

LESSON TRANSCRIPT

Absolute Beginner S1 #1

Say "Hello" in Turkish Anytime, Anywhere!

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#1

INTRODUCTION

Gabriella: Hello and welcome to the Absolute Beginner series at TurkishClass101.com. This is season 1, lesson 1, Say "Hello" in Turkish Anytime, Anywhere! I'm Gabriella.

Feyza: Merhaba, and I'm Feyza!

Gabriella: And together we are going to guide you through the first steps in Turkish. In this lesson, you'll learn how to say "hello" in Turkish any time of the day.

Feyza: The conversation takes place on the street. It's between Merve and Hakan. Hakan is Merve's husband Bora's friend.

Gabriella: And they've just bumped into each other on the street.

Feyza: Merve and Hakan already know each other, so they're using informal language.

Gabriella: But with minor adjustments, this conversation is applicable to formal situations as well. Ok, let's listen to the conversation.

DIALOGUE

Merve: Merhaba

Hakan: Merhaba.

Merve: Nasılsın?

Hakan: İyiyim, teşekkürler. Ya sen?

Merve: Ben de iyiyim. Sağ ol.

Gabriella: Let's hear the conversation one time slowly.

Merve: Merhaba

Hakan: Merhaba.

Merve: Nasılsın?

Hakan: İyiyim, teşekkürler. Ya sen?

Merve: Ben de iyiyim. Sağ ol.

Gabriella: Now, let's hear it with the English translation.

Merve: Merhaba

Merve: Hello.

Hakan: Merhaba.

Hakan: Hello.

Merve: Nasılsın?

Merve: How are you?

Hakan: İyiyim, teşekkürler. Ya sen?

Hakan: Fine thanks. And you?

Merve: Ben de iyiyim. Sağ ol.

Merve: I am doing fine as well. Thank you.

POST CONVERSATION BANTER

Gabriella: OK, so now it's time for some cultural information about greetings in everyday life in Turkey.

Feyza: Turkish people are very vocal with their gestures, and this trait comes from their Mediterranean heritage.

Gabriella: That means smiling and shaking hands are key to forming a strong bond, right Feyza?

Feyza: They sure are... For a good first impression, try to hold your hand out with a firm shake, smile and say "Merhaba!" at the same time. Don't be shy with your smiles when you're greeting someone.

Gabriella: Hmm. It seems like first impressions are the lasting ones...

Feyza: (laughs) Yes, that's very true.

Gabriella: How about when you're talking to your elders? Do you need to change your mannerisms and attitude?

Feyza: Good question Gabriella. When you are talking to elders, or other people you respect, replace "sen" which is "you" -second person singular, with the second person plural "siz". As for "sağ ol", just add the related suffix "sağ olun" which means "thank you." This personal pronoun and suffix is also used to emphasize politeness and courtesy.

Gabriella: And listeners, don't forget to bow your head a little when leaving.

Feyza: That's right. But note that this should just be a slight tilt, nothing extravagant. But it is a sign of politeness, that you should try to get into the habit of practising at the same time.

Gabriella: It doesn't sound too difficult to change to a formal situation.

Feyza: Yes, just a few minor changes!

Gabriella: Now listeners, Turkey is very diverse and eclectic in terms of people's cultural backgrounds. See the lesson notes if you want to learn more about the different gestures used by Turkish people of various backgrounds! Ok, now let's have a closer look at the usage for some of the words and phrases from this lesson.

VOCAB LIST

Gabriella: The first word we shall see is...

Feyza: merhaba [natural native speed]

Gabriella: hello

Feyza: merhaba [slowly - broken down by syllable] merhaba [natural native speed]

Gabriella: Next

Feyza: nasıl [natural native speed]

Gabriella: how

Feyza: nasıl [slowly - broken down by syllable] nasıl [natural native speed]

Gabriella: Next

Feyza: teşekkür [natural native speed]

Gabriella: a word showing appreciation, thanking.

Feyza: teşekkür [slowly - broken down by syllable] teşekkür [natural native speed]

Gabriella: Next

Feyza: sağ olmak [natural native speed]

Gabriella: literal meaning: "May you be safe and sound"; this expression is also used to say "thank you" in Turkish.

Feyza: sağ olmak [slowly - broken down by syllable] sağ olmak [natural native speed]

Gabriella: And last

Feyza: iyi [natural native speed]

Gabriella: good

Feyza: iyi [slowly - broken down by syllable] iyi [natural native speed]

KEY VOCAB AND PHRASES

Gabriella: Let's take a closer look at some of the words and phrases from this lesson.

Feyza: Yes, as well as talking about their meaning, we'll give some details about their usage.

Gabriella: The first word from this dialogue is...

Feyza: "Merhaba!"

Gabriella: This is one of the most important phrases in Turkish.

Feyza: Yes, you'll hear this every day, and anytime, anywhere...

Gabriella: It can be used both with people you know, and people you are meeting for the first time.

Feyza: And it can be used in any context, both formal and informal. It means "hello".

Gabriella: Feyza, what are some of the other expressions that are used to greet people at different times of the day, like morning or evening?

Feyza: Well, “Merhaba! Günaydın.” is “Hello! Good Morning” and “Merhaba! Tünaydın.” is “Hello! Good Afternoon.” And then there is “Merhaba! İyi Akşamlar!” meaning “Hello! Good Evening!”

Gabriella: Wow, a lot to take in at once!

Feyza: You think so? Well for now, just remember and practice “Merhaba”.

Gabriella: Ok, good tip! What’s next, Feyza?

Feyza: “Teşekkür”, which is the part of a phrase that shows your appreciation and gratitude.

Gabriella: This phrase naturally follows the question “How are you?” in Turkish.

Feyza: In Turkish, “how are you” is “nasılsın?” for the informal and “nasılsınız?” for the formal question. And it’s answered with “Teşekkürler. İyiyim.” meaning “Thank you. I am fine.”

Gabriella: Now there, you just added another suffix to “teşekkür” Can you tell us why?

Feyza: Ah you mean plural suffixes ‘-ler’ or ‘-lar’. “teşekkür” is the singular form of this noun. Here, using the plural form will make your answer sound more hearty and enthusiastic.

Gabriella: I think this will make more sense when you explain the grammar behind it. For now, let’s move on to the other expression, which means “thank you”.

Feyza: Ok. “Sağ ol” is used in casual conversations between friends, family members and other close relations.

Gabriella: What about people you don’t know?

Feyza: Easy. You can simply say, “Sağ olun” when you’re doing your weekly shopping at your neighborhood greengrocers, or when you’re thanking the taxi driver when reaching your destination.

Gabriella: These encounters don’t require high levels of formality right?

Feyza: That’s right, Gabriella.

Gabriella: This seems like an idiomatic expression. What is the literal meaning?

Feyza: The literal translation for this idiomatic expression is “May you be safe and sound”. But keep in mind that this expression has many meanings.

Gabriella: A very interesting way of saying “thank you”. Can you explain these meanings a little more?

Feyza: Well, you might also hear this expression at other life events, such as funerals for example. Imagine yourself approaching relatives of the deceased in the courtyard of a mosque. In this situation, you’d say “Çok üzgünüm. Başınız sağ olsun.” meaning “I am so sorry. May you be safe and sound.”

Gabriella: Well we hope that you won’t be faced with a sad situation like that dear listeners, but it is a very useful expression. Please don’t forget to check our lesson notes for further examples. Okay, now onto the grammar.

GRAMMAR POINT

Gabriella: In this lesson, we’re going to learn about how to greet someone in Turkish.

Feyza: We’ll cover asking them how they are feeling, and various ways of saying thanks.

Gabriella: Yes, so let's remember "How are you" in Turkish is...

Feyza: "Nasılsın?" in informal and "Nasılsınız?" in formal contexts.

Gabriella: There are so many suffixes in Turkish!

Feyza: It's true. The original form of this sentence is "Sen nasılsın?" meaning "How are you?" But Turkish tends to shorten the sentences to sound more natural, and this is only possible through the extensive use of suffixes in Turkish grammar.

Gabriella: Let's explain this more by breaking the sentence down.

Feyza: Ok. "Sen" is "you" second person singular, "nasıl" is an interrogative word meaning "how." "Nasıl-sın". "s" here is a buffer letter and -in is the suffix for the second person singular.

Gabriella: So if you delete "sen", meaning "you" in this sentence, will it still have the same meaning while having a clearer sentence structure?

Feyza: Yes, exactly! That makes it more practical and natural for everyday conversation.

Gabriella: And you mentioned something before about the usage of buffer letters. Can you explain that with an example for our listeners?

Feyza: Sure. As we discussed earlier, to reply to Nasılsın meaning "How are you", you can say "İyiyim, teşekkürler" meaning "I am fine thanks." Here, 'iyi' means 'good' as in a good mood. "-im" is a suffix that indicates a personal ending. And finally "y" is a buffer letter.

Gabriella: Buffer letters... are a little confusing. Why are there so many in Turkish?

Feyza: I think of "buffer letters" as connection letters, as they usually connect two vowels. They are the building blocks of the sentence syntax. In Turkish, two vowels can not be used next to each other. When a word that ends with a vowel takes a suffix that starts with a vowel, we put the buffer letter in between them.

Gabriella: So it's kind of like the mathematics of the Turkish language.

Feyza: Exactly! I suppose every language has a formula!

OUTRO

Gabriella: Ok, that's all for this lesson. You can find more information on buffer letters in the lesson notes.

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Gabriella: ...or skip around to different levels. It's up to you!

Feyza: Instantly access them all right now at www.TurkishClass101.com

Gabriella: Thank you for listening, everyone.

Feyza: Hoşçakalın