

Important Phrases used while traveling in a foreign country

Phrases in English and equivalent in Tamil with phonetic guide

GENERAL PHRASES

I was recently asked by an American student who was traveling to Tamil Nadu, India (the southeastern state of India). This student was interested in communicating with the locals and was very much enthused about learning the Tamil language as this person would spend few months (long enough to interact with locals but not long enough to afford a special tutor for learning the Tamil language formally). The student chose to meet with me because of my involvement with Tallahassee Tamil Community and [Tallahassee Tamil Sangam](#). The student was born and brought in the United States of America and didn't know any Indian languages and has not traveled to India before. But the student would spend few months in a rural area as part of an educational training. The student is likely to return one more time in about a year later.

I quickly realized this may be a good opportunity for me to put together some resources for people like this student and those who would like to visit Tamil Nadu. So I and spent about two hours researching about what all common phrases a traveler would need to know. My own family's travels to Japan, France, Germany, and Italy helped me in selecting some of the phrases.

Later on, I met with this person and gave the tables shown in next few pages. I also spent some time talking to this person in Tamil and its pronunciation. The table is my first attempt and the Tamil sentences shown are in the colloquial style rather than strict spoken Tamil. The sentences are intended to address everyday people rather than elders and seniors. English is different from many Indian languages in one important category; English language doesn't change depending upon the level of respect of the addressee but Indian languages do. So be aware of this aspect.

KEYWORDS:

Important phrases, Travel Phrase, Tamil Phrases, English Travel Phrases and its Tamil Equivalent, Phrases used while traveling, Travel, Foreign Travel, Travelers to Tamil Nadu, Tamilnad, Tamilnadu, Tamil, Visitor, Visiting Tamil Nad, Visit, Travel companion, தமிழ், தமிழ் மொழி, தமிழ் நாடு, பிரயாணம், ரயில் பயணம், தமிழ் வார்த்தைகள், அடிக்கடி பயன் படும் தமிழ் வாசகங்கள், தமிழ் கேள்விகள், தமிழ் பதில்கள், பயணி, வழிப்போக்கர், பயணக்காரன், பார்வையாளர், விருந்தாளி, வருநர், வந்திருப்பவர்.

Phrase in English	Phrase in Tamil (transliterated)	In written Tamil (colloquial)
My name is “ “	En pear “ “	என் பெயர் “ “
What is your (w/ respect) name?	Onga pear enna?	உங்க பெயர் என்ன?
What is your (casual) name?	On pear enna?	உன் பெயர் என்ன?
Hello	Vannakkam	வணக்கம்
Thanks	Nandri	நன்றி
I am okay!	Nan nalla irukkan	நான் நல்ல இருக்கேன்
How about you?	Neenga nalla irrukkingala	நீங்க நல்ல இருக்கீங்களா?
Nice to meet [you]	[Ungala] parthathula santhosham	[உங்கள] பார்த்துல சந்தோஷம்
Are you doing well?	Sovkkiyama?	செளக்கியமா?
I am doing well!	Nan sovkkiam	நான் செளக்கியம்
Bye (I will see you later)	Poyittu varan (leave & come back)	பொய்ட்டு வரேன்
Phrase in English	Phrase in Tamil (transliterated)	In written Tamil (colloquial)
Bye	Varan (come back)	வரேன்
Good morning	Kalai vannakkam	காலை வணக்கம்
Good evening	Malai vannakkam	மாலை வணக்கம்
Good night	Apparam parkalam (will see you later)	அப்பறம் பார்க்கலாம்
Excuse me	Mannikkanum	மன்னிக்கணும்
I don't know Tamil	Tamil theriyathu	தமிழ் தெரியாது
I know little Tamil	Konchayam Tamil theriyum	தமிழ் கொஞ்சம் தெரியும்
Please	Thayavu seithu	தயவு செய்து
Please excuse me	Thayavu seithu mannikanum	தயவு செய்து மன்னிக்கணும்
How much is this apple?	Apple velai enna?	ஆப்பிள் வெலை என்ன?
Where is the train station?	Train station enga?	ட்ரின் ஸ்டேசன் எங்க?
Where is the bus stand?	Bus stand enga erukku?	பஸ் ஸ்டாண்டு எங்க இருக்கு?
No	Illa	இல்ல/வேண்டாம்

Phrase in English	Phrase in Tamil (transliterated)	In written Tamil (colloquial)
Yes	Aamam	ஆமாம்
I want	Aenakku venum	எனக்கு வேணும்
I don't want	Aenakku vendam	எனக்கு வேண்டாம்
I am hungry	Aenakku pacikkuthu	எனக்கு பசிக்குது
I am thirsty	Aenakku thanni venum (I want water)	எனக்கு தண்ணி வேணும்
Nice	Nalla erukku	நல்லா இருக்கு
Not good	Nalla illai	நல்லா இல்ல
Where is hospital/doctor's office?	Hospiatl/doctor office enga irrukku?	ஆஸ்பத்திரி எங்க இருக்கு?
Where is police station?	Police station enga errkku?	போலீஸ் ஸ்டேசன் எங்க இருக்கு?
I have a head ache	Ankku thalai valikkuthu	எனக்கு தலை வலிக்குது
I have a stomach ache	Ankku (en) vayatha valikkuthu	எனக்கு வயத்தை வலிக்குது
I am afraid	Anukku payam irrukkuthu	எனக்கு பயமா இருக்குது
Don't touch me!	Ennai thodathe!	என்னை தொடாதே
Stand clear off me!	Ennai thalli nillunga!	என்னை தள்ளி நில்லுங்க
Fire! Fire!	Thee or Nerruppu	தீ! நெருப்பு
Where is the rest room?	Bathroom enga irrukku	பாத் ரூம் எங்க இருக்கு?
Where is ladies room?	Ladies bathroom enga irrukku?	லேடீஸ் பாத் ரூம் எங்க இருக்கு?

SHOPPING PHRASES USED WHILE TRAVELING ABROAD (ENGLISH AND IN TAMIL)

Phrase in English	Phrase in Tamil (transliterated)	In written Tamil (colloquial)
Where is dress shop?	Thuni kadai enga irrkku?	துணிக்கடை எங்க இருக்கு?
Where is a hotel?	Hotel enga irrukku?	ஹோட்டல் எங்க இருக்கு?
Where is my room?	En room enga irrkku?	என் ரூம் எங்க இருக்கு?

How to go to hotel?	Hotelkku eppadi porathu?	ஹோட்டலுக்கு எப்படி போறது?
Where is vegetable shop	Kai curry kadai enga irrukku?	காய்கறி கடை எங்க இருக்கு?
How much is this?	Edhu evvalu?	இது எவ்வளவு?
Too much	Adigam	அதிகம்
Too little	Kuraivu	குறைவு
I want fresh	Pudusa venum	புதுசா வேணும்
Is it clean?	Suthama irrukka?	சுத்தமா இருக்கா?
Don't want	Vendaam	வேண்டாம்
Want	Venum	வேணும்
I don't want	Aenakku vendam	எனக்கு வேண்டாம்
I want	Aenakku venum	எனக்கு வேணும்
I am hungry	Aenakku pacikkuthu	எனக்கு பசிக்குது
Phrase in English	Phrase in Tamil (transliterated)	In written Tamil (colloquial)
I am thirsty	Aenakku thanni venum (I want water)	எனக்கு தண்ணி தவிக்குது
Nice	Nalla erukku	நல்லா இருக்கு
Not good	Nalla illai	நல்லா இல்ல
What is the size	Size enna	சைஸ் என்ன?
I will come back	Apparam varan	அப்பறம் வரேன்
I want coffee	Coffee venum	காபி வேணும்
I want (black) coffee with no sugar and no milk	Coffee sakkari podama pal illama venum	காபி சக்கரை போடம பால் இல்லமே வேணும்
Waiter!	Server	சர்வர்
Check please!	Bill kodnuga	பில் கொடுங்க
Delicious (food)	Tasta irukkuthu	டேஸ்டா இருக்கு

NUMBERS AND COLORS (IN TAMIZH AND ENGLISH)

Number	In Tamil	Color	In Tami
1	Onnu	Green	Pachai
2	Rendu	Red	Seppu
3	Munu	White	Vellai
4	Nalu	Black	Karruppu

5	Anchu	Blue	Neelam
6	Aaru	Yellow	Mancha
7	Aelu	Pink	Rose
8	Aettu	Brown	Brown
9	Onpathu		
10	Patthu		
100	Nuru		
200	Rendu Nuru		
300	Munu Nuru		
1000	Aeyaram		

Words used in America	Equivalent words in India
Waiter	Server
Check please	Bill please
Elevator	Lift
Gas station	Petrol Bunk
Gas(oline)	Petrol
Line	Queue
First floor	Ground floor
Second floor	First floor
Bike	Cycle
Cell phone number	Mobile number
Excuse me	Pardon me
You are welcome!	

COMMON VERBS AND NOUNS IN ENGLISH AND TAMIL (FOR FOREIGNERS VISITING TAMIL NADU)

Verb	In Tamil	Noun	In Tami
Sit	Utkar	Name	Peyar
Stand	Alunthiru	House	Veedu
Run	Odu	Road	Road/salai
Walk	Nada	Lane	Theru
See	Par	Temple	Koil
Eat	Sappidu	God/Goddess	Sami
Drink	Kudi	Bus,van,car,train,plane	Bus,van,car,train,plane
Lie down	Padu	Up	Mela
Sleep	Thungu	Down	Kela
Come	Va	Front	Munnala
Go	Po	Back	Pinnala
Read	Padi		
Sing	Padu		