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 thay 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 thay 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 taler 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 thay  
Next to = Boo loh thay  
Near = Boo daw
**Numbers/Time**

| 1 – ter  | 10 – ta hsee |
| 2 – kee  | 11 – ta hsee tu |
| 3 – thu  | 12 – ta hsee kee |
| 4 – lwee |  |
| 5 – yeh  | a.m. = hgaw ka |
| 6 – hku  | p.m. = haw ka |
| 7 – nwee |  |
| 8 – hkaw |  |
| 9 – kwee |  |

**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 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