

Tunisia



COUNTRY FACTS:

Capital: Tunis

Population: 10,589,025

Area, sq. mi.: 63,170

Real GDP per capita: 9,100

Adult literacy rate: 83% (male);
66% (female)

Ethnic make-up: Arab 98%,
European 1%, Jewish and other
1%

Religion: Muslim 98%, Chris-
tian 1%, Jewish and other 1%

School Classes

The relationship between students and teachers in Tunisia is formal. Students remain in one classroom throughout the day and teachers come in to teach different subjects. In Tunisia students are evaluated on daily homework, class participation, and periodic written exams.

Extracurricular Activities

Opportunities to participate in extracurricular activities are limited at school although the concept does exist. Students usually go to private sports clubs or public youth centers. Tunisian parents are typically not involved in their children's extracurricular activities.

School Rules

Tunisian students can have their phones with them at school and use them as long as they are not seen inside the classroom. In Tunisian schools girls wear blue school aprons, not uniforms. Boys do not have uniforms. The dress code allows clothing that is no higher than the knee and at least half sleeve-shirts.

Return

Upon return to their country, Tunisian students often face difficulties with French and Arabic languages as they may have missed a year of material in those courses.

Family Life

In Tunisia, most households consist of parents and their children. Rarely do grandparents, aunts, uncles or cousins live in the same house unless the family lives in a rural area. Families in Tunisia tend to split the household responsibilities along gender lines where most mothers are more responsible for the household and fathers are more responsible financially. Fathers usually have the authority in most occasions, but mothers do intervene if necessary.

Families typically eat their meals together and consider this valuable family time. Siblings freely share clothes with each other and rarely ask permission of one another. In Tunisia, teenagers are expected to interact respectfully with their parents at all times. However, it is fine to be informal with their siblings.

Teen Life

Teenagers in Tunisia usually meet at school or through common activities, as well as in their neighborhoods. But online acquaintances are becoming more and more popular. It is common for students to lend money to each other.

Responsibilities

Once a child leaves the household they are expected to take responsibility for themselves, until then, however, a child is largely dependent upon their parents. It is not typical for families to have maids. Usually, the girls are more helpful around the house and the boys less so. Tunisian males rarely cook, but females do. Students typically receive pocket money for food and fun from their parents, but don't necessarily budget.

Parental Involvement

Parents in Tunisia have no worries regarding internet use as they don't know much about the internet and technology. They rarely monitor their teenagers. Parents check their children's school results as they arrive in the mail, it is not through direct contact with the school. Parents will usually respect their children's personal interests and individual time. Females, however, may be slightly more restricted in their movement in the evening times, or because they may be required to be accompanied by a relative to social or individual activities.

Pets

Tunisian families rarely keep pets indoors, and pets in Tunisia are treated like pets. However, this will really depend on whether or not the student grew up with pets.

Personal Interactions

Mixed Gender Socializing

Socializing is more common in groups. At school in particular, socializing one-on-one is not as common. With regards to mixed gender socializing in the U.S., girls might feel awkward about it at first, but boys will likely adjust quickly as they are generally a bit more out-going than girls. Personal space between people of the same gender is often close.

Communication Styles

The cultural norm is that it is unacceptable to show negative emotions in public or in front of the family, however, many teenagers still show their emotions. They may do so more with their peers than with their family, but it does happen at home too. In Tunisian culture, silence can be a means of communicating negative feelings they may be experiencing. Teens may not talk with their parents about important subjects as they may be shy to do so.

Eye Contact

Eye contact is important as a way to demonstrate respect, but Tunisian teens may be shy with new people.

Personal Hygiene

In Tunisia, people generally shower every two days on average but that varies from one person to another. Underwear is supposed to be changed every day, but other clothes can be worn two days in a row. If the clothes smell, then they are considered unclean. If they do not, such as a jacket or jeans, they are not considered unclean. In Tunisia, students will put on house clothes when they return home when they know that they're staying in the house.

Religion

Many Tunisians practice their religion at home with family, but they do not necessarily attend services with the community. Ramadan is the month where family sits together for dinner, and wakes up at night for a light snack. For Eid al-Fitr children buy new clothes, visit family and go somewhere for fun.

Holidays

Prophet's Anniversary, Eid al-Fitr, and Eid al-Adha are predominate holidays in Tunisia. The anniversary of the Prophet's migration from Mecca to Medina is the beginning of the new Islamic calendar, Hijri year. The dates of these holidays vary from year to year by about 10 days as they are based on the Hijri calendar.