

Basic Karen Language Guide

Created by the Karen Organization of Minnesota

Getting To Know Someone

Good morning = Ghaw luh a ghay

Good afternoon = Nee luh a ghay

Good evening = Ha luh a ghay

Good night = Na luh a ghay

What is your name? = Na mee dee leh?

My name is _____. = Ya mee may _____.

Nice to meet you. = Tee ban a tha khu doh mah.

Thank you very much. = Ta bluh doh mah.

How are you? = Na oh sue oh klay ah?

I'm fine. And you? = Ya oh sue oh klay. Na maw?

Have you eaten yet? = Na aw may wee lee ah?

Yes, I have eaten. = Ya aw may wee lee.

What did you eat? = Na aw may daw ta ma nu leh?

I ate _____. = Ya aw may daw _____.

How was it? = Na aw may wee say ah?

Delicious = Wee doh mah/bay doh mah

Drink water. = Aw htee

What are you doing? = Na mar ma nu leh?

How is your family? = Na hee poe hkaw poe oh sue ah?

How many children do you have? = Na poe oh peh ga leh?

I have ____ children. = Ya poe oh _____.

How old are your children? = Na poe oh pweh nee leh?

Good = Ghay doh mah

Where are you from? = Na heh peh leh?

I am from _____. = Ya heh luh _____.

Where do you work? = Na mar ta peh leh?

I work at _____. = Ya mar ta _____.

I go to school at _____. = Ya leh sue joe _____.

Where are you going? = Na ga leh peh leh?

Do you speak English? = Na ka toh kaw lo wah klo ba ah?

I only know a little Karen. = Ya theh pwa k'nyaw klo ba taser.

What do you call this in Karen? = A weh ee na goh luh pwa k'nyaw klo dee leh?

Do you understand? = Na na puh ah?

I understand. = Ya na puh.

Can you please repeat that again? = Wee tha sue kay theh kador teh blaw.

Yes = May

No = Ta may bah

Question Words

Where = hpeh leh

Why = bah mer nu hkoh leh

Who = ma ta leh

When = a kah hpeh leh

What = ta ma nu leh

How = di leh

How many = hsee ah leh

How long/far = hsee yee leh

Pronouns

I = ya

You = na

He/she = a weh poh kwa/poh mu

It = ta a weh ee

We = pa weh thay

They = a weh thay

This = ta a weh ee

That = ta a weh nay

Family Terms

Father = Pa

Mother = Moe

Daughter = Poe mu

Son = Poe kwa

Husband = Wa

Wife = Ma

Friend = Tee tha koh

Days of the Week

Monday = Meu Tu Nee

Tuesday = Meu Kee Nee

Wednesday = Meu Theur Nee

Thursday = Meu Lwee Nee

Friday = Meu Yeh Nee

Saturday = Meu Gheu Nee

Sunday = Aw bui nee

Bus Terms

Are you ready? = Na kathaw na tha lee ah?

Please wait here. = Wee tha sue awkaw peh ee.

I am outside. = Ya oh leur takleur.

Please open the door. = Wee tha sue ataw treh.

Do you have a bus card or cash? = Na bus ka oh ah may ta may na say oh ah?

I have a bus card. = Ya bus ka oh.

I have cash. = Ya say oh.

Do you have enough warm clothes? = Na sayka keu leur oh ler pweh lee ah?

Do you need a hat, gloves, scarf, or socks? = Na lo ba koplaw, sooplaw, kobopa, may ta may kawplaw ah?

I will bring a hat, gloves, scarf or socks for you next time I see you. – Ya ka heh so nay thu koplaw, sooplaw, kobopa, may ta may kawplaw ler kee ta blaw tee lo tha luh kee.

The bus arrives at _____. The next bus comes at _____. = Bus ker heh tu weh peh _____. Bus ler kee ta koh ker heh tu weh peh _____.

Sit down here. = Say naw peh ee.

Watch outside so you know where to stop. = Kwa ler ta kler daw na ker thay nyaw bus patoo peh leh.

Pull the cord to signal the driver to stop. = Tu plee poe taper naw, ler bus ker sa ker patoo.

Locations

House = Hee

Office = Roe

Tree = Thay

Gas Station = Ka tho law

Park = Paw ker ruh

Restaurant = Ta oh klah

Bridge = Toh

Road = Gleh

Directional Terms

Behind = A law kee

In front of = A meh nyah

Opposite = Ta hga loh tha

Next to = Boo loh tha

Near = Boo daw

Between = A ker tha

Before = Ta klu

After = Wee a law kee

Numbers/Time

1 – ter

2 – kee

3 – thu

4 – lwee

5 – yeh

6 – hku

7 – nwee

8 – hkaw

9 – kwee

10 – ta hsee

11 – ta hsee tu

12 – ta hsee kee

a.m. = hgaw ka

p.m. = haw ka

Today = Ta nee ee

This morning = Ta hgaw ee

This afternoon = Ta ha ee

Tonight = Ta na ee

Yesterday = Ma ta nee

Yesterday morning = Ma hah ta nee hgaw kaw

Last night = Ma na ger

Last week = Ma hah ta nwee

Tomorrow = Keh ma hsay

Tomorrow morning = Keh ma hsay hgaw kaw

Tomorrow afternoon = Keh ma hsay hah kaw

How Are You Feeling?

How are you feeling? = Na oh hsoo oh klay ah?

Good = oh hsoo

Happy = tha ku

Sad = tha uh

Confused = ta bee beu ba ya doh mah

Angry = tha htaw

Worried = ba yo ta

Sick = oh ta hsoo ba

Tired = low bwee