

THE BULLSHEET

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HOW TO SAY HI TO PEOPLE IN PASSING WITHOUT BEING CREEPY OR BITCHY OR USING TOO MUCH ENERGY: A COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE

Hayley Shay,
Loves saying hi to people

Ever have trouble giving a quick hello to people in passing who are acquaintances or your friends but not like, friends friends, and you're unsure whether to acknowledge their presence as they go past you? If you're normal, your answer is probably "What?" and "No". But if you're like me, subtly socially incompetent in ways psychologists can't wrap their heads around, then you have found the perfect guide, my friend (but not friend friend).

Imagine this: You're walking on campus, minding your own business. You're on your way to badminton practice, or to pick up your door-dashed chicken tikka-masala at the Curtis arch, and suddenly, you recognize a figure out in front of you. It's That Person from class, or it's your roommate's friend's buddy, and now you're bound to cross paths with them. Time crawls to a stop and you have to make a choice: Greet them or Ignore them. Be calm, don't forget to breathe. I'll help walk you through your decision.

First, assess the subject. What are they doing? Are they on their phone and appear engrossed? Then, IGNORE! Headphones on and eyes averted? IGNORE! Save your energy for badminton, champ. If they don't notice you, then there's "no harm, no fowl" as they say, and you can grab your chicken tikka-masala while it's still hot with your mind unmarred by the memory of an awkward greeting. But make sure to NOT LOOK AT THEM in case they gain situational awareness and catch you slack-jawed and staring like a creep. Keep your eyesight at a 45 degree angle downwards. You may even furrow your eyebrows and frown, so as to look lost in thought or deeply distraught by a life event. A little face like that is the perfect repellent for casual social interaction. One sees someone making a face like that and one goes "Eugh, I don't want to touch that!" An ideal response for our purposes.

But you won't always be so lucky as to have THEM ignore YOU. Sometimes you gotta decide whether to be the bad guy or not. Imagine this: You're ravished after badminton practice and dreaming of scarfing down some South Asian cuisine. Maybe some sort of chicken with some yummy sauce kind of dish. Yeah, that's nice. But then, POW! About 100 hundred feet in front of you is someone you worked on a class project with and never talked to again. Proximity to the subject—both physically and emotionally—is a critical point of consideration. If that's your bud just say hi. No big deal. But sometimes that's not your bud. Sometimes that's just a guy you happen to know. Sometimes that's just a person you feel compelled to acknowledge the existence of so as not to defy an invisible social contract nobody knows the terms of. And that's just the crux of our dilemma here, isn't it folks? But enough waxing philosophical, back to our scenario: You can't ignore your ex-project partner this time because the walkway is too narrow and they're bound to notice. If you ignore them here you run a huge risk of coming off as a bitch (Bitch-Risk approx. 85%). There is a science to this stuff—it's a precise calculus. You must greet them. But how? You ABSOLUTELY must be within at least FORTY FEET of your subject to greet them. It doesn't matter if you made eye contact from 200 hundred feet away. If that happens you must pretend you didn't and that you've been walking while in a fugue state that you were able to get out of once they were within forty feet of your person. This is just the way it has to be. Otherwise you wave like an idiot at the person and you're left scrambling on what to do for the next ten seconds they're still in your line of sight and part of your soul just dies right there.

You get the gist of this stuff so let's wrap this garbage up now by talking about what your greeting should look like. Obviously, make eye contact. Always smile to minimize bitch-risk. Words are great and you should use those. "Hi," "hello," and other crap. But what if you're not endowed with the gift of speech at that moment because you literally just don't want to open your mouth or move your face that much? In that case, a wave will suffice, but utilize waving scarcely and only with proper technique. Don't stick your arm straight in the air and move your hand around because that is stupid and gay. Don't even raise your arm half-way. When it comes to waving, I've got some of my most unorthodox advice yet: When you're waving at someone, don't raise your hand AT ALL. Stick your arm out in front of you slightly at hip-level, and just move your hand side to side with your palm almost parallel to the ground. It is so effortless and composed—the opposite of your true nature if you're the intended audience for this guide. Try it right now! It's awesome. Also, it's worth mentioning that if it's a man you're greeting you can sometimes get away with doing nothing I just said and just nodding nonchalantly at them.

I hope this helped you, readers. Good luck and godspeed!



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