

Mind Your Ps and Qs: Etiquette at the Courthouse



Never been to court? No idea what to expect? Here are some helpful tips.

Helpful Tips

- Dress professionally – you should be wearing business clothing. Make sure to remove your hat and sunglasses before entering the courtroom.
- Be aware of your body language, including hand gestures. Keep your body movements to a minimum to avoid being distracting to others in the courtroom. You should limit your movements during the hearing unless the Court instructs otherwise.
- Speak loudly enough to be heard.
- Be respectful to the judge and to other parties, including the attorneys for other parties. This includes referring to the judge as “your honor” and referring to opposing parties as Mr. and Ms., followed by their last name.
- Do not interrupt the judge or other parties when they are speaking, just as you would not want to be interrupted.
- Stand when the judge enters the courtroom. If you want to approach the judge, seek permission from the judge to do so first. When addressing the judge, stand a few feet back from the bench.
- Do not bring or consume food, drinks, or gum in the courtroom.
- Be aware of the courtroom’s policy on electronic devices.
- Be on time to all hearings.
- Attend all scheduled hearings.
- Do not photograph, film, or record any bankruptcy hearing.

