

DAS TÄGLICHE LEBEN / DAILY CUSTOMS

13 THINGS FOREIGNERS DO THAT MAKES GERMANS REALLY UNCOMFORTABLE

Having a huge meal really late at night

On the topic of meals, it's not really the done thing to opt for the Mediterranean way of life and eat a meal late at night.

I mean, people do it of course, especially in the cities where there is a more diverse population and lots of different restaurants.

But the traditional way in Germany was always to have a cold meal in the evening because you've already had your main meal of the day at lunchtime. Abendbrot (which translates literally to evening bread) often consists of, yep you guessed it, bread as well as cold cuts of meat, cheese and salad.

Using Sie and du forms incorrectly

The German language has many challenges but this one is down to the context of the conversation and that makes it quite tricky to grasp.

For example, starting a new job in a German workplace is a minefield. In many parts of Germany would be extremely frowned upon if you waltzed in and used the "du" form with your boss and colleagues before they offered you that option.

But if someone is younger than you or in a less senior position then they're meant to use the polite "Sie" form with you. The fact is there are no solid rules, you just have to judge the situation and trust your gut instinct. To save yourself from making a faux pas it's probably best to stick to "Sie" with strangers.

But if you used the "Sie" polite form in an edgy cafe, people might screw up their face at you.

As a foreigner, Germans are usually nice and won't judge too much if you get it wrong or make a mistake but it doesn't stop you feeling a bit silly.

Trying to split bills

In Germany the norm (at least in groups rather than families) is to pay for your own food *getrennt* or separately. What that usually results in is a complicated set of sums between the guests and the server as everyone tries to work out what they owe down to the last penny.