

POW WOW ETIQUETTE

If you have never been to a Pow Wow, here are a few rules that may help you feel more at home. Keep in mind that customs vary from region to region and Pow Wow to Pow Wow. When in doubt quietly wait until there is a break in the action and ask the folks near the drum(s) to point you towards the Arena Director.

- 1) Dress and act appropriately. Hot pants, halter tops, swimwear, profanity and 'making out' have no place at Pow Wows.
- 2) Pointing with the fingers is considered poor manners by some nations. If you must point, use your head and nod in the direction you wish to indicate.
- 3) The seating around the Arena is reserved for dancers in regalia. Seats with blankets, shawls or regalia items on them are taken and should not be bothered. Do NOT sit on someone else's blanket unless invited.
- 4) The Arena is a sacred place from the time it is blessed until the Pow Wow is over. Do not walk across the arena. Walk around the edges. Only dancers and arena directors, etc. are allowed in the arena.
- 5) Listen to the Master of Ceremonies. He will announce who is to dance and when. Most Pow Wows conduct Intertribals in which the public may participate. Check with the Arena Director for more information.
- 6) Show respect to the Flag, Honor and Veterans songs and prayers by standing until the song is completed. Men—remove your hats!
- 7) Pictures should NOT be taken during Veterans Songs, Flag Songs, Prayers or any other time announced by the Master of Ceremonies. If you wish to photograph a dancer in regalia, ask first. If the picture is for publication or commercial use, that should be explained before the picture is taken.
- 8) Do not touch a drum without permission. Women are not generally allowed to sit at a drum or to touch it.
- 8) Pets should be left at home. If pets are brought to the event, at no time should pets be allowed in the Arena.
- 9) Respect the Head Man and Head Woman Dancers. Their role entitles them to start each song or set of songs. In some traditions, it is considered improper for dancers to pass the Head Man or Woman Dancer within the Arena.

10) Veterans dances may be restricted to Veterans, Combat Veterans or in some cases, the relations of Veterans. If you are not familiar with a particular dance, observe and learn. Watch the Head Dancers to learn the procedures.

10) The Flag Song, or Indian National Anthem, is sung when the American Flag is raised or lowered. Please stand and remove hats during the singing of this song. It is not a song for dancing. Pictures are not allowed during these songs.

11) Giveaways, attributes of Indian generosity, are held at many dances. They are acknowledgments of appreciation to recipients for honor or service given to the people. When receiving a gift, the recipient thanks everyone involved in the giving.

12) Unless you are sure spectator seating will be provided, bring a chair. Remember that the seating immediately around the Arena is for dancers only.

13) Alcohol, recreational drugs and firearms are prohibited. In all cases, these items are not allowed on Metro campuses.

14) If you see a lost feather, or you yourself drop a feather, do NOT pick it up. Notify the nearest Veteran, the Head Veteran, Head Man Dancer or Arena Director immediately.

15) If you have a question, ask. Most dancers, singers, elders and staff are happy to help. Offer a cold drink or other small, symbolic gift to those who help you.