

# Visitor Etiquette

Please remember common courtesy. Looking into windows or wandering into homes is as rude at Hopi as it would be if a stranger helped himself to a tour of your home. Remember that when you visit Hopi, you are a guest on private land. Liberties taken by visitors in the past have led to strict enforcement of regulations by the Hopi. It is a privilege to visit Hopi communities, especially during ceremonies, and visitors must respect regulations. With respect, the visitor to Hopi can enjoy a rewarding experience unlike any other in the world. Some special restrictions might not be so obvious, however, and these simple points should help visitors avoid embarrassment:

- ***Absolutely No Recording.*** No recording of any type while in and around Hopi villages. These include, but are not limited to: picture-taking, video recording, audio recording, sketching, and note taking. These are strictly prohibited especially during ceremonies. Visiting Hopi is a wonderful time to use your mind and heart to record what you are privileged to see. Please note publication of these observations and/or recordings is both exploitative and prohibited without prior consent from the Hopi Cultural Preservation Office. Witnessing a Hopi ceremony is a privilege, not a right. If you have more questions about why these restrictions exist and what they mean to the Hopi, please visit our page on [Privacy](#).
- ***Wear appropriate clothing.*** Just as you would when going to a wedding or other ceremony, you should consider what you wear when you go to a Hopi ceremony. Long pants or a skirt are favored over shorts or a short skirt, for instance. The desert Southwest is prone to extreme temperature swings, so if you are spending an evening be sure to bring warm clothes and many layers. Sun block is a good idea year-round.
- ***Do not interrupt ceremonies. First of all, please note that not all ceremonies are open to the public.*** Often posted signs indicate who is welcome. If no signs are posted, seek information from local shops or the village community. At ceremonies open to the public, be aware that there are behavioral guidelines to follow. Well-meaning people, who would never think of going up to the altar during a wedding to ask questions, have nonetheless interrupted, distracted, or simply gotten in the way of Hopi ceremonies. Unless you are invited, the simplest rule is to stay out of *kivas* (ceremonial rooms) and stay on the periphery of dances or processions. Remember that you are here to watch; there is no more rewarding or thoughtful way to visit ceremonies than to be inconspicuous and quiet.
- ***Don't Touch.*** If you aren't sure, don't touch it. A visitor to the Southwest might see shrines from many different cultures, including highway-side markers remembering lost loved ones, which is a thoughtful memento left by Hispanics, Native Americans, and other south westerners. Some types of shrines are more easily recognized than others, however. Hopi spirituality is very intertwined with daily life, and objects that seem ordinary to you might have deeper significance to the person who placed them. Shrines are placed by sincere individuals and not meant to be disturbed. If you come upon a collection of objects at Hopi and you aren't sure what to do, respect the wishes of the person who left the offerings and take your attention elsewhere. If you want to know more about Hopi culture, you may look at our [Recommended Readings](#).