Hindi phrasebook

**Hindi** is an Indo-European language spoken in India, Bangladesh, Nepal, and throughout the Indian diaspora worldwide). Of the 22 national languages and over 1,000 dialects of India, Hindi is promoted by the government and viewed by over half the population as a "link-language."

Hindi is descended from [Sanskrit](http://wikitravel.org/en/Sanskrit_phrasebook), sometimes called "the mother of all languages," or "Latin of the East." Hindi developed from the proto-Hindi Khadi Boli (lit. "Pure language"). A mixture of Hindi and Urdu, called **Hindustani** (though this name is also applied to the Caribbean dialect of Hindi), is the form heard in most Bollywood films, that try to appeal to the widest audience possible. Hindustani is different than what is taught at the literary level and what is used by news programs and the government in India.

A striking fact is that, depending on the source, Hindi is listed anywhere from the 2nd-5th most widely spoken language in the world. In contrast to languages such as [Mandarin](http://wikitravel.org/en/Chinese_phrasebook) or Spanish, there has not been much stress outside of India in promoting Hindi education.

Hindi Phrases

**Cultural Notes**

**Greetings:** There are no time elemental greetings in Hindi such as good morning, good afternoon, etc. And each religion has its own greetings. It is considered very gracious to address a person by *their* respective greetings, but not necessary. *Namaste* is the most ubiquitous greeting, and though of Hindu origin is now mostly secular. It is said with hands folded and a small gesture of bowing – but don't go overboard Japanese style! *Namaste* literally means "I bow to you." The original religious significance was of bowing to the soul (*ātmā*) within another. It is custom to touch the feet of someone older than you when saying *Namaste*. *Namaskār* has the same meaning, but is used less often in Hindi, though it is common in other Indian languages such as Gujarati and Bengali. *Namaskār* is thought of as more formal, and as such is used more often when addressing a group or a person of importance. The Sikhs also

**Civilities:** In Western cultures, saying phrases like *please*, *thank you*, *you're welcome*, *excuse me*, *sorry*, etc. are so ingrained into us from a young age that we say them without a second thought. Not so for Indians. Saying such phrases in an inappropriate circumstance might even embarrass the person, or cheapen the gravity of the phrase itself. These phrases are only said in a sincere sense. For example, don't say dhanyavad (thank you) after a clerk hands you your grocery bag (he is not expecting it!), but when someone goes out of their way to do something nice for you. Sometimes, English words themselves are used; due to the British colonial influence, especially in urban areas and among the upper class. In this case, use them as you would in English. Just remember that like Germans and the French, they sometimes have trouble with English *th* sounds and therefore pronounce *th* as थ. In conclusion, though Hindi has corresponding words to english, this does not mean that the context in which they are used also correspond likewise. Don't let all of this lead you to believe Indians are cold though – nothing could be further from the truth! These sentiments are merely communicated through body language rather than verbally. To show your thanks, a simple smile will do the trick. Other common gestures include the infamous "head bobble"; and a hand gesture made by swiftly swinging the wrist so your palm is facing the sky and your forefingers slightly elongated. Before travelling to India, rent some Bollywood films so that if a spontaneous Bhangra breaks out in the streets, you'll be ready to join in! All kidding aside, they can demonstrate body language and customs far better than any book is able to, all while acclimatizing you to the language as well.

**Prefixes & Suffixes:** With the words for "yes" and "no" *jī* may be added before to give it a more polite tone. Sometimes, speakers will simply reply with *jī*, as an affirmation of something someone says. *Jī* is added to a person's name as a sign of respect. For example; in India, Mahatma Gandhi is known simply as *Gandhiji*. Another suffix which is indispensable is *vāla,*  often rendered in English as "-wallah". Many books devote whole chapters to vāla. With nouns, it gives the meaning "the one or thing that does" and with verbs, it indicates something is about to happen. Examples:

* noun – shop (*dukān*) + *vāla* = shopkeeper ( *dukānvāla*)
* verb – to come ( *āna*) + *vāla* = (the) ... is coming ( *ānevāla hay*)

**English Loan Words:** The British Empire's influence spread into the language itself, and this continues today with American culture being exported throughout the world. So, an English word or phrase may almost always be inserted into any Hindi sentence. You will often hear Indians, whom while talking in Hindi, pepper their sentences with English words. Sometimes, they'll even alternate sentences, going from Hindi to English, and back to Hindi! Upon meeting an Indian, many times you may not even get to practice your Hindi, because they want to practice *their* English on *you*! English loan words are particularly used for modern inventions/technologies, so words like TV, computer and microwave are the same as in English apart from the slight change of accent. However; this is mostly in the cities, and learning some Hindi will have been all the more rewarding when in rural or non-tourist areas, as well as allowing you to communicate with a wider variety of people in the cities.

**Gender & the 2nd Person Pronoun:** Certain words have different endings depending on your gender. If you are a man, say these with an -a suffix, and if you're a woman, -ī. However; when addressing the person respectively with *āp*, the masculine ending takes the plural form. This is not all that different from the behavior of other Indo-European languages, c.f. German *Sie*, which like *āp* is also both the respectful 2nd person pronoun *and* plural form of address. The other two forms are the familiar *tum* and intimate *tū* . These change the forms of certain words. *Tum* is for friends and peers, *tū* for small children (within the family); between 'significant others' in private; traditionally to lower castes; in the past, slaves; and, paradoxically, when supplicating to the gods/God (c.f. Greek mythology). As a general rule, stick with *āp*, until you become more familiar with the language and culture. Forget about *tū* altogether, at the best using it would be a *faux pas* and at the worst, *very* offensive. For those reasons as well as practical ones, this section will only use the *āp* form.

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| **Accha! OK? TK!**  One of the most useful words to know is *accha*. It is both an adjective and interjection. Its meanings include (but are not limited to!): good, excellent, healthy, well, OK, really?, awesome!, hmm..., a-ha!, etc.! If you learn no other word, remember this one.  Another common all-purpose word is *ṭhīk hai*, pronounced and occasionally even spelled out as "TK". It is used in the same manner, meaning: OK/all right, yes/understood (affirmation), right/correct, etc. Sometimes shortened to just *ṭhīk*. |

**Basics**

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| ***Common signs:***  **OPEN**  **CLOSED**  **ENTRANCE**  **EXIT**  **PUSH**  **PULL**  **TOILET**  **MEN**  **WOMEN**  **FORBIDDEN** |

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| --- | --- |
| **English** | **Transliteration** |
| Hello (used esp. when answering the phone) | helo |
| Hello/Goodbye | namaste |
| Hello/Goodbye | namaskār |
| Hello/Goodbye (Hindu, respectful) | praņām |
| Hello/Goodbye (Hindu, colloquial) | rām rām |
| Hello/Goodbye (Sikh) | sat śrī akāl |
| Hello/Goodbye (Sikh, formal) | vāhegurū jī ka khālsa |
| Hello/Goodbye (Sikh, reply) | vāhegurū jī kī fateh |
| See you later | phir milenge |
| How are you? | āp kaise/kaisī hain? |
| How are you? | āp khairiyat se hain? |
| I am fine | main ṭhīk hūn |
| OK/fine (colloq.) | ṭhīk hai |
| Fine, and you? (more formal reply) | ṭhīk, aur aap? |
| What is your name? | āpka nām kya hai? |
| My name is \_\_\_ . | mera nām \_\_\_ hai. |
| Nice to meet you (formal). | āpse milkar bahut khushi huī |
| Nice to meet you too (reply). | mujhe bhī |
| Yes | haan |
| No/not | nahīn |
| Do you speak English? | āpko angrezī ātī hai? |
| Is there someone here who speaks English? | kya kisī ko angrezī ātī hai? |
| I don't speak Hindi. | mujhe hindī nahīn ātī hai. |
| I can't speak Hindi | main hindī nahīn bol sakta hūn. |
| I speak some Hindi. | mujhe kuch hindī ātī hai |
| I don't understand. | main samjha/samjhī nahīn |
| Speak more slowly | dhīre dhīre boliye |
| Come again? | phirse? |
| What does "..." mean? | "..." ka artha/matlab kya hai? |
| How do you say "..."? | "..." kaise kahate hain? |
| Where are you from? | āp kahan se hain? |
| I'm from ... | main ... se hūn |
| Please | kṛp-ya |
| Thank you | dhanyavād/shukriya (Hindustani/Urdu) |
| Thank you | thainkyū |
| Thank you very much | bahut bahut ... |
| You're welcome | āpka svāgat hai |
| You're welcome (lit. don't mention it) | koī bāt nahīn |
| Excuse me (getting s.o.'s attention) | suniye |
| Pardon me | kṣama kījiye |
| Pardon me/I'm sorry | maaf kijiye |
| Where is the toilet? | ṭāyaleṭ kahan hai? |
| Where is the toilet? | śaucālay kahan hai? |
| Good!, really?, nice, etc. | accha |
| Just one minute | ek minaṭ |

**Forms of Address**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **English** | **Transliteration** |
| Mr. | misṭar |
| Mrs. | misez |
| Mr. | śrī |
| Mrs. | śrīmatī |
| Mr. (Sikh, ਸਰਦਾਰ) | sardār |
| Mrs. (Sikh, ਸਰਦਾਰਨੀ) | sardārnī |
| Sir | mahodaya |
| Dr. | ḍākṭar |

**Interrogatives**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **English** | **Transliteration** |
| how/of what kind? | kaisa |
| how much/many? | kitna/kitne |
| what? | kyā? |
| when? | kab? |
| where? | kahān? |
| who? | kaun? |
| which? | kaunsa? |
| why? | kyon? |

**Numbers**

The numerals used to write in decimal are called Indo-Arabic numerals. Developed in India, they were borrowed by the Arabs, and gradually spread to Europe.   
Hindi numbers ending in 9 are named as "un" (-1) plus the next multiple of ten. Instead of naming powers of a thousand, Hindi has unique names for a thousand, a hundred thousand, ten million etc. These peculiarities don't seem to have effected the proliferation of Indian mathematicians.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Numeral** | **Transliteration** | **Numeral** | **Transliteration** | **Numeral** | **Transliteration** | **Numeral** | **Transliteration** |
| 0 | shUnya, bi.ndi | 25 | paccīs | 50 | pacās | 75 | pachattar |
| 1 | ek | 26 | chabbīs | 51 | ikyāvan | 76 | chihattar |
| 2 | do | 27 | satāīs | 52 | bāvan | 77 | sathattar |
| 3 | tīn | 28 | aṭṭhāīs | 53 | tirpan | 78 | aṭhhattar |
| 4 | chār | 29 | untīs | 54 | cauvan | 79 | unyāsī |
| 5 | pānc | 30 | tīs | 55 | pacpan | 80 | assī |
| 6 | cheh, chai, cheḥ | 31 | ikttīs | 56 | chappan | 81 | ikyāsī |
| 7 | sāt | 32 | battīs | 57 | sattāvan | 82 | bayāsī |
| 8 | āṭh | 33 | taintīs | 58 | aṭṭhāvan | 83 | tirāsī |
| 9 | nau | 34 | cauntīs | 59 | unsaṭh | 84 | caurāsī |
| 10 | das | 35 | paintīs | 60 | sāṭh | 85 | pacāsī |
| 11 | gyāreh | 36 | chattīs | 61 | iksaṭh | 86 | chiyāsī |
| 12 | bareh | 37 | saintīs | 62 | bāsaṭh | 87 | sattāsī |
| 13 | tereh | 38 | aṛtīs | 63 | tirsaṭh | 88 | aṭṭhāsī |
| 14 | caudeh | 39 | untālīs | 64 | cainsaṭh | 89 | navāsī |
| 15 | pandreh | 40 | cālīs | 65 | painsaṭh | 90 | nabbe |
| 16 | soleh | 41 | iktālīs | 66 | chiyāsaṭh | 91 | ikyānave |
| 17 | satreh | 42 | bayālīs | 67 | sarsaṭh | 92 | bānave |
| 18 | aṭhāreh | 43 | taintālīs | 68 | aṛsaṭh | 93 | tirānave |
| 19 | unnīs | 44 | cavālīs | 69 | unhattar | 94 | caurānave |
| 20 | bīs | 45 | paintālīs | 70 | sattar | 95 | pacānave |
| 21 | ikkīs | 46 | chiyālīs | 71 | ikhattar | 96 | chiyānave |
| 22 | bāīs | 47 | saintālīs | 72 | behattar | 97 | sattānave |
| 23 | teīs | 48 | aṛtālīs | 73 | tihattar | 98 | aṭṭhānave |
| 24 | caubīs | 49 | uncās | 74 | cauhattar | 99 | ninyānave |

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| **Numeral** | **Transliteration** |
| 100 | sau |
| 200 | do sau |
| 300 | tīn sau |
| 1000 | hazār |
| 2000 | do hazār |
| 3000 | tīn hazār |
| 1,00,000 | lākh |
| 1,00,00,000 | karoṛ |
| 1,00,00,00,000 | arab |
| 1,00,00,00,00,000 | kharab |
| number \_\_\_\_\_ (*train, bus, etc.*) | nambar \_\_\_\_\_ ṭren, bas, ... |
| 1 half | ādhā |
| less | kam/thoṛa |
| more | adhika/jyada |

**Time**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **English** | **Transliteration** |
| now | ab, abhī |
| later | bād men, phir |
| before | pehle |
| morning | subeh, savera(early morn.) |
| afternoon | Dopehar |
| evening | shām |
| night | rāt |

**Clock time**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **English** | **Transliteration** |
| one o'clock AM | rāt men ek baje |
| two o'clock AM | rāt men do baje |
| noon | dopehar |
| one o'clock PM | dopehar ek baje |
| two o'clock PM | dopehar do baje |
| midnight | ādhī rāt |

**Duration**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **English** | **Transliteration** |
| minute | minaṭ |
| hour | ghanṭa |
| day | din |
| week | hafta |
| month | mahīna |
| year | sāl |

**Days**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **English** | **Transliteration** |
| Today | āj |
| Yesterday/Tomorrow (depends on context/tense) | … kal |
| Day after tomorrow/day before yesterday | parson |
| Week | hafta |
| This week | is hafte |
| Last week | pichle hafte |
| Next week | agle hafte |
| Two weeks | do hafte |
| Month | mahīna |

The Hindu days of the week are each ruled by a planet, and corresponding exactly to ancient cultures in the West, i.e. Sunday = Ravivār (Lord of the Sun's day [lit. time or period]). Thursday/O.N. Þorsdagr, Thor's day = Guruvār (Lord of Jupiter's day), Saturday/Saturn's day = Śani's (Lord of Saturn's day), etc. Unlike her Western counterparts, in India, Astrology is still a vital part of Hindu culture. Though attitudes may vary on its validity, priests are still consulted, as per tradition, for an auspicious day to hold a wedding. (*-vār*), meaning *day, time, or period* is often dropped colloquially.

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| --- | --- |
| **Day** | **Transliteration** |
| Sunday | itvār, ravivār (Sun) |
| Monday | somvār (Moon); pīr |
| Tuesday | mangalvār (Mars); mangal |
| Wednesday | budhvār (Mercury); budh |
| Thursday | guruvār (Jupiter)/brihaspativār |
| Friday | śukravār (Venus) |
| Saturday | śanivār (Saturn) |

**Colors**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Color** | **Transliteration** |
| color | rang |
| colorful | bahut bahAna, rangabirangī |
| colorless | berang |
| black | kālā |
| white | safed/shwet |
| red | lāl |
| pink, rosy | gulābī |
| orange | nārangī |
| saffron | kesirayā |
| yellow | peela |
| green | harā |
| blue | neelā |
| turquoise | firozī |
| purple | bainganī, jāmnī |
| brown | bhūrā |
| gray | sleṭī |
| golden | sunaharā |
| silver | chāndhī (also the metal) |
| shiny | chamkeelā |
| deep, dark | gaharā |
| pale, light | halkā |

**Transportation**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **English** | **Transliteration** |
| Train | ṭren, relgāṛī |
| Train Station | sṭeśan |
| Bus | bas |
| Bus Station | bas aḍḍa |
| Bus Stop | bas sṭāp |
| Rickshaw | rickśa |
| Auto Rickshaw | āṭo |
| Taxi | ṭaiksī |
| Car | gāṛī, kār |
| Airplane | havāī jahāz |
| Airport | havāī adda |

**Bus and Train**

**How much is a ticket to \_\_\_\_\_ ?** (\_\_\_\_\_ jaane ki ticket kitne ki hai?)

**One ticket to \_\_\_\_\_ (**Ek \_\_\_\_\_ ki ticket dijiye.)

**Where does this train go? (**Yeh train kidhar jaati hai?)

**Does this train/bus stop in \_\_\_\_\_? ?(** Kya yeh train/bus \_\_\_\_\_ par rukti hai?)

**When does the train/bus for \_\_\_\_\_ leave? (**\_\_\_\_\_ ki train/bus kab niklegi?)

**When will this train/bus arrive in \_\_\_\_\_?**

Yeh train/bus \_\_\_\_\_ kab pahuchegi?

**Directions**

**How do I get to \_\_\_\_\_ ? (**\_\_\_\_ tak kaise jaoON?)

**\_\_\_\_the train station? (**— railway station)

**\_\_\_\_the bus station? (**— bas aḍḍa.?)

**May I see the room first?** (*phela,kumra dhaik lon?*)

**bigger?** (*Aur Bharra*)

**cleaner?** (*Aur Saaf*)

**cheaper?** (*Aur Sustha*)

**OK, I'll take it.** (*Teeke, le lenge)*

**I will stay for \_\_\_\_\_ night(s).** (*\_\_\_\_raath rukenge*)

**Can you suggest another hotel?** (*Aur koi hotel batha dijeeai*)

**Please clean my room.**. (*kamra saaf kurlo.*)

**I want to check out.** (*mujhe nikalna hai*)

**Money**

**Do you accept American/Australian/Canadian dollars?**

**Do you accept American/Australian/Canadian dollars?** (*American/australian/canadian dollar lete hei?*)

**Do you accept credit cards?** (*Credit Kaard lete hai?*)

**Where is an automatic teller machine (ATM)?** (*ATM kiddhar hai?*)

**Eating**

**A table for one person/two people, (please).**

**Can I look at the menu, please?**

**Menu card please** — menyoo kard diijiyeh

**One more, please**. (*ek aur*)

**Another round, please.** (*ek aur round milega*)

**When is closing time?** (***kab tak khula hai (what time is bar open till)/*** *bar band kab hota hai*When is closing time?)

**Shopping**

**Do you have this in my size?** mere saiz ka milegaa?

**How much is this?** iska kitna hoga?

**That's too expensive**- bahut mehnga hai

**Would you take \_\_\_\_\_?** kya aap \_\_\_\_\_ lena chahege?

**expensive**mehnga

**cheap**sastā

**I can't afford it.** main nahi le sakti

**I don't want it.** mujhe nahi chahiye

**You're cheating me.** tu mujhe fassa rahe hoo

**I'm not interested.** mujhe shauk nahi hai

**OK, I'll take it.** theek hai, main le letā hoon

**Can I have a bag?** kyā āp mujhe thaili dege

**Do you ship (overseas)?** bahr desh parcel kar sakthe ho

**I need...**— mujhe ... cāhiye

**toothpaste.** — (dant) manjan

**toothbrush**... — tūth braś

**soap.**. — sābun

**cold medicine.**— khānsī kī dawā

**a razor. -** rezar, ustara

**umbrella.**. — chātā

**an English-language book.**— angrezī kī kitāb

**an English-language magazine.**— angrezī kī patrika

**English paper** = angrezī kā akhbār; ..

**an English-Hindi dictionary**. . — angrezī-hindī sabda kośh

**I need your help** (*mujhe āpki sahayta chahie*)

**I'm lost.** (*main rasta bhul gaya*)

**I lost my wallet.** (*mera purse ghoom ho gaya*)

**I have fever**  (*mujhe bhukaar hai*)

**I am hurt** (*mujhko chot lagi hai*)

**I want a doctor** (*mujhko doctor chahie*)

**Can I make a call** (*phone kar sakta hoon main?*)