

Gestures that vary by country

Choose one of the gestures below and mime it to your partner until they guess.

Money/ Cash/ You have to pay	(I'm) sad/ disappointed	Time out/ Let's take a break	Cut/ Time's up/ Stop your presentation
(Are you) crazy (?)	(Waiter) the bill/ check (please)	(Would you like a) drink(?) (= alcohol)	(Would you like a) cup of tea(?)
(I'm) stupid/ stupid me!	Mind your own business/ Don't be nosy	I don't know (the answer to your question)	(You're) late
I swear/ I promise (I will do it)	(You are) drunk	Please (I'm begging you)	(You need to pay) a bribe
(This/ That is/ was) delicious/ tasty	One more time/ Repeat	(You were) great/ wonderful	Shut up
Goodbye	Quiet please	(That idea is) bad	Hi/ Hello
(You are) talking too much	(Very) pleased to meet you	(It's too) loud	Here you are/ Here you go
(I'm) pregnant	I'm proud of myself/ I think I did a good job	I won/ I'm the winner	Please take a seat
Excuse me, can I get past?	Excuse me, can I have your attention?	I'm hungry/ I want to eat	I'm full/ I couldn't eat another thing
(Please) eat	After you	This way (please)	Well done!
(I'm/ I feel) cold	(I'm/ I feel) hot	(Can I take) a photo (of you?)	

Do the mimes again, but this time with your partner responding, e.g. saying "Bye. See you on Monday" when you mime "Goodbye".

Do the same with responses, but this time speaking (the full sentences) while you mime.

What could the responses to the things above be? Brainstorm at least two for each and then compare with the suggested answers on the next page.

Suggested answers

- You have to pay – How much is it?/ I'm sorry, I don't have any money on me/ In that case, I'm not interested.
- I'm sad/ disappointed – What's wrong?/ What happened?
- Time out/ Let's take a break – Great idea. Is there anywhere I can smoke?
- Stop your presentation – It seems like I've run out of time, so if you have any questions about what I've said today please catch me later or email me at any time.
- Are you crazy? – I guess it sounds a bit strange./ Absolutely not. Everyone's doing it in LA.
- The bill please – Just a moment, Sir. I'll get it for you right away/ Please pay at the till.
- Would you like a drink? – Actually, I really need to get going./ Thanks. Same again please.
- Would you like a cup of tea? – I'd prefer a coffee if there is one./ That would be lovely.
- Stupid me! – Don't worry, it's a common mistake/ What's wrong?
- Mind your own business – I'm sorry. I didn't realise it was a sensitive area./ Sorry if I seemed nosy. Let's move on to...
- I don't know the answer to your question – Do you know who I can ask who will?/ Surely it's part of your job to know!
- You're late – Sorry to keep you waiting. My bus broke down. I'll buy you a drink.
- I promise I will do it – Please make sure you do!
- You are drunk – I am a little bit tipsy./ And why not? It's Friday!/ Not at all. It's just high spirits.
- Please, I'm begging you – Okay, just this once./ If it means so much to you.../ I'm afraid it's out of my hands.
- You need to pay a bribe – I'm afraid company policy does not allow such things./ I hope I am misunderstanding you. If not, I will need to report you to someone.
- That was delicious – I'm glad you liked it.
- One more time/ Repeat – I was saying...
- You were great – You're too kind./ I do think it went quite well this time./
- Shut up – I will not shut up. I have a right to be heard!
- Quiet please – Sorry.
- Goodbye – Bye/ See you/ Have a good time
- That idea is bad – Do you really think so?/ I can see why you'd think so, but I'm sure it'd work
- Hi/ Hello – Hi. How's it going?
- You are talking too much – Sorry. Please go ahead.

- Very pleased to meet you – Very pleased to meet you too. I've heard so much about you.
- It's too loud – Sorry about that. I'll turn it down.
- Here you are/ Here you go – Thank you.
- I'm pregnant – Congratulations. When is it due?
- I'm proud of myself/ I think I did a good job – Well done!/ Don't get big headed about it.
- I won/ I'm the winner – Congratulations/ You must be very proud/
- Please take a seat – Thank you. Is here okay?
- Excuse me, can I get past? – Sorry. I'll just move my bag.
- Excuse me, can I have your attention? – How can I help you?/ Yes?
- I'm hungry – Shall we go out for lunch?/ Can I get you something?/ Please help yourself.
- I'm full/ I couldn't eat another thing – I'm glad you enjoyed it.
- Please eat – Thanks/ After you.
- After you – Thanks./ No, please. After you.
- This way (please) – Thanks.
- Well done! – Thank you./ It was nothing./ You're too kind.
- I feel cold – Shall I turn on the heating?/ Would you like a blanket?
- I feel hot – Would you like me to open a window?
- Can I take a photo of you? – I'd rather you didn't. I didn't put on any make up today. Maybe another time. / Sure. No problem. Please go ahead.