

United Arab Emirates



- Capital:** Abu Dhabi
- Population:** 4.6 million (approx).
Dubai: 420,000 (approx).
- Religion:** 96% Muslim (16% Shi'ite), 4% Christian, Hindu and other.
- Government:** Overall authority is vested in the Supreme Council of the seven emirates rulers (who are absolute monarchs in their own states), and the council's decisions require the approval of at least five. The rulers of Abu Dhabi and Dubai each have a veto (an expression of their political predominance). The Supreme Council elects the head of state (the president) and government.
- Ethnic Groups:** 19% Emirian, 23% other Arab, 50% South Asian, 8% other expatriates (approximately 10% of the population are nomadic).
- Language:** Arabic. English and Farii are commonly spoken in the major urban centres. Urdu and Hindi are also spoken.
- Currency:** The Emirian dirham (AED), divided into 100 fils.
- The federation of seven emirates comprising the UAE is located along the central east coast of the Arabian Peninsula. The emirates of Abu Dhabi, Dubai, and Sharjah support over 90% of the total population.
 - The UAE's high per capita income is founded on oil and gas. Most petroleum is produced by Abu Dhabi and Dubai.
 - A predominantly desert-type climate with very irregular and scant rainfall and extreme temperatures during the summer months.

Business and Social Etiquette

- Punctuality is not considered a virtue in Dubai. Your associate may be late for an appointment or not show up at all. You, however, should endeavour to be prompt.
- An appointment is rarely private. Expect your visit to be interrupted by phone calls and visits from your associate's friends and family. Westerners frequently find these distractions infuriating; try to maintain your equanimity.
- Friday is the Muslim holy day; no business is conducted. Most people do not work on Thursdays, either. The work week runs from Saturday through Wednesday.
- As there are several styles of greeting currently used in Dubai, it is safest to wait for your business associate to initiate the greeting, especially at a first meeting.
- Westernised men shake hands with other men. Some men will shake hands with western women. Women in Dubai take no part in business.
- Business cards should be printed in English on one side and in Arabic on the other.
- Foreigners are not exempt from local standards of dress. Foreigners should wear modest western clothes. Despite the heat of the desert, most of the body must remain covered. Local laws prohibit the wearing of neck jewellery by men, and westerners have been arrested for violating such rules.
- The pace of business is much slower in Dubai than in the west. Be patient.
- Business meetings always start slowly with long inquiries into one's health and journey.
- Decisions will take a long time to be made.
- Coffee is often served toward the end of a business meeting. This is a signal that the meeting will soon conclude. Incense is often lit at this time as well.
- Saving face and the avoidance of shame are vital to people in Dubai. You may have to compromise on some issue to protect someone's dignity even if there is no substantive reason to do so.
- The topics of Israel and women should be avoided. Do not even inquire as to the health of your business associate's wife or daughter.
- Hosting visitors is considered a virtue among locals, so they will take care of all of the entertaining within their country. However, you are not expected to bring any gifts when invited into a local home.
- Be prepared to remove your shoes before entering a building. Follow the lead of your host. As a general rule, keep both feet on the ground. Arabs do not cross their legs when sitting. Never show the bottom of your foot to an Arab; this is considered offensive.
- Eating is done with the right hand only. The left hand is considered unclean in the Arab world.

Language

English	Arabic	Phonetics
Hello	a-ssalāma alaykum	See notes
Good Morning	sabaH al-kheir	
Good Morning (response)	sabaH al-nuir	
Goodnight (to a man)	tisbaH ala-kheir	
Goodnight (to a woman)	tisbaHin ala-kheir	
Goodnight response(man)	wa inta min alil-kheir	
Goodnight response (wom)	wa inti min alil-kheir	
Goodbye	ma'al salamā	
Yes	aiwa/na'am	
No	lā	
Please (to a man)	min fadhilk	
Please (to a woman)	min fadhilich	
Thank you (to a man)	mashkur	
Thank you (to a woman)	mashkura	
You're welcome	afwan/al afu	
I don't understand	ana afHām	

Notes:

,ā as in the 'a' in father

s as in 'so'

ay as in the 'y' in by

kh as in 'ch' in Scottish 'loch'

H a strongly whispered H as in a sigh of relief

sh as in 'ship'

r a rolled 'r'

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