

YOU'RE ALMOST A MALAYSIAN WHEN ...

- You can eat an entire meal with just your right hand;
- You drink hot 'kopi' (coffee) or 'teh tarik' (tea with sweetened condensed milk) from a 'kopitiam' (local coffee shop) through a straw ... from a plastic bag ...;
- You naturally point with your thumb and not your forefinger;
- You're an expert at using the squat toilet;
- You are not surprised if you see footprints on the seat of a western toilet;
- You remove your shoes before entering a house;
- Since the water shortages you have become an expert at cleaning your entire body with half a bucket of water, a sponge, and some soap;
- You always have a supply of face masks in your bag in case of 'haze';
- You end every sentence in 'lah';
- You only ever eat pork in a Chinese restaurant;
- You celebrate every major faith's religious festivals and love all the public holidays they bring;
- You accept that you have to ask for 'large' clothing in every store;
- You have snacks, drinks, a book, and at least a quarter tank of petrol in your car for the anticipated traffic jams;
- At least a couple of your pairs of leather shoes have disintegrated from the constant humidity, or been stolen from outside a temple, or Mosque where you leave your shoes outside before entering;
- You can name three different kinds of monkeys and snakes from personal experience;
- If you are over 5 foot 5, you feel really tall;
- You remember to bring a shawl to the cinema to fight off hypothermia from the a/c;
- You always know what time of day it is according to the 'call – to – prayers' chants;
- An entire family plus an item of furniture driving past on a bike seems normal;

- Motorcyclists are always right, no matter how wrong they are;
- You smile at the motorcyclists driving up the wrong way towards you on your side of the road ... No wonder, they wear their jackets back to front. Multi – functional you see – not just a shield against the wind;
- You walk around a shopping mall in your flip flops Or ride a bike in your flip flops;
- You're comfortable eating roti canai and daal for breakfast;
- You know you've been bitten by a mosquito if you are unfortunate enough to come down with dengue fever;
- Your right hand automatically comes forward to receive or give anything to anyone;
- You are an expert at bargaining for a fair price in the market;
- You know the potholes in the road by heart;
- You carry an umbrella for the rain AND for the sun;
- Your handbag is hidden under the car seat every time you drive and you automatically move your handbag away from oncoming traffic when walking in the city;
- Strangers call you "brother", "sister", "aunty", or "uncle" (depending on your age);
- No matter which way you drive you know you'll always find a sign to "Ipoh";
- You recognize: "Pusat Bandaraya" (City Center), "Lebuhraya Persekutuan" (Federal Highway), "Sehala" (One Way), "Keluar" (Exit), "Masuk" (Enter), "Tolak" (Push), and "Tarik" (Pull);
- You overlook inconsistencies and if spelling isn't your forte either, you feel positively at home. Road signs to "Ulu Klang" can also be spelt "Hulu Klang". "Jalan Tanjong" can suddenly turn into "Jalan Tanjung". "Same thing lah ...";
- You double park ;
- You honk to announce that you are outside because it's too hot to get out and ring the bell;
- You have stopped retching at the smell of durian and suspect you actually like it... a bit;
- You have at least one Kebaya Nyonya, Baju Kurung, Cheongsam, and Shalwar Kameez in your wardrobe;
- The only winter clothes you have are for your annual ski trip;

- You have stopped converting everything from Ringgit to your home currency;
- You repeat words or stretch the vowels, like “Sorry, sorry” for emphasis, or “small, small” for plural. “Soooooo many small small children lah”, meaning quite a lot of young kids;
- As a national pastime, you stop to eat at the next stall even though you have just eaten, and you drive to a shopping mall even though you have nothing to buy, because it’s air conditioned and ... ‘national pastime lah’;
- You take staring (also a pastime) as a complement;
- Geckos in your bedroom are a guest to welcome. Invited or not. They help keep insect populations down;
- You sleep through the neighbors’ car alarms, house alarms, barking dogs, cats in heat, fireworks, honking, the morning paper round, and their Sunday morning house renovations;
- You find yourself doing your best to prove Malaysia is better than its neighbor Singapore. “At least we’re more laidback” Too laidback? “Noooo lah!”;
- ... Malaysia Boleh! (Malaysia can!)