

Intrepid Travel Language Guides

Hindi Language Guide Script

Scott: Ahh excuse me – would you mind taking a photo of me in front of the Gateway?

Mrs Sharma: Sure, if you would like it behind you we may have to move a bit closer.

Scott: I'd love to but I was over there a minute ago and was totally hassled by beggars and hawkers, so I retreated back here!

Mrs Sharma: Come, I will go with you and protect you! To avoid being hassled it is a good idea to wear some local clothes so you don't look like too much of a tourist.

Scott: Thanks for the tip – I'm not taking you away from anything?

Mrs Sharma: No, I'm meeting some friends for lunch at the Taj Mahal – but I'm early and am just enjoying the view for awhile. Come, move quickly with me.

Scott: My name is Scott – how do I say this in Hindi?

Mrs Sharma: You say mera naam scott hai . I'm Mrs Sharma – in Hindi you say mera naam Mrs Sharma hai. This is a good spot for a photo – stand just there... say cheese!

Scott: Cheese!

Mrs Sharma: Here – what do you think – good yes?

Scott: How do I say 'good' in Hindi?

Mrs Sharma: You say achchhaa. My friends won't be here for half an hour or so – would you like me to teach you some more Hindi while I wait for them?

Scott: If it is not inconvenient for you I'd really appreciate it!

Mrs Sharma: Not at all. Come, lets sit here where we can watch the hawkers and tourists – can you see the snake charmer over there... he has been there for as long as I can remember!

Scott: People actually do that?!?! Wow – I never thought I'd see a snake charmer – I didn't think they really existed!

Mrs Sharma: Foreigners find it takes a few days to get used to Mumbai! Now, what would you like me to teach you?

Scott: Ok, well I've been trying to learn a few phrases whenever I visit a new country, I've got a little set of them that I find useful. First, greetings – how do I say Hello, Good Morning and Goodbye?

Mrs Sharma: Well, you say Namaste for hello – you can also use this for good afternoon and good evening, good morning is shuba prahbaat and goodbye is achacha phir milenygey

Scott: Namaste, shuba prahbaat and achacha phir milenygey . You told me how to say my name but how do I ask “What is your name?”

Mrs Sharma: Ahh, this is aap kaa naam kya hai ?. You have probably heard that in India status is very important. We always refer to peoples by their title – even if it is only Mr, Mrs or Miss. So, out of respect, an Indian would refer to me as Mrs Sharma rather than by my first name, which is Leela. Try to remember to do this as Indians will appreciate you making the effort.

Scott: Ok, I'll do that. I'm travelling around for a few months so I was hoping to meet some locals along the way! What about things like excuse me, sorry, please and thank you?

Mrs Sharma: Ahh, you are a nice polite boy – you will do well in India! You say shamma kare, maaf karain, kripyaa and dhanyavaad

Scott: So, shamma kare, maaf karain, kripyaa and dhanyavaad

Mrs Sharma: If you are travelling all over India you shouldn't have any problem being understood, most people speak English plus Hindi and Urdu are very similar so you should have no trouble communicating no matter where you are.

Scott: That is comforting! How do I say yes and no and ok?

Mrs Sharma: yes is hanh, ok is theek hai and no is nahin – but you will not often hear an Indian say no as it is considered very harsh and we do not like to disappoint – rather you may hear things like “I'll try” or “we'll see” or “possibly” – just watch for these phrases and you will figure out what the person is trying not to say.

Scott: Kinda like saving face?

Mrs Sharma: Yes, sort of, it is about being helpful and polite.

Scott: Ok, that is good to know. What about directions? Can you tell me how to say “Where is” and “Which way to”

Mrs Sharma: Where is kahaan hai and which way to ... kaa raasta kya hai?

Scott: So, kahaan hain and ... kaa raasta kya hai? I know, I'll need to know a few things to help find accommodation, can you tell me how to say “Have you a room”

Mrs Sharma: Sure, this is kya aapke paas kamra khaalee hai?

Scott: kya aapke paas kamra khaalee hai? and what about “How much is it” and “can I see it”

Mrs Sharma: yes, this is kitna kiraaya hogaa? and kya main dekh sakta hoon?

Scott: So, kitna kiraaya hogaa? and kya main dekh sakta hoon?

Mrs Sharma: Exactly! Don't forget Hindi is a very expressive language, I'm sure you've seen how Indians like to talk with their hands – don't be afraid to be expressive when you are bargaining!

Scott: Ok and speaking of bargaining how do I say 'too expensive'

Mrs Sharma: I don't think you will need to use a lot in India – but you say bahut mehngaa hain

Scott: bahut mehngaa hain – I know India is cheap but I'm still on a budget you know! Hey, what about "I like this" and "I don't like this"

Mrs Sharma: You should say mujhe yeh pasand hain or mujhe yeh pasand nahin aayaa

Scott: So, mujhe yeh pasand hain xxxxx or mujhe yeh pasand nahin aayaa I've noticed that Indians speak really quickly – whether in English or Hindi – can you tell me how to say "Please say that more slowly"

Mrs Sharma: yes, we do talk very quickly and with our hands – it can be a bit confusing. Just say kripya zaraa dheere-dheere boliye

Scott: kripya zaraa dheere-dheere boliye I'm really trying to use my hands while I'm talking – it's hard as I don't normally do this! Now, what about numbers – how do I count to ten?

Mrs Sharma: this is ek, do, teen, chaar, paanch, chey, saat, aath, naw, dus

Scott: ek, do, teen, chaar, paanch, chhey, saat, aath, naw, dus

Mrs Sharma: Very good – you are picking this up quickly!

Scott: It doesn't feel that way! Do you have time to teach me a few more phrases?

Mrs Sharma: Sure, Indians are not normally very punctual – you will hear of something called IST – Indian Stretched Time – you must not let this frustrate you – particularly if you are dealing with Government Bodies, just go with the flow. My lunch booking is soon, but I have time to help you some more.

Scott: I really appreciate it. I've seen lots of people eating with their hands – is this common?

Mrs Sharma: Yes, unless you are in a top Western Restaurant you will find most people will eat with their hands – remember to only ever use your right hand though!

Scott: Why?

Mrs Sharma: Because they use their left hand to wipe their...

Scott: Ahhhhh.....Ok – glad you told me that! Can you teach me how to say bus, train, taxi and boat.

Mrs Sharma: Of course, these are bus, railgaadi, taxi, naav

Scott: bus, railgaadi, taxi, naav - oh, what about ticket

Mrs Sharma: This is tikit – try to travel outside peak times particularly on the trains, just about all Indians commute to work so peak times are very very crowded. Taxi's are very cheap – just make sure you get the driver to use the meter.

Scott: Ok – more good tips – I'm so glad you're helping me. Now when I'm booking tickets or accommodation I might need to know today, tomorrow and now

Mrs Sharma: these are aaj, kal & abhi

Scott: aaj, kal & abhi – oh and what about yesterday?

Mrs Sharma: this is kal

Scott: kal – now I've heard lots of stories about Bombay Belly – I'm hoping to avoid this, but just in case I don't, how do I say doctor and hospital

Mrs Sharma: Yes, even locals regularly get sick. Try to eat some lassi and yoghurt and only ever drink water from sealed bottles – but you will probably get sick at some point no matter how careful you are. Doctor is daktar and hospital is haspataal . Also, bananas and papayas are good to eat if you are not well.

Scott: so, daktar and haspataal . Ok, so I should prepare for Bombay Belly at some point – I had heard that! What about if I get in trouble or something happens – how do I say Police or Stop thief!

Mrs Sharma: Actually, you will probably not need these as India has a pretty low crime rate – but just in case police is police and stop thief is chor ko pakro

Scott: police and chor ko pakro . Now Mrs Sharma you are really going to think I've lost my marbles – but I've been learning this phrase in all the countries I visit, can you tell me how to say “Don't Shoot, those drugs aren't mine!”

Mrs Sharma: Scott, you are very funny – considering that most Indians do not even drink alcohol I'm not sure why you think you are going to need these! I will have to tell the girls about this over lunch! You say bandook naa chalaye, yeh nasheeli davaayen meri nahin hain

Scott: bandook naa chalaye, yeh nasheeli davaayen meri nahin hain – it might be funny now Mrs Sharma, but what if I actually need to use this phrase!?!?! That was my last phrase – thank you so much for your help, can I walk you to the restaurant?

Mrs Sharma: That is very kind of you – thank you.