

Survival Turkish for Everyday Life

Last reviewed: August 2026

You do not need perfect grammar to make life in Türkiye easier. A greeting, a polite request, and the confidence to say “I am still learning” can transform an interaction. Start with the phrases you will use most often.

A Quick Pronunciation Key

Turkish spelling is more consistent than English spelling. These letters are especially useful:

c sounds like the **j** in “jam.”

ç sounds like the **ch** in “chair.”

ş sounds like **sh**.

ğ usually lengthens or connects the surrounding vowels rather than making a hard sound.

ı is an unrounded vowel without an exact English equivalent; it is not the same as **i**.

ö and **ü** are similar to the same letters in German.

Do not let pronunciation anxiety stop you. Context, kindness, and repetition do a lot of work.

Greetings and Politeness

Turkish	English
Merhaba.	Hello.
Günaydın.	Good morning.
İyi akşamlar.	Good evening.
Hoşça kalın.	Goodbye. (said by the person leaving)
Güle güle.	Goodbye. (said to the person leaving)
Lütfen.	Please.
Teşekkür ederim.	Thank you.
Rica ederim.	You're welcome.
Affedersiniz.	Excuse me.
Kolay gelsin.	May your work go easily.

Kolay gelsin is one of the loveliest everyday expressions to learn. Say it when entering or leaving a shop, office, or workplace.

When You Do Not Understand

Turkish	English
Türkçe öğreniyorum.	I am learning Turkish.
Biraz Türkçe konuşuyorum.	I speak a little Turkish.
Anlamadım.	I didn't understand.
Tekrar eder misiniz?	Could you repeat that?
Biraz daha yavaş, lütfen.	A little slower, please.
Yazar mısınız?	Would you write it down?
İngilizce konuşuyor musunuz?	Do you speak English?
Çeviri kullanabilir miyiz?	Can we use translation?

Shopping

Turkish	English
Bu ne kadar?	How much is this?
Bir kilo, lütfen.	One kilogram, please.
Yarım kilo, lütfen.	Half a kilogram, please.
Başka var mı?	Is there another one?
Sadece bakıyorum.	I'm just looking.
Kart geçiyor mu?	Do you accept cards?
Nakit ödeyeceğim.	I will pay cash.
Fiş alabilir miyim?	May I have the receipt?
Poşet istemiyorum.	I don't need a bag.

Restaurants and Cafés

Turkish	English
Bir masa var mı?	Is there a table available?
Menüye bakabilir miyim?	May I see the menu?
Bunu istiyorum.	I would like this.
Etsiz mi?	Is it without meat?

Süt ürünü içeriyor mu?	Does it contain dairy?
Alerjim var.	I have an allergy.
Acısız olsun, lütfen.	Not spicy, please.
Su alabilir miyim?	May I have water?
Hesap, lütfen.	The bill, please.
Çok güzeldi.	It was very good.

Note: For a serious food allergy, carry a professionally translated allergy card. A phrase guide alone cannot guarantee that staff understands ingredients or cross-contact risks.

Directions and Transportation

Turkish	English
... nerede?	Where is ...?
... nasıl gidebilirim?	How can I get to ...?
Sağda.	On the right.
Solda.	On the left.
Düz gidin.	Go straight.
Yakın mı?	Is it close?
Uzak mı?	Is it far?
Burada inmek istiyorum.	I want to get off here.
Bu otobüs Kızılay'a gidiyor mu?	Does this bus go to Kızılay?
Adresi gösterebilir misiniz?	Can you show me the address?

Home and Deliveries

Turkish	English
Evdeyim.	I am at home.
Kapıyı açıyorum.	I am opening the door.
Adresi mesajla göndereceğim.	I will send the address by message.
Üçüncü kat.	Third floor.

Asansör yok.	There is no elevator.
Su akıyor.	Water is leaking.
Elektrik yok.	There is no electricity.
Kombi çalışmıyor.	The boiler is not working.
Yardım eder misiniz?	Could you help me?
Ne zaman gelebilirsiniz?	When can you come?

Pharmacy and Medical Care

Turkish	English
Eczane nerede?	Where is the pharmacy?
Nöbetçi eczane nerede?	Where is the pharmacy on duty?
Doktora ihtiyacım var.	I need a doctor.
Randevu almak istiyorum.	I would like to make an appointment.
Ağrım var.	I am in pain.
Buram ağrıyor.	It hurts here.
Alerjim var.	I have an allergy.
Bu ilacı kullanıyorum.	I take this medication.
İngilizce tercüman gerekiyor.	I need an English interpreter.
Acil yardım lazım.	I need emergency help.

For an emergency, call **112**. A phrase sheet is not a substitute for professional medical interpretation.

Numbers You Will Use Often

Number	Turkish
0	sıfır
1	bir
2	iki
3	üç
4	dört
5	beş

6	altı
7	yedi
8	sekiz
9	dokuz
10	on
20	yirmi
50	elli
100	yüz
1,000	bin

A Seven-Day Practice Plan

- **Day 1:** Learn hello, please, thank you, and excuse me.
- **Day 2:** Practice numbers 1–10.
- **Day 3:** Order one familiar drink or food in Turkish.
- **Day 4:** Ask the price of something.
- **Day 5:** Practice your address and floor number.
- **Day 6:** Learn how to say that you do not understand.
- **Day 7:** Use **kolay gelsin** naturally in a shop.

Small, repeated interactions are more useful than waiting until you feel fluent enough to speak.

My Essential Information

My address in Turkish: _____

My telephone number: _____

My emergency contact: _____

My allergies: _____

My regular medications: _____

Where to Study Turkish

Ankara offers university-based programs, independent language courses, and online options. Ask about placement testing, course level, weekly schedule, class size, certificate recognition, and current fees before registering.

Program	Location	What to know
Ankara University TÖMER tomer.ankara.edu.tr	Beşevler: Emniyet Mah. No. 8, Yenimahalle Nene Hatun: Nenehatun Cad. No. 122, Çankaya	Long-established university language center teaching Turkish to international learners. Check the current branch, schedule, placement process, and registration period.
Turkish-American Association www.taa-ankara.org.tr/en	Cinnah Cad. No. 20, Kavaklıdere, Çankaya	Offers Turkish courses for foreigners in a multicultural setting. Its published course information states that programs and teachers are approved by the Ministry of National Education.
Gazi University TÖMER tomer.gazi.edu.tr	Emniyet Mah., Abant 1 Sok., TOKİ Blokları 10/2-C, Yenimahalle	Offers structured Turkish levels and proficiency testing. Registration details, course intensity, and fees are published by academic year.
ASBÜ TÖMER tomer.asbu.edu.tr	Anafartalar Mah., Cumhuriyet Cad. No. 4, Ulus, Altındağ	Ankara Social Sciences University program with level courses, placement and proficiency exams, and published academic calendars. You do not have to be an ASBÜ student to ask about enrollment.
Yunus Emre Institute turkce.yee.org.tr/en	Online; available from anywhere	Provides an official online Turkish-learning portal and periodically opens online course applications. Useful when an in-person schedule or location is not practical.

Private Tutors and Community Recommendations

Private tutors are widely available. One-to-one lessons can be especially useful for conversation practice, workplace Turkish, exam preparation, or a schedule that does not fit a group class. Ask about qualifications, lesson location, cancellation terms, and whether a trial lesson is available before paying for a package.

Facebook groups can help. Joining Ankara or Türkiye expat groups can be a practical way to find recent course experiences, tutor recommendations, conversation exchanges, and study partners. Treat recommendations as a starting point: independently verify the teacher or school, agree on the price and terms in writing, and avoid sending a large advance payment to someone you have not vetted.

Tiffles in Türkiye Practical guides and reflections from building a life in Türkiye.

Website: tifflesinturkiye.com © 2026 Tiffles in Türkiye. All rights reserved.

This guide is intended as a practical introduction and may not cover every regional expression or situation. For medical, legal, or other important conversations, use a qualified interpreter when needed.