What is culture shock?

Culture shock is a common challenge people face when moving into a new environment with different customs, language, food, and/or values.

Symptoms of culture shock may include:

- Boredom
- Intense loyalty to home culture
- Extreme homesickness
- Withdrawing from Americans
- Headaches or upset stomach
- Change of appetite
- Increased need for sleep
- Increased sense of physical pain
- Depression
- Anger over minor inconveniences
- Unexplained crying
- Relationship stress
- Difficulty completing work or study
- Exaggerated cleanliness

CONTACT THE MU COUNSELING CENTER

if you notice that you are having a difficult time adjusting to life at MU. Our staff can help you adapt and be successful.

119 Parker Hall (on South 6th Street between East Stewart Road and Elm Street)
573-882-6601
well-being.missouri.edu

Follow Mizzou Well-Being on Facebook and Instagram for events, inspirational quotes, articles, and videos offering strategies for coping, relieving stress, maintaining mental health, and just being the person you hope to be.

ADJUSTING TO YOUR NEW COMMUNITY
All students face challenges when adjusting to a new college. International students face even more new experiences and challenges. International students generally report experiencing four phases of adjustment.

1. **Honeymoon**: Everything is great! You are having a wonderful time.

2. **Shock**: There are so many differences in this country, and you aren’t sure how to deal with them. You didn’t think it would be like this.

3. **Negotiation**: You learn to deal with challenges and try to integrate them with your own beliefs.

4. **Acceptance**: You are able to live well in your new environment despite the differences you are experiencing.

### THINGS TO CONSIDER

**GREETINGS** Americans often greet each other with a handshake or hug, regardless of gender. Many will ask, “How are you?” This is often another way of saying hello. The most common reply is, “I'm fine, how are you?” Spatial distance is an important aspect of non-verbal communication. Most Americans stand about three feet apart when talking.

**FRIENDSHIP** Most people at Mizzou will be friendly. However, they will talk about hobbies, politics, sports, or current events rather than personal matters such as finances or family problems.

**DRESS** Mizzou students usually dress informally except when instructed to wear professional attire. It is not necessary to wear Western style clothing. Please wear clothes you feel comfortable wearing.

**SCHEDULES** Americans generally place a high priority on being punctual. You will be expected to be on time to events that have a specific starting time such as class, meetings, or social engagements.