



Maido: A gaijin's guide to Japanese gestures and cultures.

Christy Colon Hasegawa

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Maido (my-dough, not to be confused with that childhood favorite, Play-Doh) describes several of the most common Japanese gestures and defines their meanings and the cultural contexts that surround them. The word "maido" is a slang term commonly used in the Kansai region of Japan (Osaka, Kyoto, Kobe) and is short for "maido arigatou," which literally means, "thank you every time." People often use Maido as a greeting in business and sales, and as a send-off to a business's best customers as if to say, "come again" or "thank you." In this case, Maido is welcoming you to a world where you don't offend every single Japanese person you meet. In Maido, you'll see young fashionistas, salarymen, and insane fad starters such as lolitas, yankiis, gyarus and more, demonstrating Japanese gestures. Each photograph depicts the ideal form of a particular gesture and also captures the colorful and absolutely crazy characters running amok in Tokyo and Osaka. By learning a few simple gestures you can hopefully avoid making intercultural slip-ups and win the respect of locals. And who knows--maybe the next time you walk into the local izakaya (watering hole), you may be lucky enough to hear someone saying, "Maido! Maido!" to you.

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