those in the "proper" group would be included. A gentleman never carried his business cards to these events, but a social card with just his name. Times have changed. Now, business is conducted continuously (thanks to breakfast meetings, e-mail, and cellular phones); and, women are now as significant in the business world as men.

The U. S. was founded on the work ethic that good, honest, hard work is rewarded. Because of this work ethic, time is money and punctuality is highly regarded, so a cellular phone *can* save the day when automobile traffic in a major city causes unexpected delays.

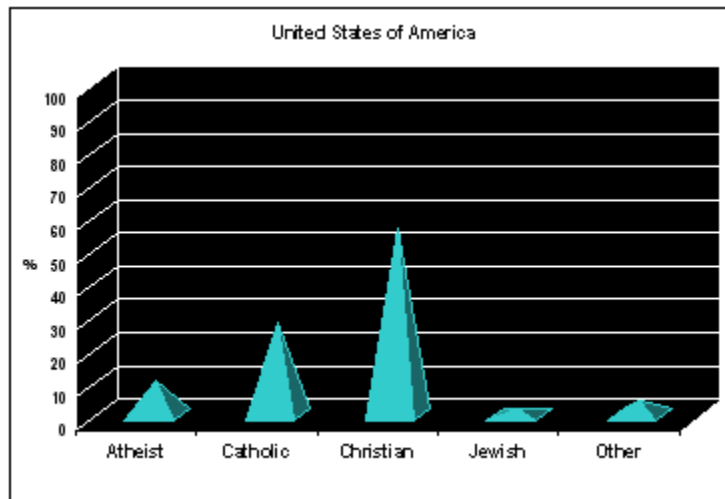
Brain Teaser: What do you wear to a high level meeting with a corporate executive who is worth millions, is 22 years old, lives at the beach, and has the latest computer innovation?

Geert Hofstede Analysis United States of America

[Click Here for Geert Hofstede country scores](#)

The Geert Hofstede analysis for the United States is very similar to other World Countries that have their heritage founded in Europe with strong ties to the British Isles (see Great Britain, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand). Individualism ranks highest and is a significant factor in the life of U.S. Americans. The low ranking of Long-term Orientation reflects a freedom in the culture from long-term traditional commitments, which allows greater flexibility and the freedom to react quickly to new opportunities. [More Details](#)

Religion in the United States of America



* WORLD FACTBOOK 2002

Appearance

- Business suit and tie are appropriate in all major cities. Wear dark colored business suits in classic colors of gray and navy. For an important formal meeting, choose a white dress shirt, for less formal a light blue shirt will still give you a conservative appearance.
- Women should wear a suit or dress with jacket in major cities. Wearing classic clothing and classic colors of navy, gray, ivory, and white will ensure you give a confident and conservative appearance.
- Rural areas and areas with extremely warm summers have more informal wardrobe requirements.
- Women may wear a business dress, or skirt and blouse, in rural areas.
- Men may conduct business without wearing a jacket and/or tie in rural areas.
- The formality of a meeting, even in rural areas, may dictate a sports jacket and tie for men. The same formality will require a woman to wear a dress, possibly with a jacket.
- Casual clothing is appropriate when not attending a work related meeting/dinner. Building a casual wardrobe using classic lines and colors (navy, gray, camel, ivory and white) will give you a look that is stylish and professional even when you are relaxing.
- Clothing, whether formal or casual, should be clean and neat in appearance.
- Men may generally wear jeans or khaki pants with a shirt for casual attire.
- Women may wear comfortably fitting slacks with a casual shirt. Wearing jeans or shorts, even in a casual setting, may be inappropriate for the city. It is better to err on the conservative side if you are not sure.

Behavior

- Business conversation *may* take place during meals. However, many times you will find more social conversation taking place during the actual meal.
- Business meetings may be arranged as breakfast meetings, luncheon meetings, or dinner meetings depending on time schedules and necessity. Generally a dinner, even though for business purposes, is treated as a social meal and a time to build rapport.
- Gift giving is discouraged or limited by many US companies. A gracious written note is

always appropriate and acceptable.

- If you do give a gift, it should not appear to be a bribe.
- An invitation for a meal or a modest gift is usually acceptable.
- If you are someplace with a line or queue, go to the end and wait your turn.
- Do not use or chew on a toothpick in public.
- Many public places and private homes do not allow smoking. In some areas laws have been passed to prevent smoking in public places.

Communications

- Offer a firm handshake, lasting 3-5 seconds, upon greeting and leaving. Maintain good eye contact during your handshake. If you are meeting several people at once, maintain eye contact with the person you are shaking hands with, until you are moving on to the next person.
- Good eye contact during business and social conversations shows interest, sincerity and confidence.
- Good friends may briefly embrace, although the larger the city, usually the more formal the behavior.
- Introductions include one's title if appropriate, or Mr., Ms, Mrs. and the full name.
- Business cards are generally exchanged during introductions. However, they may be exchanged when one party is leaving.
- A smile is a sign of friendliness, and in rural areas you may be greeted with a "hello" rather than a handshake.
- Ask permission to smoke before lighting a cigarette or cigar. Due to health concerns, you may or may not be given permission.