

## Path 2. Words of Courtesy

In **Italian** there are two ways to greet, which have both a really different value in comparison to English. 'Ciao' is informal, you can use it with friends, relatives and with people you know. 'Salve' is much more formal and it is used with people in a respectable position or whom you don't know well. As well as in English, you can say hello with 'Buongiorno', 'Buon pomeriggio' and 'Buona sera', depending on the moment of the day: the first expression from when you wake up until noon, the second one is usually used from noon until 7 pm and the last one from 7 to 9 pm.

The most common form to say sorry is 'Scusa', which is also used to ask for permission; another popular way is 'Mi dispiace', for a little bit more serious situations, where we have made a mistake and we are really sorry about that, while the first expression is used in more "lighter" situations.

The good manners are not perceived as in English but a 'per favore' at the end of a request is really appreciated (it corresponds to the English word 'please'). Then, you will answer with 'Sì/No grazie', that means 'Yes/No, thank you'.

When you enter in a formal place or a new place, you are usually greeted with a 'Benvenuto/a'. Literally, this word means: well arrived.

In **Spanish** you can greet with 'Hola', (typical informal greet between friends), and with 'Buenos dias' or 'Buenas tardes' (also formal greetings). There is not a clear division between afternoons and evenings in greetins, and you can use the first expression from early morning until noon and the second one from noon until it doesn't get dark.

As well as in Italian, to apologize or to ask for permission you use the word 'Perdón', which has a much more "lighter" meaning than 'Lo siento'. The latter is used in situations where you are really sorry for something you have done.

When you ask something, it is better to add 'por favor' at the end of the sentence. Then, the interlocutor will reply with 'Sí/No gracias'. "Welcome", in Spanish is 'Bienvenido/a'. It has the same function and meaning as it has in Italian and English. The only difference between English is that, in Spanish, the word changes according to the gender.

In **French**, as in Spanish, there is just one way to greet during formal and informal situations: 'Salut'. To this one, you can add typical courtesy expressions, like an alternative in formal situations, such as: 'Bonjour' and 'Bonsoir'. Also here, there is a similarity to Spanish because in neither languages there is a differentiation between afternoons and evenings. The only peculiarity is that you can use 'Bonjour' in every single moment of the day.

To apologize the use of 'Désolé' is frequent, while to ask for permission the expression used is: 'Excusez-moi'.

As in English, good manners are almost an obligation, for this reason it is good to use forms like 's'il vous plaît' and 'Oui/Non merci'. As in the languages mentioned above, the French word 'Benvenue' has the same meaning and function.

Because of its similarity with English language, in **German** you find the corresponding words for 'Hi' and 'Hello' in 'Hi' and 'Hallo', also really similar in the meaning. About other ways to greet such as 'Guten Morgen', 'Guten Tag' and 'Guten Abend', there are not many differences from their use in English: you can use the first expression until noon, the second one from noon to 5 pm and the last one from 5 to 9 pm. With the apologies, you can find a closer match to Italian language as for the meaning with the word 'Entschuldigung', used when we want to say you are sorry also about banal things, and with 'Das tut mir leid', which is used for more "important" situations.

As far as good manners are concerned, there is a similarity with English language: it is better end every

request with 'Bitte' and reply with 'Ja/Nein, Danke', always thanking.  
Beyond the visual similarity, also the meaning of 'Willkommen' (welcome) is the same as in English.

**Greek** people use to greet each other in an open and spontaneous way; there are though some differences between a formal greet and an informal one. If you meet someone for the first time, it's better to avoid kissing him/her on cheeks, unless he/she does it first. In these situations, the most appropriate greeting form is: 'Γεια σας.' (*Yàsas*), literally 'cheers to you' (in plural). In informal situations, the best way to greet someone is saying 'Γεια σου.' (*Yàsú*) (singular). You can also use the expression 'Καλημέρα' (*Kalimera*) until noon and also when you arrive or leave a place or an event. During afternoon and evening hours, it is advisable to use 'Καλησπέρα' (*Kalispera*).

There are two ways to apologize: 'Απολογούμαι' (*aplogume*) and 'Λυπάμαι' (*Lypáme*). It is a sign of kindness to use the forms: 'Παρακαλώ' (*parakaló*), which means 'please' and 'Ευχαριστώ' (*efcharisto*), that stands for 'thank you'. To welcome someone or just to give him/her an adequate hosting, it is good to say 'Καλωσόρισες' (*kalosórisis*) - singular, or 'Καλωσορίσατε' (*kalosorisate*) - plural.

**Polish.** Just like the Italian 'ciao', 'cześć' can be used both when you meet someone and when you greet someone who goes away. 'Cześć' is a bit too informal to be used in more structured social contexts. It is perfect for friends and familiars, but Poles, who care a lot about social protocol, could be offended if you use this greeting form the first time you meet someone. In these situations, it is better to use 'Witam' or 'Dzień dobry' in the morning and 'Dobry wieczór' for the afternoon/evening.

To apologize, you use 'Przepraszam' and, if you are in a formal occasion, followed by 'Pana(m)/Pania(f)', depending on the interlocutor's gender; or you can also say 'Bardzo mi przykro'.

As said before, social protocol is very important for Poles, so it is advisable to add 'Proszę' (please) to any requests and 'Tak/Nie, dziękuję' to replies.

**Albanian** is a language belonging to a group of its own: it is an Indo-European language and so a mix of sounds and words which come from two sides of the world really far from each other.

Beginning with greetings, in Albania is frequent to greet someone just with gestures, or with 'Përshëndetje', which doesn't change neither in formal or in informal situations. Another common way to greet among young people is saying 'ç'kemi'.

You can also greet with 'Mirëmëngjes' in the morning, 'Mirëdita' in the afternoon, but with which you can also mean something like 'Good day', and finally with 'Mirëmbërëma' in the evening. When someone apologizes, he/she usually say 'Më falni', or 'Më vjen keq' when the situation is a little bit more serious, like in Italian.

Just like all the languages mentioned above, it is a form of respect and education to end any request with 'Ju lutem' and reply with 'Po/Jo, faleminderit', avoiding this way to seem impolite.

'Mirëpritur', Albanian welcome, literally means 'well expected'.

The best way to say 'hi' in **Chinese** is 'nǐ hǎo' 你好. Note that the exact pronunciation of this greeting can vary according to the Chinese dialect used. In Mandarin Chinese, the standard and informal way to say 'hi' is the one above mentioned. A literal translation corresponds to something similar to 'you are fine'. To be more formal, you can use 'nín hǎo': this greeting form has the same meaning of the first one, but it is a little bit more formal and less used. It is written: 您好 and its pronunciation is 'ne-in haOW'. This language has had strong influences from the Western world, so much that from the Anglo-Saxon cultures derive: 早上好 zǎoshang hǎo (literally: Good morning), 下午好 Xiàwǔ hǎo (lit. Good afternoon) and 晚上好 wǎnshang hǎo (lit. Good evening).

In China apologies and forgiveness have a very different value. To apologize, for them, it doesn't imply any acknowledgment of guilt. It is a duty and an act without any dramatic consequences. A ritual to be done, a requirement to make present and to repeat whenever the opportunity arises. It is not recognized the liberating value of forgiveness and that is why neither you look for forgiveness nor give yours. They only forgive the sinners whose sins are forgiven. Apologies can be expressed saying 对不起 (Duìbuqǐ), and

whenever you have to say you are sorry, you say 我很抱歉 (Wǒ hěn bàoqiàn). As for courtesy expressions, Chinese people usually use '请' (Qǐng), that means "please" and '是 (Shì)/不是 (Bú shì), 谢谢 (Xièxie)', that is to say "Yes/No, thanks". In the same way, they tend being very hospitable, inviting guests with the expression '欢迎 (Huānyíng)', which literally means "merry arrival".

In **Russia**, the most common way to greet someone in an informal way is 'привет' (pri-vet). It is also the most used way and corresponds to 'Hi'. To greet someone in a more formal way, you use 'Здравствуйте' (ZDRAST-vwee-tye). It literally means 'Health to you'. Also, you can greet - depending on the moment of the day - with Доброе утро (Dobraje utra) in the morning, with добрый день (dobryy den') in the afternoon and with Добрый вечер (Dobrij vècier) for the evening. To apologize, you should say 'Извини, пожалуйста' which is pronounced 'Izvinì pazhàlsta'. The origin of the word 'izvini' comes from 'vina', that means 'fault'. Otherwise, you can use 'Простите' (Prostitute). To thank, it is used the word 'Спасибо', which in our alphabet is written 'Spasibo' but is pronounced 'Spasiba', that literally means 'God save you'. With the word 'Pozhaluysta' you are not only saying 'you're welcome', but also 'please'. Welcome is given with the word 'добро пожаловать' (dobro pozhalovat'), which means literally 'good allow'.

**Arabic.** مكيلا ماسلا (As-salam alaykom) is the formal greeting form which can be used both with men and women in the most part of social contexts, and its literally translation is a blessing that means: 'peace be with you'. Even if it is more used in the Muslim community, it can be used in other circumstances and situations as well. The phrase is pronounced 'Ahl sah-LAHM ah-LAY-kum'. You should answer to this greeting with another blessing: ماسلا مكيلاعو (Wa Alykom As-slam), which means 'peace be also with you and is pronounced 'Wah ah-LAY-kum ahl sah-LAHM'. The greeting can be abbreviated saying أهلاً ('**Ahlan, is pronounced 'Salam'**). This is an informal and friendly expression to say 'hi', this word means 'peace'. Before noon, you can also greet with مرحلا حابص (Sabaḥu Al-khair). In the afternoon or in the evening, you greet saying مرحلا عاسم (Masa'u Al-khair), you should use this phrase at any time after noon. If we want to apologize, you use رنتعا ('A'tadhir), and when you want to say that you are sorry for something: فسأنا ('ana asif). The good manners are really important, so you should remember to say من لصف (Min fadlik), 'please' and شكرك (Shukrān lak), 'thank you'. If you invite someone in your house, at work or in another place, the best way to greet and give the welcome is أهلاً وسهلاً (Ahlan wa sahlan), literally 'I wish you that you can find family لهأ and plains لهس'.