

The Malayalam Starter Pack

120 essential colloquial phrases — the real, spoken Malayalam of everyday Kerala

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Pronunciation tip: read the phrases as plain English letters — they are spelled the way they sound. Hear many of them spoken free at speakmalayalam.com/malayalam-phrasebook.html

Greetings & First Meetings

Namaskaram	Hello (any time of day)
Sughamano?	How are you?
Sugham!	I'm fine!
Entha vishesham?	What's new? / What's up?
Vishesham onnum illa	Nothing much
Ente peru ... aanu	My name is ...
Ninte peru entha?	What's your name? (casual)
Njaan Americayil ninnaan	I'm from America
Kandathil santhosham	Happy to meet you
Sheri, kaanaam!	Okay, see you!
Poyi varaam	Bye (lit. I'll go and come)
Pinne kaanaam	See you later

Politeness & Essentials

Nanni	Thank you
Othiri nanni	Thanks a lot
Kshamikkanam	Sorry / excuse me
Kuzhappamilla	No problem / it's fine
Dayavayi	Please
Sheri	Okay
Athe	Yes
Alla	No (that is not so)
Illa	No (there is none)
Ariyilla	I don't know
Manassilayi	Understood / got it
Manassilayilla	I didn't understand

Asking & Understanding

Entha?	What?
Evide?	Where?
Eppol?	When?
Enthukondu?	Why?
Engane?	How?
Aaraa?	Who is it?
Ethra?	How much?
Onnu koodi parayamo?	Can you say that once more?
Pathukke parayamo?	Can you speak slowly?
English ariyamo?	Do you know English?
Enikku Malayalam kurachu ariyaam	I know a little Malayalam
Njaan Malayalam padikkukayaanu	I'm learning Malayalam

Food, Tea & Eating

Enikku vishakkunnu	I'm hungry
Enikku daahikkunnu	I'm thirsty
Oru chaaya kitto?	Can I get a tea?
Vellam venam	I need water
Nalla ruchi!	Very tasty!
Adipoli!	Awesome!
Mathi, vayar niranju	Enough, I'm full
Kurachu koodi tharamo?	Can I have a little more?
Erivu kurachu mathi	Only a little spicy, please
Choru kazhicho?	Did you eat? (lit. had rice?)
Kazhichu	I ate
Kazhichilla	I haven't eaten

Family Words

Amma	Mother
Achan	Father
Chettan / Chetta	Big brother (also: hey, sir-casual)
Chechi	Big sister (also to any woman, friendly)

Ammamma	Grandmother (maternal)
Appooppan	Grandfather
Mol / Mole	Daughter / dear girl
Mon / Mone	Son / dear boy
Bharya	Wife
Bharthavu	Husband
Kutty	Child / kid
Veedu	House / home

Travel & Getting Around

... evideyaanu?	Where is ...?
Bus stand evide?	Where is the bus stand?
Ethra duram undu?	How far is it?
Auto venam	I need an auto-rickshaw
Ivide nirthamo?	Can you stop here?
Nere po	Go straight
Valathottu	To the right
Idathottu	To the left
Pathukke!	Slowly! / careful!
Ethra aayi?	How much (is the fare)?
Njaan vazhi thetti	I've lost my way
Railway station-il pokanam	I need to go to the railway station

Shopping & Bargaining

Ithu ethra?	How much is this?
Valare kooduthal aanu!	That's too much!
Kurachu kurakkamo?	Can you reduce a little?
Veno... venda	Hmm... no, I don't want it
Ithu venam	I want this one
Vere color undo?	Is there another colour?
Cheriyathu undo?	Is there a smaller one?
Valiyathu undo?	Is there a bigger one?
Nallathu	Good one

Card edukkumo?	Do you take card?
Baaki tharoo	Give the change, please
Kollaam, edukkaam	Nice, I'll take it

Numbers 1-12

Onnu	1
Randu	2
Moonnu	3
Naalu	4
Anchu	5
Aaru	6
Ezhu	7
Ettu	8
Onpathu	9
Pathu	10
Pathinonnu	11
Pandrandu	12

Feelings & Sweet Things

Enikku santhosham aayi	I'm happy / that made me happy
Enikku sankadam undu	I'm sad
Enikku kshenam aanu	I'm tired
Pedikkanda	Don't be scared / don't worry
Njaan ninne snehikkunnu	I love you
Ente ponnu	My precious (term of endearment)
Nee sundari aanu	You are beautiful (to a woman)
Nee sundaran aanu	You are handsome (to a man)
Nalla kutty!	Good kid! / well done, dear!
Miduki!	Clever girl! / well done!
Midukan!	Clever boy! / well done!
Kidu!	Super! (slang)

Emergencies & Health

Sahayikkoo!	Help!
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Doctor venam	I need a doctor
Hospital evide?	Where is the hospital?
Enikku sugham illa	I'm not feeling well
Vedana undu	It hurts / there is pain
Pani undu	I have a fever
Marunnu venam	I need medicine
Police-ne vilikku!	Call the police!
Ente phone nashtappettu	I lost my phone
Pathukke, please	Slowly, please
Veettil aarundu?	Is anyone home?
Ellaam sheriyaakum	Everything will be alright

Your next step: phrases become conversations with practice and correction. Take the free 2-minute level test at speakmalayalam.com/malayalam-level-test.html, follow the free 30-day course, or book a one-to-one lesson — online, worldwide, 5 AM–11:30 PM IST.

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