

Just For Fun: Turkish!

Turkish is spoken primarily in Turkey. Turkey is the “bridge” between the West and the East, between Europe and Asia. Most of the country is located in Asia, but a small part is in Europe. The huge city of Istanbul is located on both continents; half is in Europe and half in Asia, the two sides being separated by a strait called the Bosphorus. The capital and second-largest city is Ankara, and the third city is Izmir on the west coast. There are millions of Turks in Germany and Turkish is also spoken by large numbers of people in Bulgaria, Macedonia, Northern Cyprus, and other countries. There are a number of other less-well-known languages closely related to Turkish such as Tatar (spoken in Russia), Azerbaijani (Azerbaijan), Kazakh (Kazakhstan), and Uzbek (Uzbekistan).

Turkish uses the Latin alphabet like English; however, some of the letters are different. Here are some unusual ones:

<u>Letter</u>	<u>Pronunciation</u>	<u>Example</u>
c	like English “j”	cam (glass)
ç	like English “ch”	uçak (airplane)
ğ	silent	dağ (mountain); ağaç (tree)
i	like English “ee”	dil (language)
ı	like English “i” in “disk”	sıcak (hot)
ö	no English equivalent	göz (eye)
ş	like English “sh”	beş (five)
ü	no English equivalent	gün (day)

Some common expressions

Merhaba	Hello
İyi günler	Hello or goodbye (daytime)
İyi akşamlar	Hello or goodbye (evening)
Nasılsınız?	How are you?
İyiyim	I'm fine.
Türkiye	Turkey
Türkçe	Turkish
İngilizce	English
İstanbul	Istanbul

Grammar

We said that Turkish was agglutinative, from the Latin meaning “to glue together.” This means that you can pile one suffix on top of another to make long words equivalent to whole phrases or sentences in English. For example:

Ev (*house*)

Evler (*houses*)

Evleriniz (*your houses*)

Evlerinizden (*from your houses*)

Evlerinizdenmiş (*it was apparently from your houses*)

Some colorful expressions:

<u>Expression</u>	<u>Meaning</u>	<u>Literal translation</u>
Sağ ol	Thank you	“Be healthy”
Hoş geldiniz	Welcome	“Pleasantly you came”
Hoş bulduk	(Response to “welcome”)	“Pleasantly we found”
Kolay gelsin	(Said to someone working)	“May it come easily”
Elinize sağlık	(Said to the hostess who prepared food)	“Health to your hands”