

Living in California

Greetings:

Be prepared to say “Hi” to everybody and anybody. In stores, expect to hear “Are you finding everything all right, today?” or “Can I help you?” Don’t be annoyed, you’ll get used to it. You might actually miss the service once you are back in Germany.

Lines:

Americans are best practiced line standers. Use your time in line to meet interesting people. In supermarkets, never cut in front of someone who was there before you.

Individual Space:

Personal space is larger than in Germany. Don’t sit directly next to someone in a movie theater or bus if it can be avoided and respect the individual space of others.

Restaurants:

Tipping is a must! Always add a 10-20% tip to the bill in a pub, restaurant or cafe. In most restaurants you will have to wait to be seated.

Traffic:

As a pedestrian: never cross a street diagonally and only cross a street at the end of a block. In some cities the police will have no problem handing out “jaywalking” tickets.

As a biker: when turning right, extend your left upper-arm out to the left, parallel to the road and angle your forearm vertically upward.

As a driver: A stop sign is equivalent to the German “yield” sign.

Always check whether the cross road has stop signs. If it is not a four-way-stop you will have to stop for the cross-traffic.

Gasoline is cheaper in suburbs compared to downtown areas

Always yield to pedestrians and always respect police officers!

Alcohol:

Never consume alcohol in public! Always carry your ID if you want to buy alcohol in stores or pubs (drinking age is 21)

Never have alcoholic beverages in the main cabin of your car! Nobody in your car is allowed to drink alcohol while you are driving. Always transport alcoholic beverages in the trunk.