

Everyday Indonesian

Daily Conversations for Living in Indonesia



Prepared by:
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Indonesian—English Pocket Guide

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About This Book

This book is designed as a practical pocket guide for anyone who lives in, works in, or frequently visits Indonesia.

Rather than focusing on grammar rules or long explanations, this book helps you communicate in real-life situations that you will encounter every day. All dialogues are based on common interactions with local people, such as ordering food, using transportation, shopping, asking for directions, and handling daily needs.

Each learning sentence is written in Indonesian and is immediately followed by its English translation. This format allows you to quickly understand meaning without switching pages, making the book easy to use in real situations.

The language used in this book is neutral and natural. It is polite enough for daily interactions, yet simple and practical for beginners. The expressions are commonly used by Indonesian people in everyday conversations.

This book is suitable for:

- Expats living in Indonesia
- Digital nomads and long-term visitors
- Beginners learning Indonesian (A1–A2 level)
- Learners who want a fast and practical reference

You can read this book from beginning to end or open any section based on your immediate needs. Use it as a learning tool, a survival guide, or a daily companion while living in Indonesia.

How to Use This Pocket Guide

This book is designed to be flexible and easy to use in real-life situations.

You do not need to read this book from the first page to the last page. Each unit stands on its own and represents a specific situation that you may encounter in daily life in Indonesia.

How to read the dialogues

- Read the Indonesian sentence first.
- Immediately check the English translation below it.
- Repeat the Indonesian sentence out loud to practice pronunciation.

When to use this book

- Before going out, to prepare for a specific situation
- During a conversation, as a quick reference
- After an interaction, to review and learn new expressions

Tips for effective learning

- Focus on meaning first, not grammar.
- Practice short sentences rather than long explanations.
- Use the expressions directly with local people.

Do not worry about making mistakes. Most Indonesians appreciate the effort to speak their language and will respond kindly.

This book is meant to help you communicate, not to make you sound perfect. Confidence and clarity are more important than accuracy at the beginning.

Pronunciation Quick Guide

Indonesian pronunciation is generally consistent and phonetic. Most words are pronounced exactly as they are written. This section explains how to pronounce Indonesian sounds clearly and naturally.

Vowels (A, I, U, E, O)

Indonesian has five main vowel sounds. Each vowel is pronounced clearly and never changes.

A

Pronounced like a in **father**.

Saya mau makan.

I want to eat.

Nasi goreng satu.

One fried rice.

I

Pronounced like ee in **see**.

Ini murah.

This is cheap.

Di mana toilet?

Where is the toilet?

U

Pronounced like oo in **food**.

Saya tunggu di sini.

I will wait here.

Itu susu dingin.

That is cold milk.

E

There are two common sounds:

1. Closed E (like e in *bed*)

Enak sekali.

Very delicious.

Besok pagi.

Tomorrow morning.

2. Neutral E (schwa) – very common and relaxed

Terima kasih.

Thank you.

Sebentar, ya.

Just a moment, please.

O

Pronounced like *o* in **more**, but shorter.

Ojek di sana.

The motorcycle taxi is over there.

Toko itu tutup.

That shop is closed.

Consonants (Important Differences)

Most consonants are similar to English, but these need special attention.

C

Always pronounced “ch”, never “k”.

Cari jalan.

Look for the road.

Saya mau cari makanan.

I want to look for food.

G

Always hard, like **g** in **go**, never soft.

Harga murah.

The price is cheap.

Tolong tunggu sebentar.

Please wait a moment.

K

At the end of a word, **K** is often not released (soft stop).

Tidak.

No.

Baik.

Alright.

NG

Pronounced like *ng* in **sing**.

Pulang sekarang.

Go home now.

Warung ini tutup.

This food stall is closed.

NY

Pronounced like *ny* in **canyon**.

Punya uang kecil?

Do you have small money?

Banyak orang.

Many people.

Stress and Rhythm

Indonesian words are spoken **evenly**.

There is **no strong stress** like in English.

 NOT: NA-si GO-reng

 YES: na-si go-reng (even, calm rhythm)

Nasi goreng satu.

One fried rice.

Saya mau bayar.

I want to pay.

Sentence Intonation

Intonation in Indonesian is generally **flat and calm**.

Statements

The tone goes slightly down at the end.

Saya mau pesan makanan.

I want to order food.

Yes/No Questions

The tone rises slightly at the end.

Sudah siap?

Are you ready?

Bisa bayar pakai kartu?

Can I pay by card?

Polite Softening with “ya”

Adding *ya* makes your sentence sound friendlier.

Tidak pedas, *ya*.

Not spicy, please.

Sebentar, *ya*.

Just a moment, please.

Politeness in Indonesian Culture

Politeness is a key part of communication in Indonesian culture.

Speaking politely is often more important than speaking perfectly.

Indonesian people value calmness, friendliness, and respect in daily interactions. Even simple words can sound polite when spoken gently.

Polite Words You Should Always Use

Tolong.

Please.

Terima kasih.

Thank you.

Maaf.

Sorry / Excuse me.

Permisi.

Excuse me (to pass or interrupt).

Softening Sentences with Small Words

Small words can make your sentence sound more polite and friendly.

Ya.

(Used to soften a request or statement.)

Sebentar, ya.

Just a moment, please.

Tidak pedas, ya.

Not spicy, please.

Dong.

(Used in casual situations to soften a request.)

Tolong bantu saya, dong.

Please help me.

Asking Instead of Commanding

Direct commands can sound rude in Indonesian.

Command style

Buka pintu.

Open the door.

Polite request

Bisa buka pintu?

Can you open the door?

Boleh duduk di sini?

May I sit here?

Bisa tunggu sebentar?

Can you wait for a moment?

Saying “No” Politely

Indonesians usually avoid saying “no” directly.
Soft expressions are preferred.

Sebentar, ya.

Just a moment.

Nanti dulu.

Later, not now.

Mungkin lain kali.

Maybe another time.

These expressions help keep the conversation friendly.

Using Titles and Names

Using titles shows respect, especially with adults and service staff.

Pak.

Mr. / Sir.

Bu.

Mrs. / Ma'am.

Terima kasih, Pak.

Thank you, Sir.

Permisi, Bu.

Excuse me, Ma'am.

Key Cultural Tip

If you are unsure what to say, choose the softer option.

Being polite and calm will always leave a good impression in Indonesia.

PART 1



BASIC SURVIVAL

Greetings & Saying Goodbye

Introducing Yourself

Asking Someone's Name

Saying Thank You & Sorry

Asking for Help

UNIT 1

Greetings & Saying Goodbye

Situation

You are greeting someone or saying goodbye in a daily situation in Indonesia.

Dialogue

A: Halo.

Hello.

B: Halo.

Hello.

A: Apa kabar?

How are you?

B: Baik, terima kasih.

I'm good, thank you.

A: Senang bertemu dengan Anda.

Nice to meet you.

B: Senang bertemu dengan Anda juga.

Nice to meet you too.

Saying Goodbye

A: Saya pergi dulu.

I'll go now.

B: Baik. Sampai jumpa.

Alright. See you.

A: Sampai nanti.

See you later.

B: Hati-hati di jalan.

Take care on the way.

Alternative Expressions

Selamat pagi.

Good morning.

Selamat siang.

Good afternoon.

Selamat sore.

Good afternoon / early evening.

Selamat malam.

Good evening.

Sampai besok.

See you tomorrow.

Sampai ketemu lagi.

See you again.

Cultural Note

In Indonesia, greetings are often calm and friendly.

Handshakes are common, but not always necessary. A smile and eye contact are usually enough.

Expressions like *Hati-hati di jalan* are commonly used when saying goodbye and show care and politeness.

UNIT 2

Introducing Yourself

Situation

You are introducing yourself to someone for the first time in Indonesia.

Dialogue

A: Halo.

Hello.

B: Halo.

Hello.

A: Nama saya Alex.

My name is Alex.

B: Nama saya Rina.

My name is Rina.

A: Dari mana asal Anda?

Where are you from?

B: Saya dari Belanda.

I'm from the Netherlands.

A: Tinggal di mana sekarang?

Where do you live now?

B: Saya tinggal di Bali.

I live in Bali.

Alternative Expressions

Nama saya Shawn.

My name is Shawn.

Saya dari Australia.

I'm from Australia.

Saya tinggal di Jakarta.

I live in Jakarta.

Saya baru di sini.

I'm new here.

Senang bertemu dengan Anda.

Nice to meet you.

Cultural Note

Indonesians often start conversations by asking simple personal questions such as where you are from or where you live.

These questions are friendly and polite, not intrusive.

Using *Anda* is neutral and polite, especially when meeting someone for the first time.

UNIT 3

Asking Someone's Name

Situation

You want to ask someone's name politely in Indonesia.

Dialogue

A: Permisi.

Excuse me.

B: Ya?

Yes?

A: Siapa nama Anda?

What is your name?

B: Nama saya Budi.

My name is Budi.

A: Senang bertemu dengan Anda.

Nice to meet you.

B: Senang bertemu dengan Anda juga.

Nice to meet you too.

Alternative Expressions

Nama Anda siapa?

What is your name?

Boleh tahu nama Anda?

May I know your name?

Nama saya Laura.

My name is Laura.

Panggil saya Budi.

Call me Budi.

Cultural Note

In Indonesian, there are several polite ways to ask someone's name.

Expressions like *Boleh tahu...* sound softer and more respectful.

Using *Anda* is appropriate in formal or first-time interactions.

You have reached the end of
the sample



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