

India

Capital:	New Delhi
Population:	1.1 billion (approx). One sixth of the world's population calls India home.
Religion:	77.69% Hindu, 16.2% Muslim, 2.31% Christian, 1.85% Sikhs, 0.77% Buddhist, 0.41% Jains and others/not stated 0.76%.
Government:	India is defined as 'a sovereign socialist secular democratic republic'.
Ethnic Groups:	The principal strains that make up India's heterogeneous ethnic mix include Australoid, Caucasoid, Mongoloid, and Negroid. 72% of the population are Indo-Aryan, 25% are Dravidian, and 3% Mongoloid or other.
Language:	Two official languages: Hindi and English. However more than 14 major and 300 minor languages are spoken in India.
Currency:	The rupee (INR), divided into 100 paise.

- Located in southern Asia, India is the seventh largest country in the world. It is divided into 25 states and 7 union territories.
- There are numerous sites of human settlement in India dating from the Upper Paleolithic Age (c. 40,000 BC). The urban Indus Valley civilisation (c. 2500-1700 BC) had its centre in modern Pakistan but extended into contemporary India. During the second millennium BC tribal people of the Aryan language group from central Asia began to settle in the Ganges Valley. Their language, religious beliefs and social institutions fused with those of the local inhabitants, laying the foundations for many key elements of Indian culture, in particular Sanskrit, Hinduism and the caste system.
- After long struggles against British rule, India became an independent country on 15 August 1947. When the British left in 1947, British India was partitioned into primarily Hindu India and mostly Muslim Pakistan.
- The origins of the caste system are unclear, but it has existed in India for thousands of years. Even though discrimination on the basis of caste has been outlawed by the government, caste still plays a significant role in the politics and business of the country. Although there are only four traditional castes, these are broken down into thousands of subcastes.
- India is primarily rural, with 80% of the people living in more than 550,000 villages.

Business and Social Etiquette

- Indians appreciate punctuality but don't always practice it themselves. Keep your schedule loose enough for last minute rescheduling of meetings. Indians have a less hurried attitude toward time than many other cultures. The concept 'time is money' is alien to most Indians.
- Business in India is highly personal. When making business contacts, be prepared to establish a close personal relationship based on mutual respect and confidence.
- Titles are highly valued by Indians. Always use professional titles, and don't address someone by her or his first name unless you are asked to or you are close friends.
- Business negotiations require time and patience. Plan on several visits before a decision is reached. Impromptu business meetings are common.
- Always present your business card. It is not necessary to have it translated into an Indian language.
- The traditional Indian greeting is the namaste. To perform the namaste, hold the palms of your hands together (as if praying) below the chin, nod or bow slightly, and say namaste (nah-mas-tay). This greeting is useful for foreigners in any situation where a handshake might not be acceptable.
- When refreshments are offered, it is customary to refuse the first offer, but to accept the second or third. To refuse any refreshment is an insult.
- Among Indians, a side-to-side toss of one's head indicates agreement, although this may be interpreted as meaning 'no'. On the other hand, the North American up-and-down head nod (used to signify 'yes') has the meaning of 'no' in India.
- Business lunches are preferred to dinners.
- Remember that Hindus do not eat beef and Muslims do not eat pork.
- If you are invited to dinner, be a few minutes late unless it is an official function.
- Eat only with the right hand, as the left hand is used for hygienic purposes and is considered unclean. Touching a communal dish with your hands may cause fellow diners to avoid it.
- The head is considered the seat of the soul by many Indians. Never touch someone else's head, not even to pat the hair of a child.
- Never point your feet at a person. Feet are considered unclean.
- Pointing with a finger is rude; Indians point with the chin.
- Because of the many ethnic groups, some Indians have one name, whilst others may have two or more. The order of names also varies from region to region.
- Use Mr, Mrs or Miss unless invited to use a person's first name. Even then, Indians will be comfortable if you prefix their name with Mr or Miss or the Indian equivalent. 'Sri' = Mr, 'Srimati' = Mrs, and 'Kumari' = Miss.
- Visiting businesspeople usually receive many invitations to dinner and home visits. If invited to a meal in a private home, remove your shoes before entering, unless your hosts are wearing footwear. Gifts of chocolate, Indian sweetmeats or flowers are appropriate. Do not wrap presents in white or black, which are considered unlucky colours.

Language

English	Hindi
Hello	namaste/namskār
Good Morning	shubha prabhaat
Goodnight	shubha raatri
Goodbye	namaste/namskār
Yes	ĵi hā
No	ĵi nahī
Please	kripyaa
Thankyou	shukriyā/ dhanyavād
You're welcome	koī bāi nahī
I don't understand	maī nahī samjhā/ ī

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