Devanagari देवनागरी

The trick: Hindi is written left to right, and the letters hang from a line on top. Each consonant carries a built-in a: क ka. A vowel mark changes that a. **Romanization on this sheet:** plain Latin, with long vowels as aa, ii, uu, and an n after a vowel that goes through the nose.

Vowels: a letter at the start of a word, a mark after a consonant

अ no mark	आ ा	इ ि	ई ी	उ ु	ऊ ू	ए े	ऐ ै	ओ ो	औ ौ
क **a**	का **aa**	कि **i**	की **ii**	कु **u**	कू **uu**	के **e**	कै **ai**	को **o**	कौ **au**

Consonants, row by row

	plain	with a puff	voiced	voiced, puff	nasal
back of the mouth	क **k**	ख **kh**	ग **g**	घ **gh**	ङ **ng**
roof of the mouth	च **ch**	छ **chh**	ज **j**	झ **jh**	ञ **ny**
tongue curled back	ट **t**	ठ **th**	ड **d**	ढ **dh**	ण **n**
tongue on the teeth	त **t**	थ **th**	द **d**	ध **dh**	न **n**
lips	प **p**	फ **ph**	ब **b**	भ **bh**	म **m**
y, r, l, v	य **y**	र **r**	ल **l**	व **v**	
sh, s, h	श **sh**	ष **sh**	स **s**	ह **h**	

A puff of air: say क ka, then ख kha with a breath, as if blowing out a candle. The h means a puff, so th and ph are never the English th or f. **The shaded row** is said with the tongue curled back; the row below, with the tongue on your teeth. This sheet writes both as t and d: the letter shows which.

The hidden a

At the end of a word, and often in the middle, the built-in a goes quiet: कमल kamal, lotus, not kamala; घर ghar, house.

Dot letters

A dot below adds a sound: ज़ z as in ज़रूर zaruur, sure; फ़ f as in फ़िल्म film; ड़ d with a flap, close to r: लड़का ladkaa, boy.

Through the nose

The dot on top, as in अं an, is an n or m: हिंदी hindii. The moon and dot, as in अँ an, sends the vowel through the nose: हाँ haan, yes; माँ maan, mother.

Joined letters

The halant क् k takes the a away, so letters join: क्ष ksh क्षमा kshamaa, forgiveness; त्र tr यात्रा yaatraa, trip; ज्ञ gy ज्ञान gyaan, knowledge; श्र shr श्री shrii, Mr.

How words work व्याकरण

Every noun is masculine or feminine

masculine
often ends in -aa
लड़का ladkaa boy · बेटा betaa son · कमरा kamraa room

feminine
often ends in -ii
लड़की ladkii girl · बेटी betii daughter · रोटी rotii flatbread

Often, not always: पानी paanii, water, is masculine, and किताब kitaab, book, is feminine. Learn each noun with its colour. Describing words in -aa follow the noun: अच्छा लड़का achchhaa ladkaa, a good boy; अच्छी लड़की achchhii ladkii, a good girl.

Little words come after the noun

घर में
ghar men
in the house

मेज़ पर
mez par
on the table

दिल्ली से
dillii se
from Delhi

राम का घर
raam kaa ghar
Ram's house

का, की, के: of changes like an -aa word, to match the noun that comes after it: राम का घर raam kaa ghar, Ram's house; राम की किताब raam kii kitaab, Ram's book.

The verb goes last, and it knows who's talking

मैं
main
I

चाय
chaay
tea

पीता
piitaa
drink

हूँ
huun
am

a man says
मैं चाय पीता हूँ main chaay piitaa huun

a woman says
मैं चाय पीती हूँ main chaay piitii huun

Three ways to say you

Word	Use it for	You are
तू **tuu**	very close: a best friend, a small child, God. Rude to a stranger.	तू है **tuu hai**
तुम **tum**	friends, family, people younger than you	तुम हो **tum ho**
आप **aap**	strangers, elders, teachers, at work. Always safe.	आप हैं **aap hain**

है or हैं: है hai means is, for one person or thing: यह घर है yah ghar hai, this is a house. हैं hain, with the dot on top, is for many and for आप aap: वे दोस्त हैं ve dost hain, they're friends. And I am is मैं हूँ main huun.

The first 237 words पहले शब्द

How: learn five a day, then hunt for them in Kitsumi subtitles. Nouns are in colour: blue is masculine, pink is feminine. *(Notes in brackets)* say how a word is used.

Greetings and survival

नमस्ते namaste
hello; also goodbye *(with anyone)*

नमस्कार namaskaar
hello *(a little more formal)*

शुक्रिया shukriyaa
thank you *(everyday)*

धन्यवाद dhanyavaad
thank you *(formal)*

आप कैसे हैं? aap kaise hain?
how are you? *(to a woman: kaisii)*

मैं ठीक हूँ main thiik huun
I'm fine

हाँ haan
yes

नहीं nahiin
no, not

ठीक है thiik hai
OK, fine

माफ़ कीजिए maaf kiijie
sorry; excuse me *(polite)*

कोई बात नहीं koii baat nahiin
no problem, never mind

कृपया kripyaa
please *(formal; people mostly just ask nicely)*

स्वागत है svaagat hai
welcome

फिर मिलेंगे phir milenge
see you again

अलविदा alvidaa
farewell *(for a long goodbye)*

आपका नाम क्या है? aapkaa naam kyaa hai?
what's your name?

मेरा नाम ... है meraa naam ... hai
my name is ...

मुझे समझ नहीं आया mujhe samajh nahiin aayaa
I didn't understand

मुझे नहीं पता mujhe nahiin pataa
I don't know

Question words

क्या kyaa
what; at the start, it makes a yes or no question

कौन kaun
who

कहाँ kahaan
where

कब kab
when

क्यों kyon
why

कैसे kaise
how

कितना kitnaa
how much *(kitne, how many)*

कौन सा kaun saa
which one

Me and you

मैं main
I

हम ham
we *(in films, also a proud I)*

तुम tum
you *(friends)*

आप aap
you *(polite, always safe)*

यह yah
he, she, this *(said yeh)*

वह vah
he, she, that *(said voh)*

वे ve
they

मेरा / मेरी meraa / merii
my *(with a masculine / feminine word)*

आपका aapkaa
your *(polite)*

तुम्हारा tumhaaraa
your *(friends)*

यहाँ yahaan
here

वहाँ vahaan
there

Little words

और aur
and; also more

लेकिन lekin
but

या yaa
or

भी bhii
also, too *(main bhii, me too)*

बहुत bahut
very, a lot

थोड़ा thodaa
a little

सिर्फ़ sirf
only

के साथ ke saath
with *(after the word)*

के लिए ke lie
for *(after the word)*

क्योंकि kyonki
because

अगर agar
if

मत mat
don't *(before a verb)*

Describing words

अच्छा / बुरा achchhaa / buraa
good / bad

बड़ा / छोटा badaa / chhotaa
big / small; also older / younger

गरम / ठंडा garam / thandaa
hot / cold

नया / पुराना nayaa / puraanaa
new / old *(things)*

सस्ता / महँगा sastaa / mahangaa
cheap / expensive

आसान / मुश्किल aasaan / mushkil
easy / hard

सुंदर sundar
beautiful

ख़ुश / उदास khush / udaas
happy / sad

थका हुआ thakaa huaa
tired

तेज़ tez
fast; also sharp, bright

आप is the safe you: आप aap works with anyone: आप कैसे हैं? aap kaise hain?, how are you? Save तुम tum for friends: तुम कैसे हो? tum kaise ho?

People, time, numbers लोग और समय

Family

माँ maan
mother *(also mummy)*

पिता pitaa
father *(also papa)*

माता-पिता maataa-pitaa
parents

भाई bhaaii
brother

बहन bahan
sister

बेटा / बेटी betaa / betii
son / daughter

पति pati
husband

पत्नी patnii
wife

परिवार parivaar
family

People

आदमी aadmii
man

औरत aurat
woman

लड़का / लड़की ladkaa / ladkii
boy / girl

बच्चा bachchaa
child *(bachche, children)*

लोग log
people *(always plural)*

दोस्त dost
friend, a man or a woman

पड़ोसी padosii
neighbour

डॉक्टर doktar
doctor

When

आज aaj
today

कल kal
tomorrow; also yesterday

परसों parson
the day after tomorrow, or before yesterday

अभी abhii
right now

बाद में baad men
later

सुबह subah
morning

दोपहर dopahar
afternoon, midday

शाम shaam
evening

रात raat
night

दिन din
day

हफ़्ता haftaa
week

महीना mahiinaa
month

साल saal
year

घंटा ghantaa
hour

बजे baje
o'clock: पाँच बजे paanch baje, at five

Days of the week

सोमवार somvaar
Monday

मंगलवार mangalvaar
Tuesday

बुधवार budhvaar
Wednesday

गुरुवार guruvaar
Thursday

शुक्रवार shukravaar
Friday

शनिवार shanivaar
Saturday

रविवार ravivaar
Sunday *(also itvaar)*

Two sides of the family

Dad's side

दादा daadaa
grandpa

दादी daadii
grandma

चाचा chaachaa
uncle

बुआ buaa
aunt

Mum's side

नाना naanaa
grandpa

नानी naanii
grandma

मामा maamaa
uncle

मौसी mausii
aunt

Hindi says which side: दादी daadii is dad's mum, नानी naanii is mum's mum. Dad's older brother is ताऊ taauu, and the wives get their own words too: चाची chaachii, मामी maamii.

Numbers

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
एक ek	दो do	तीन tiin	चार chaar	पाँच paanch	छह chhah	सात saat	आठ aath	नौ nau	दस das
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
ग्यारह gyaarah	बारह baarah	तेरह terah	चौदह chaudah	पंद्रह pandrah	सोलह solah	सत्रह satrah	अठारह athaarah	उन्नीस unniis	बीस biis
30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100	1,000	100,000
तीस tiis	चालीस chaaliis	पचास pachaas	साठ saath	सत्तर sattar	अस्सी assii	नब्बे nabbe	सौ sau	हज़ार hazaar	लाख laakh

Kal is two days: कल kal means tomorrow and yesterday. The verb tells you which: कल आऊँगा kal aauungaa, I'll come tomorrow; कल आया kal aayaa, I came yesterday. From 21 to 99, every number is its own word: learn them as you meet them.

Food, places, verbs खाना और जगहें

Food and drink

पानी paanii
water

चाय chaay
tea

कॉफ़ी kofii
coffee

दूध duudh
milk

लस्सी lassii
yogurt drink

रोटी rotii
flatbread

चावल chaaval
rice

दाल daal
lentils; lentil curry

सब्ज़ी sabzii
vegetables; a veg dish

चिकन chikan
chicken *(on menus)*

मछली machhlii
fish

मांस maans
meat

अंडा andaa
egg

फल phal
fruit

आम aam
mango

नमक namak
salt

चीनी chiinii
sugar; also Chinese

मिठाई mithaaii
sweets

नाश्ता naashtaa
breakfast; a snack

स्वादिष्ट svaadisht
tasty

तीखा tiikhaa
spicy, hot

मुझे भूख लगी है mujhe bhuukh lagii hai
I'm hungry

बिल लाइए bil laaie
the bill, please

Places

घर ghar
house, home

स्कूल skuul
school

दफ़्तर daftar
office

दुकान dukaan
shop

बाज़ार baazaar
market

अस्पताल aspataal
hospital

बाथरूम baathruum
toilet, bathroom

स्टेशन steshan
station

शहर shahar
city

गाँव gaanv
village

सड़क sadak
road, street

मंदिर mandir
temple

देश desh
country

भारत bhaarat
India

Things

फ़ोन fon
phone

किताब kitaab
book

पैसे paise
money *(plural)*

चाबी chaabii
key

गाड़ी gaadii
car; also a train

कमरा kamraa
room

दरवाज़ा darvaazaa
door

Verbs

खाना khaanaa
eat; also food

पीना piinaa
drink

जाना jaanaa
go

आना aanaa
come

सोना sonaa
sleep; also gold

देखना dekhnaa
see, watch

सुनना sunnaa
listen, hear

पढ़ना padhnaa
read, study

लिखना likhnaa
write

बोलना bolnaa
speak

कहना kahnaa
say

करना karnaa
do

समझना samajhnaa
understand

जानना jaannaa
know

सीखना siikhnaa
learn

रहना rahnaa
live, stay

खरीदना khariidnaa
buy

बैठना baithnaa
sit

रुकना ruknaa
stop, wait

मिलना milnaa
meet

चाहना chaahnaa
want

प्यार करना pyaar karnaa
love

Verbs end in -naa: that's the dictionary form. Take off ना naa and add an ending: खाना khaanaa, eat; खाता हूँ khaataa huun, I eat. Say चाहिए chaahie for need: मुझे पानी चाहिए mujhe paanii chaahie, I need water.

Show words फ़िल्मी शब्द

Reactions

अरे! are!
hey! oh! *(surprise, or to get attention)*

यार yaar
mate, dude *(between friends)*

चलो chalo
come on, let's go; OK then

बस bas
enough, that's it; also just, only

अच्छा achchhaa
oh, I see; really? *(said with a rising voice)*

सच में? sach men?
really? seriously?

हाय राम! haay raam!
oh my God! *(it calls on Ram; grannies and comedy)*

क्या बात है! kyaa baat hai!
wow, brilliant! *(praise)*

बिल्कुल bilkul
absolutely

अरे बाप रे! are baap re!
oh my God! *(it means oh, father)*

हे भगवान! he bhagvaan!
oh God!

पागल है क्या? paagal hai kyaa?
are you crazy?

कोई नहीं koii nahiin
never mind, it's fine *(casual)*

चुप! chup!
quiet!

बचाओ! bachaao!
help!

What to call people

जी jii
yes *(polite)*; after a name it shows respect: शर्मा जी sharmaa jii

भाई / भैया bhaaii / bhaiyaa
bro; any man your age *(bhaiyaa: warm, for a driver or shopkeeper too)*

दीदी diidii
big sister; any young woman a little older

बेटा betaa
son; elders say it to any child, even a girl

जानू jaanuu
sweetheart *(between lovers)*

साहब saahab
sir, after a name or a job *(said saab)*

आंटी / अंकल aantii / ankal
auntie / uncle: any older woman or man, even a stranger

The big scenes

मैं तुमसे प्यार करता हूँ main tumse pyaar kartaa huun
I love you *(a woman says kartii)*

मुझे माफ़ कर दो mujhe maaf kar do
forgive me

मत जाओ! mat jaao!
don't go!

तुम्हारी याद आती है tumhaarii yaad aatii hai
I miss you

Hinglish is normal: people in shows mix English words into Hindi all the time: मेरा phone कहाँ है? meraa phone kahaan hai?, where's my phone? It isn't bad Hindi. It's how many people talk.

जी makes it polite: add it to almost anything: हाँ जी haan jii, yes; नहीं जी nahiin jii, no; जी हाँ jii haan, yes indeed. Elders and shopkeepers say it all day.

Swear words are strong: Hindi has harsh swear words, often about someone's mother or sister. You'll hear them in gritty series: recognise them, but don't say them. अरे यार! are yaar! and हे भगवान! he bhagvaan! are the mild ones you can say in front of anyone.

Practice अभ्यास

How: cover the romanization and the grey lines with a strip of paper. Read the Hindi out loud, then slide it down to check. Can you read every line without peeking? You've got it.

Questions: raise your voice at the end, or start with क्या kyaa: क्या आप हिंदी बोलते हैं? kyaa aap hindii bolte hain?, do you speak Hindi? The line at the end of a sentence, ।, is a full stop.

Saying no: put नहीं nahiin before the verb: मैं नहीं जानता main nahiin jaantaa, I don't know (a woman says jaantii). For don't, as an order, use मत mat: मत जाओ mat jaao, don't go.

Read these sentences

1. नमस्ते, मेरा नाम प्रिया है।
   namaste, meraa naam priyaa hai.
   Hello, my name is Priya.
2. आप कहाँ से हैं?
   aap kahaan se hain?
   Where are you from?
3. बाथरूम कहाँ है?
   baathruum kahaan hai?
   Where is the toilet?
4. यह कितने का है?
   yah kitne kaa hai?
   How much is this?
5. एक चाय दीजिए।
   ek chaay diijie.
   One tea, please.
6. मुझे दाल बहुत पसंद है।
   mujhe daal bahut pasand hai.
   I really like daal.
7. आज बहुत गरमी है।
   aaj bahut garmii hai.
   It's very hot today.
8. कल मैं दिल्ली जा रहा हूँ।
   kal main dillii jaa rahaa huun.
   Tomorrow I'm going to Delhi. (a woman says rahii)
9. मैं थोड़ी हिंदी बोलता हूँ।
   main thodii hindii boltaa huun.
   I speak a little Hindi. (a woman says boltii)
10. चलो, चलते हैं!
    chalo, chalte hain!
    Come on, let's go!

Meet a word you don't know? In Kitsumi, hover any word in Hindi subtitles to see what it means.