

Essential Greek

Ναι Neh	Yes
Όχι Okhi	No
Παρακαλώ Parakalo	Please / You're welcome
Ευχαριστώ (πολύ) Efkhareesto (polee)	Thank you (very much)
Εντάξει Endaksee	All right / OK
Σιγγνώμη Seeghnomee	Excuse me

A Note on the Strangeness of Things

One of the first things you'll notice about the Greek language is that it uses a different alphabet to English. Don't let this put you off! Unlike English, once you know what the letters sound like, you can read and say almost anything. Pick up almost any Greek phrasebook and you'll find an explanation of the alphabet – or try picking it up on the hoof. For now though, here are a few pointers to things different from English.

- γ /gh/ Most of the time, like the -ng of 'skipping' When before ι it sounds like a γ in English.
- δ /dh/ A cross-between d and the th- of 'there'
- ρ /r/ Like a Scottish or Spanish r
- ; (semi-colon) in Greek is used as the question mark

Non-Essential Greek

A lot of Greeks speak English but, of course, some don't. Here are some useful phrases. The majority of Greeks greatly appreciate an attempt.

Hello & Goodbye

Για σας Ya sass	Hello / Goodbye <i>Use the σας (sass) form in formal situations or when talking to more than one person.</i>
Για σου Ya soo	<i>For speaking to one person you know well or is younger than you use σου (soo).</i>
Καλημέρα Kaleemehra	Good morning / good day. <i>This greeting is used until 5pm.</i>
Καλησπέρα Kaleespehra	Good evening. <i>This greeting is used between 5pm and sunset.</i>
Καληνίχτα Kaleenikhtha	Good night. <i>This greeting is used after sunset and, unlike in English, can be used when meeting someone.</i>
Αντίο Andeeo	Goodbye
... σας sass	<i>Adding σας turns Good day into Have a good day.</i>
For example: Καλημέρα σας Καλησπέρα σας Καληνίχτα σας	Have a good/nice day. Have a good evening. Have a good night.

I need ...

Χρειάζομαι Khreeazome I need	ένα ταξί / μία απόδειξη ena taxi / meea apodheeksee a taxi / a receipt
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Smoking

Σιγγνώμη, μπορώ να καπνίσω εδώ; Seeghnomee, boro na kapneeso edho?	Excuse me. Can I smoke here?
Παρακαλώ φέρτε μου ένα τασάκι; Parakalo ferte moo ena tassakee?	Please could you bring me an ashtray?
Έχετε ένα τασάκι; Ekhete ena tassaki?	Do you have an ashtray?
Σας πειράζει να καπνίσω; Sass peerazee na kapneeso?	Do you mind if I smoke?
Έχετε αναπτήρες; Ehkhehteh anapteeres?	Do you have lighters?
μία αναπτήρα mee a anapteera	a lighter
Marlboro Lights και μια αναπτήρα, παρακαλώ Marlboro Lights keh meea anapteera, parakalo	(Twenty) Marlboro Lights and a lighter please

Can I ... ?

Μπορώ να έχω (μια αναπτήρα); Boro ekho (mee a anapteera)? Can I have (a lighter)?	πάω στην τουαλέτα / το ντους; pao stin tooaleta / to doos? use the toilet / the shower?
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Eating and Drinking

Greek food is delicious and (reasonably) healthy. If you only do one thing while you're in Greece, eat! Here's some vocab and suggestions but find out more about Greek food at <http://www.gourmed.gr> or trying to find a Greek restaurant near you.

Snacks

The Greeks are particularly fond of pasties called πίτες (peetes) which come in a variety of flavours.

μία τυρόπιτα meeā teeropeeta	a cheese pastie
μία λουκάνικοπιτα meeā lookaneekopeeta	a sausage pastie
μία ζαμπονοτυρόπιτα meeā zambonoteeropeeta	a ham and cheese pastie
μία σπανικόπιτα meeā spanikopeeta	a spinach pie (<i>normally with a ricotta-type cheese</i>)
μία μπαγέτα με... meeā bageta me ...	a baguette with ...

Coffee

Going for a coffee is an important thing in Greece and there is a lot of variety to choose from. A traditional Greek coffee (ενα ελληνικό καφέ, ena elleniko kafe) is served in an espresso-style cup with the grounds in the bottom. When it is made, the grounds are heated with the water and any sugar so you need to specify how sweet you like your coffee when you order it: plain (σκέτο, sketo), medium (μέτριο, metrio) or sweet (γλύκο, gleeko). Instant coffee is also popular in Greece and, through Nescafé's international marketing, all instant coffee is now known as Νες (Ness). Instant coffee is served hot and cold. For a regular hot coffee, ask:

ενα ζέστο Νες, παρακαλώ
ena zehsto Ness, parakalo
a hot coffee, please

and specify whether you would like it with/without (με/χωρίς) milk/sugar (γάλα/ζάχαρη). For a hot, sweet coffee without milk you would ask:

ενα ζέστο Νες γλύκο χωρίς γάλα, παρακαλώ
ena zesto Ness gleeko khorees ghala, paraklo

Last, but by no means least, is the Greek iced coffee (ενα φραπέ). As with Greek coffee, you need to specify how you like your coffee before it is served. For a milky iced coffee without milk, ask:

ενα σκέτο φραπέ με γάλα, παρακλώ
ena sketo frappe me ghala, parakalo

Apparently not everyone likes coffee. These people will be pleased to know that tea is also just as easily available (ενα τσαι, ena tsai). Make sure you don't leave Greece without trying a freshly squeezed orange juice (ενα χιμό πορτοκάλις, ena kheemo portokalis)!

At the restaurant

Εχετε ενα τραπέζε για δυο άτομα; Ekhete ena trapeze ya dheeo atoma?	Do you have a table for two people?
Παρακαλώ φέρτε μου / μας ... Parakalo ferte moo / mas ...	Please could you bring me / us ...
κε άλλο νερό / ψομή / κρασή ke alo nero / psomee / krasee	some more water / bread / wine
Θα ήθελα ... Tha eethela ...	I would like ...
για πρώτο πιάτο ... ya proto peeato ...	for a starter ...
για κύριο πιάτο ... ya keereeo peeato ...	for the main course ...
το λογαριασμό to loghareeasmo	the bill

Things to try

χοριάτικι σαλάτα khoriatiki salata	Greek salad
Σαγανάκη Saghanakee	Fried cheese
Μουσακάς / Παστίσιο Moosakas / Pasteetseeo	Traditional dishes with ground meat, béchamel sauce and aubergine / pasta
Λουκουκεφτέδες Lookookeftedes	Doughnut-style balls normally served in honey with cinnamon

Want to learn more Greek? Collins' Easy Greek Photo Phrase Book is a useful holiday companion and Teach Yourself has a very thorough Beginners' Greek. *Have fun!*