

# Basic Etiquette

Treat yourself and your family to one (or more!) of the many Pow-Wows held every year by the Native American Nations of Wisconsin and affiliated organizations. The public is encouraged to attend these events and will be warmly welcomed by the host tribes.

Pow-Wows demonstrate how rich and vibrant the Native American culture is and how it is very much alive and thriving today.

## ATTIRE: DRESS APPROPRIATELY:

Avoid: swimsuits, halter tops, short skirts, t-shirts with profanity or negative slogans.

## PHOTOS AND RECORDINGS -

**ASK FIRST:** Many dancers and singers enjoy taking pictures with people, however, do not assume you can always photograph them. Always ask before you take pictures of individuals or record any songs during the Pow-Wow.

## LISTEN TO THE MASTER OF

**CEREMONIES (MC):** The MC keeps the Pow-Wow moving along, listen to his announcements.

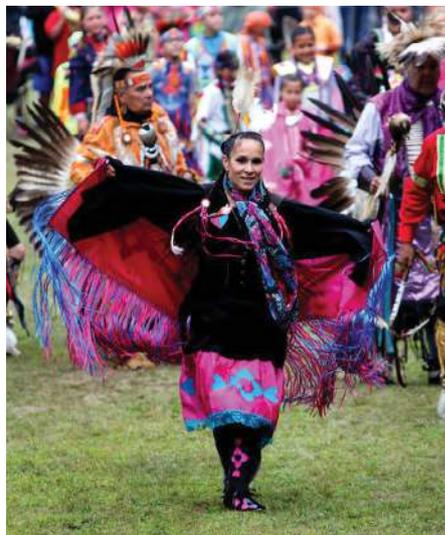
## GRAND ENTRY -

### ALWAYS STAND UP:

Every Pow-Wow begins with a Grand Entry, where all dancers enter the Pow-Wow arena, led by the Veterans and an opening prayer is offered. Please refrain from eating or talking during Grand Entry. Typically, a Pow-Wow has several Grand Entries and the public stands for all of them.

**RESPECT YOUR ELDERS:** Elders are held in great respect. If you are healthy, it's considered good manners to give up your seat to an Elder. Or, if you are standing in line for a meal, it is considered polite to let an Elder move ahead of you in line.

**JOIN THE DANCE!** An "Inter-tribal" dance sometimes follows the Grand Entry. This is a dance where visitors, friends and family dance together in the arena. The wearing of regalia is not required. If you opt to join the dance, walk with the beat and be considerate of others. Not all songs are for dancing, however. For example, the Flag Song is sung when the flag is being raised. Women should watch how other women are dancing and the same for men; do what the women and men your age are doing.



# WHEN ATTENDING A POW-WOW

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Many Pow-Wows across North America have strict protocols for various reasons and much like other cultural practices, this demands respect. The circle within the dance arena has always been thought of as a sacred place. There are also sacred items that consist throughout various pieces on each of the dancers' regalia. So, it is important to be aware that attending a Pow-Wow is not the same as attending your ordinary family reunion.

## POWOW REGALIA:

Please don't call the colorful native dress a "costume." It is their regalia. Please do not touch the dancers. Regalia is handmade and often takes months to make. Some regalia are family heirlooms. Remember the dancers and singers are not entertainers. They are members of a Native American community, observing and celebrating their cultural heritage with their families.

## YOUR CHILDREN:

Children are welcome at Pow-Wows. They love the rhythmic music, the colorful regalia and lively dances. However, there are times when they should not join the dancers in the arena and stay out of the arena. Some of the dances are competitions and a child in the Dance Circle is distracting to the dancers and singers.

## SEATS NEAREST THE ARENA:

These seats are reserved for the singers and dancers so it's not appropriate to sit in those seats. Please don't walk between the drum and the chairs surrounding it.

## BLANKET DANCE DONATIONS:

If possible, donate a few dollars when a Blanket Dance. The funds will be used by the person or group being honored.

## BRING A CHAIR:

Pow-Wows may not provide enough seating for the public.

## ALCOHOL, DRUGS, FIREARMS, AND

**SMOKING:** These are all discouraged on Pow-Wow grounds, please refrain from using or carrying any of these items into Pow-Wow grounds.

**We Invite You To Come And Learn:** The suggestions in this listing will help you and your family feel comfortable when attending a Pow-Wow. Bear in mind that each tribe has its own customs and all Pow-Wows are not identical. Pow-Wows are dynamic, they evolve over time, but continue to provide a warm and welcoming

activity for the entire family to enjoy. Join the 11 sovereign tribes in Native Wisconsin for good food, songs, dances, and fun!

Menominee Nation Contest Pow-Wow: August 2-4, 2019  
Mohican Nation Pow-Wow: August 9-11, 2019