



# Handshakes



A handshake is a short **ritual** in which two people hold one of each other's hands, often accompanied by a brief up and down movement of the **grasped hands**. Using the **right hand** is generally considered proper etiquette, but customs surrounding handshakes are specific to cultures, and different cultures may be more or less prone to shaking hands.



The handshake is thought to have originated as a **gesture of peace** by demonstrating that the hand holds **no weapon**. The hand clasp proved that the hand was empty and shaking was meant to dislodge any weapons hiding up the sleeve.

Nowadays there exist as many handshakes as there are nations and cultures: for example, did you know that in **Russia** it is not customary to shake hands with the opposite sex and that a woman's hand is always to be kissed rather than shaken?

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