



Because customs vary greatly from country to country, no rules of official protocol apply across the board in the nations of the world, which number close to two hundred. However, help is at hand before you leave for foreign shores. The three main sources of information are the Washington, D.C.. embassy for your country of destination, the consulate in the major city nearest you, and the mission to the United Nations in New York. All are able and willing to provide information to facilitate your communication and dealings with people in their homelands.

Here are a few guidelines for any American social or business travelers who have been invited to an official reception or ceremony and for hosts or hostesses who will be entertaining dignitaries overseas:

- Professionals from other countries are often given titles that, out of courtesy, should be used by the American traveler. In Italy, for example, a man who has completed university and earned a degree is called "Dottore" ("Doctor"), and a woman, "Dottoressa," out of respect for the person's academic achievement. Likewise, a male German corporate president is called "Herr Direktor" out of respect for his position. On the other hand, a French lawyer would be addressed formally as "Monsieur l'Avocat," which literally means "Mr. Lawyer." It is only polite to respect the customary titles in over countries- certainly, at least, until bonds of friendship are formed and more personal forms of address may be used.
- European heads of state, ambassadors, cabinet officers, and in some countries, high-ranking members of the clergy, may be referred to as "His Excellency;" they may be called "Your Excellency" in conversation. In correspondence, they would be addressed as "His Excellency, Giancarlo DiBeradino, Ambassador of the Republic of Italy," or "His Excellency, Ichiro Kawamura, Ambassador of Japan."
- A duke and duchess are called either "Duke" and "Duchess" or "Your Grace" in

conversation- not, for example, "Duke Charles or "Duchess of Kent."

- A prince or princess is called "Prince" or "Princess" in conversation.
- Countries that were formerly monarchies still refer to their royalty with the titles that were once held. A Russian princess, for example, although not recognized by her government as such, is still called "Princess" out of courtesy and respect.
- The king or queen of most Western European countries is addressed as "Your Majesty" and is referred to as "His [Her] Majesty."
- A prince consort to the queen is referred to as "His Royal Highness" and is addressed as "Your Royal Highness."