

Colloquial Persian

The Complete Course
for Beginners

Abdi Rafiee

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Abdi (Abdorreza) Rafiee

Introduction

Congratulations on taking the first step towards learning the language of Hafez, Sa`di, Ferdowsi and Khayyam, to name but a few of the literary giants Iran has proudly produced over the centuries as part of its contribution to the wealth of the world's cultural heritage.

On a practical level, I hope you will agree with the notion that a European learning another European language is one thing; a European learning a non-European language is quite another. We cannot separate a language from the cultural factors (beliefs, assumptions, etc.) that have influenced and shaped it over the years. The cultural gap is significantly narrower and shallower between language communities within Europe than between Europe and the East. This means that a European attempting to learn an Eastern language will need to bridge a much wider and deeper cultural gap than if he or she were learning another European language.

Despite the eastern cultural backdrop and using the Arabic alphabet, Persian is in fact an Indo-European language, i.e. related to English, and therefore much easier for English speakers to learn than Arabic. Indeed, some of my students have suggested that learning Persian first would make life much easier when you go on to learn Arabic.

In this course, I have tried to present a holistic picture of the Persian language, which includes not only the grammar of the word, the phrase and the sentence (i.e. the traditional view of grammar) but also the 'grammar' of what to say to whom and how to say or not to say it (i.e. the grammar of communication). So, we will be concerned not just with 'grammatical accuracy', but also with the social and cultural appropriateness of what we say in Persian.

Learning a foreign language without bothering about the (often) culture-specific norms governing the use of that language would be like learning how to drive a car without bothering about the Highway Code!

Who is the course intended for?

This course is intended for two types of learner:

- 1 Those who wish to learn to speak, read and write in Persian.
- 2 Those who wish to be able to communicate in Persian, without learning the script.

Type of Persian used

The type of Persian used in this course is educated colloquial Tehrani, which is understood throughout Iran, thanks to the media. Although the principal objective of this course is to introduce spoken colloquial Persian, sufficient guidance is given for those who wish to go on to study literary Persian.

The table on p. xi shows the varieties of language referred to in the book.

Use of jargon

I have tried to keep grammatical jargon to a minimum. Where a technical word is used, it is often backed up by a clarifying example. For instance, under 'Demonstratives', you are told: How to say 'this'/'these'; 'that'/'those'.

Layout of the book

The book is divided into two parts. The first part introduces the Persian sound system and the script supported by a comprehensive exercise at the end. The second part comprises seventeen units. Each unit contains two dialogues in which everyday language is introduced in its appropriate social and cultural setting. Each dialogue is supported by 'Vocabulary', 'Language and culture notes' and 'Exercises'. Each unit ends with a 'Comprehension test', which brings together the main language points introduced in the unit.

Register	Style	Context	Example
Colloquial (spoken/ written)	Formal	Addressing older people, or among participants in business meetings, using شما šomā 'you' (formal)	می‌خواید باهاشون برید ایران؟ mixāid bāhāšun berid irān? Do you want to go to Iran with them?
	Informal	Addressing friends and relatives of similar or younger age in speech or in writing (e.g. email, letter, postcard) using تو to 'you' (informal)	می‌خواهی باهاشون بری ایران؟ mixāi bāhāšun beri irān? Do you want to go to Iran with them?
Literary (spoken/ written)	Formal	Business correspondence; books; newspapers; news casting; emails, letters or plays (addressing seniors)	می‌خواهید با آنها به ایران بروید؟ mixāhid bā ānhā be irān beravid? Do you want to go to Iran with them?
	Informal	Personal correspondence addressing friends and relatives of similar or younger age; plays (addressing peers or juniors)	می‌خواهی با آنها به ایران بروی؟ mixāhi bā ānhā be irān beravi? Do you want to go to Iran with them?

Sound change in casual speech

Some sounds tend to influence the quality or length of their neighbours. Sound changes familiar to English speakers are not reflected in the transcription. Examples: **n** followed by **b**, **p**, **m** is pronounced **m**. For example, **šanbe** 'Saturday' is pronounced **šambe**. In the transcription, however, the original form **šanbe** has been used to avoid a clash with the Persian spelling.

The consonant cluster **nd** is normally reduced to **n**, as in **raftand** 'they went', which is often reduced to **raftan**. Again, the original form **raftand** is reflected in the transcription. Words ending in the sound **e** normally have this sound changed to **a** when followed by a suffix:

اونجا رفته‌ام. **unjā rafte-am** → **raftam** I've been (gone) there.


پنجره **panjare** window

پنجره‌ام **panjare-am** → **panjaram** my window

پنجره‌رو باز کردم. → پنجره را باز کردم.
panjara-ro bāz kardam. I opened the window.

Using the course

Listening

Listening to Persian spoken by native speakers helps you to gain mastery of the sound system, improve your pronunciation and develop a good Persian accent. Dialogues, exercises and materials involving listening are marked with this icon .

The dialogues

To understand each dialogue, you need to look not only at the vocabulary but also at the 'Language and culture notes' where linguistic and relevant cultural explanations are given. You may also need to refer to the glossaries at the end of the book.

The exercises

In most cases, the first question in each exercise has been answered as an example. The last exercise after each dialogue is intended to broaden the lens and use the grammar in a variety of other contexts. For these exercises and the comprehension test at the end of each unit, you will need to refer to the glossaries at the end of the book. All the answers are given in 'Key to the exercises'.

Role plays

This is a very important part of the course. Each lesson is supplemented with a series of role-play exercises. These are fully explained on the accompanying CDs. Follow the instructions and make the most of your free time (e.g. when travelling, in the kitchen, or at bedtime).

A bilingual dictionary - an essential tool

This course hopes to help you get to a stage where you can study the language independently. This is where a good (English–Persian, Persian–English) dictionary will be an essential tool.

You can help improve the course

Everything is known by everyone. 'Everyone' has yet to be born!

(a famous Persian saying)

Your comments on the form and content of the course would be most welcome. If an aspect of the language has not been covered (sufficiently), please let us know.

On the English transcription

The English transcription of Persian words appears in **bold type**. Letters or symbols in round brackets represent sounds that are normally dropped in casual speech. All English transcription should be read according to the values given below.

<i>Symbol</i>	<i>Sounds like</i>	<i>In the (mostly English) word(s)</i>
ā	a	father (British/American accent)
a	a	add
āi	i	ice
b	b	bad
c	ch	church
d	d	dad
e	e	egg
ei	ei	rein
f	f	fee
g	g	good
ġ	g	regime
h	h	hand
i	i	ski
j	j	joke
k	k	kite
l	l	leek (<i>not</i> keel)
m	m	mad
n	n	noon
o	awe	awe (British accent) shorter
oi	oi	coin
ou	ou	dough (American accent)
p	p	pad
q	r	Paris (French accent) harder
r	r	road (Scottish accent)
s	s	sad
š	sh	she
t	t	tea
u	u	flu
ui	ooey	gooey (one syllable)
v	v	vest
w	w	west
x	ch	loch; Bach
y	y	yeast
z	z	zip
.	t	water (Cockney accent)

Note: Persian consonants and vowels are described in the section 'Reading and writing in Persian'.

Abbreviations used in the book

<i>a</i>	adjective	<i>op</i>	opposite
<i>adv</i>	adverb	<i>p</i>	preposition
<i>col</i>	colloquial	<i>pl</i>	plural
<i>con</i>	conjunction	<i>pol</i>	polite
<i>dem</i>	demonstrative	<i>ps</i>	present stem
<i>f</i>	formal	<i>SI</i>	structured infinitive
<i>inf</i>	informal	<i>sing</i>	singular
<i>l</i>	literary	<i>SO</i>	someone
<i>lit</i>	literally	<i>ST</i>	something
<i>n</i>	noun	<i>sub</i>	subjunctive

Cross-referencing style

Cross-references are made throughout the book to the particular Unit and Dialogue where an explanation or clarification is given. For example, 'See U2D2 for possessive endings' means that 'possessive endings' are explained in Unit 2 Dialogue 2.

Reading and writing in Persian

Introduction

Modern Persian uses the Arabic alphabet. The Persian sounds **c**, **g**, **ġ** and **p** are not represented by any Arabic letters. Therefore, when the Arabic script was adopted, four of its letters were slightly modified to produce new letters representing the above sounds.

Persian is written and read from right to left. The first page of a Persian book is the page nearest to the right-hand-side cover. Persian numbers, however, are written and read from left to right. Initially it would be better to write on ruled paper to help you to develop a pleasant-looking handwriting. This is because letters are positioned in relation to a horizontal line.

Already, you will know a few hundred words commonly used in Persian! These are the words Persian has borrowed from other (mostly European) languages. Some of these words are pronounced in Persian more or less the same as they are in their language(s) of origin, e.g. 'soup', 'team', 'jet'. Others have been slightly modified to fit into the Persian sound system: **kolās** for 'class'. To minimise the 'unknown' area, some of these 'familiar' words are used when introducing the Persian script. The purpose here is to use a familiar launching pad that will, I hope, help the learner land smoothly on the Persian writing pad, so to speak.

When we learn a new language with a writing system entirely different from that of our own, we are often concerned about (if not intimidated by) at least two things:

- 1 having to learn a completely new set of symbols, moving in an unfamiliar direction;
- 2 having to cope with potential irregularities in the relationship between the symbols and the sounds they represent.

On (1), I cannot say much except to assure you that the comparatively 'phonetic' nature of the Persian alphabet greatly facilitates the learning of the writing system. In terms of the relation between what you see and how you pronounce it, Persian is much more consistent than English. Most sounds are represented by only one letter in Persian.

In Persian, the maximum number of letters representing the same sound is four. These are the letters that represent the sound *z*. Significantly, wherever you see any of these four letters, you can be absolutely certain that the sound represented is *z*.

The alphabet (including the consonants)

There are 32 letters in the alphabet. They help to represent 24 consonants and 11 vowels. English speakers will need to learn two new (consonant) sounds. The remaining consonants and vowels are more or less familiar to English speakers. The letter *و* *vāv* is mute in certain words.

Please do not be intimidated by what I am going to show you now – the entire alphabet! The purpose is to give you a bird's-eye view of all the Persian letters, and their various shapes, in their natural (alphabetical) order. This is the order in which you will need to remember the letters if you wish to make good use of your Persian–English dictionary. Furthermore, it will be used as a reference later when individual letters are introduced.



Table 1: The alphabet: Persian letters and their various shapes in a word (CD1; 5)

No.	Sound	Shapes				Name
		Final separate	Final joined	Medial	Initial	
1	(See vowels)	ا	ا	ا	(See vowels)	alef
2	b	ب	ب	ب	ب	be
3	p	پ	پ	پ	پ	pe
4	t	ت	ت	ت	ت	te
5	s	ث	ث	ث	ث	se
6	j	ج	ج	ج	ج	jim
7	c	چ	چ	چ	چ	ce
8	h	ح	ح	ح	ح	he-jimi
9	x	خ	خ	خ	خ	xe
10	d	د	د	د	د	dāl
11	z	ذ	ذ	ذ	ذ	zāl
12	r	ر	ر	ر	ر	re
13	z	ز	ز	ز	ز	ze
14	ġ	ژ	ژ	ژ	ژ	ġe
15	s	س	س	س	س	sin
16	š	ش	ش	ش	ش	šin
17	s	ص	ص	ص	ص	sād
18	z	ض	ض	ض	ض	zād
19	t	ط	ط	ط	ط	tā
20	z	ظ	ظ	ظ	ظ	zā
21	`	ع	ع	ع	ع	ein

No.	Sound	Shapes				Name
		Final separate	Final joined	Medial	Initial	
22	q	غ	غ	غ	غ	qein
23	f	ف	ف	ف	ف	fe
24	q	ق	ق	ق	ق	qāf
25	k	ک	ک	ک	ک	kāf
26	g	گ	گ	گ	گ	gāf
27	l	ل	ل	ل	ل	lām
28	m	م	م	م	م	mim
29	n	ن	ن	ن	ن	nun
30	v	و	و	و	و	vāv
31	h	ه	ه	ه	ه	he-do-cešm
32	y	ی	ی	ی	ی	ye

A bird's-eye view of the alphabet reveals the following facts.

On sounds

Two consonant sounds are unfamiliar to English speakers: **x** (letter 9) and **q** (letters 22 and 24).

Persian **x** is very similar to the sound represented by 'ch' in (Scottish) 'loch' and in German 'Bach'. Persian **q** is very close to French 'r', only a bit harder.

Most Persian sounds are represented by one letter each.

- t** is represented by 2 letters: ت **te** and ط **tā**
- q** is represented by 2 letters: غ **qein** and ق **qāf**
- h** is represented by 2 letters: ح **he-jimi** and ه **he-do-cešm**
- s** is represented by 3 letters: ث **se**, س **sin** and ص **sād**
- z** is represented by 4 letters: ذ **zāl**, ز **ze**, ض **zād** and ظ **zā**
- ' is represented by letter ع **ein** and **hamze** (see Glottal Stop, pp. xxxi–xxxiii).

On shapes

Each letter may have one, two, three or four shapes for various positions in a word. Nine letters have more or less the same shape for all positions in a word. These are:

ا **alef**, د **dāl**, ذ **zāl**, ر **re**, ز **ze**, ژ **že**, ط **tā**, ظ **zā**, و **vāv**

Nineteen letters have two shapes: small (for the beginning or middle of a word) and large (for the end of a word):

ب **be**, پ **pe**, ت **te**, ث **se**, ج **jim**, چ **ce**, ح **he-jimi**, خ **xe**,
س **sin**, ش **šin**, ص **sād**, ض **zād**, ف **fe**, ق **qāf**, ک **kāf**, گ **gāf**,
ل **lām**, م **mim**, ن **nun**

Letter ی **ye** has three shapes: small (for the beginning or middle of the word) and two large ones (one for final joined position, and the other for final separate).

Letters ه **he-do-cešm**, ع **ein** and غ **qein** have four shapes: initial, medial, final joined and final separate. Within the same word, all but seven letters can be connected to the letters on either side – in handwriting and in print. These seven letters can only be connected to the preceding (not the following) letter. These are:

ا **alef**, د **dāl**, ذ **zāl**, ر **re**, ز **ze**, ژ **že**, و **vāv**

Note: As we go through the examples, you will note that the final shapes of some letters (when occurring after a connectable letter) are very slightly modified to make the 'connection' easier (and nicer). In the introduction to Persian letters, some of the most common European loanwords and names will be used. However, please bear in mind that these non-Persian words are not always pronounced by Iranians exactly as they are pronounced in their language of origin.

Word stress normally falls on the last syllable of a word. Underlining indicates stress. Stressed or unstressed, a Persian vowel is normally pronounced in full.

The vowels

Persian vowels are fairly similar to their English counterparts. Letters 1, 30, 31 and 32 play a major part in representing vowels. These are: | **alef**, و **vāv**, هـ **he-do-cešm** and ی **ye**.

Table 2: Persian vowels and their various shapes in a word (CD1; 3)



No.	Vowel shapes				Vowel symbol
	Final separate	Final joined	Medial	Initial	
1	ا	ا	ا	آ	ā
2	و	و	و	او	u
3	ی	ی	ی	ای	i
4	ه	ه	هـ	آ	a
5	ه	ه	هـ	آ	e
6	و	و	و	آ	o
7	ای	ای	ای	آی	ai
8	یـ	یـ	یـ	ای	ei
9	وـ	وـ	وـ	آو	ou
10	وی	وی	وی	آوی	oi
11	وی	وی	وی	آوی	ui

In addition to their roles as consonants, letters و **vāv**, ه **he-do-cešm** and ی **ye** (see Table 1 on pp. xviii–xix) are used to represent vowels in the medial and final positions. Thus, the shape of a vowel may slightly change depending on where it occurs in a word: beginning, middle or end. When the word begins with a vowel, the first letter, ا **alef**, is used as a prop: ا̇ = **a**, ا̇ = **e**, ا̇ = **o**. Sometimes, depending on the spelling of the word, letter ع **ein** acts as a prop. In Table 2 (p. xxi), the first six are called pure vowels. The remaining five are compound vowels (diphthongs).

Vowels ā, u and i are long. Vowels a, e and o are short. Vowels āi, ei, ou and oi are more or less similar to their English counterparts. Vowel ui is similar to the sound represented by ‘-ooey’ in the English word ‘goeey’ but pronounced as one syllable – **gui** rather than **gu + i**.

Most vowels are represented by letters and are therefore incorporated into the word. Other vowels use add-on symbols that are placed above or below the letters they follow. A stroke placed above a letter (ـَ) represents the sound **a**; below it, represents **e**. This comma-shaped symbol (ـِ) placed above a letter (ـَ) represents the vowel **o**. These symbols are placed above, or below, the consonant they follow, e.g. بَ = **ba**, بِ = **be**, بُو = **bo**.

In the medial and final shape columns, the horizontal line (ـ) has been used as a dummy consonant to show the position of the Persian vowel symbols (ـَ) in relation to the consonant they follow – i.e. above or below it. Unlike the long vowels, these short-vowel symbols are not incorporated into the main body of the word. The final versions of these vowels, however, make use of proper letters and are therefore incorporated into the word.

The final shapes of letter ه **he-do-cešm** (i.e. ه/ه) are used as the final shapes of both vowels **a** and **e**. You may be relieved to know that there is only one word in Persian that ends in the vowel **a** and uses (ه) to represent it. That word is نه **na** meaning ‘no’ (a negative reply). Now, with the help of Tables 1 and 2 on pp. xviii–xix and xxi, let us do some reading and writing.

Unjoinable letters

We begin with the seven unjoinable letters referred to earlier. These are consonant letters: **د** *dāl*, **ذ** *zāl*, **ر** *re*, **ز** *ze*, **ژ** *ḡe*, **و** *vāv* and the first letter in the alphabet, **ا** *alef*, which is used in vowels. Some of the vowels are also introduced in this section. You are reminded that these seven letters cannot be connected to the *following* letter, but can be connected to a preceding letter, if it is a joinable one. To write the word **dād** 'she/he gave', we need:

d = letter **dāl** = د
ā = medial shape of vowel **ā** = ا
d = letter **dāl** = د
 Here is the result: داد

To write the word **āzād** 'free', we need:

ā = initial shape of vowel **ā** = آ
z = letter **ze** = ز
ā = medial shape of vowel **ā** = ا
d = letter **dāl** = د
 The result is: آزاد

To write the word **dud** 'smoke', we need:

d = letter **dāl** = د
u = medial shape of vowel **u** = و
d = letter **dāl** = د
 Here is the result: دود

To write the word **did** 'he/she saw', we need:

d = letter **dāl** = د
i = medial shape of vowel **i** = ی
d = letter **dāl** = د
 Here is the result: دید

Note: The medial shape of vowel **i** uses letter **ye** which is a joinable letter. This is why ی and د are connected.

To write the word **dad** 'beast', we need:

d = letter **dāī** = د
a = medial shape of vowel **a** = ا
d = letter **dāī** = د

Here is the result: دَد

To write the word **rege** 'parade', we need:

r = letter **re** = ر
e = medial shape of vowel **e** = ا
ġ = letter **ġe** = ژ
e = final shape of vowel **e** = ه

Here is the result: رژه

To write the word **roz** 'rose' (flower), we need:

r = letter **re** = ر
o = medial shape of vowel **o** = ا
z = letter **ze** = ز

Here is the result: رُز

To write the word **dāiv** 'diving board', we need:

d = letter **dāī** = د
āi = medial shape of vowel **āi** = ای
v = letter **vāv** = و

Here is the result: دایو

To write the word **dei** (the tenth month in the Iranian calendar), we need:

d = letter **dāī** = د
ei = final separate shape of vowel **ei** = ی

Here is the result: دی

To write the word **dou** 'running', we need:

d = letter **dāī** = د
ou = final shape of vowel **ou** = و

Here is the result: دُو

The short vowel symbols () which are placed above or below the line are normally dropped. This should not cause much difficulty once the skeleton of the word has become familiar to us.

Joinable letters

So far, we have been introduced to the unjoinable letters together with the various shapes of some of the more common vowels. In this section, we will see joinable letters and their various shapes, as well as the remaining vowels, in action. An attempt has been made to include all possible shapes of letters, beginning with smaller words.

Letters ب **be**, پ **pe**, ت **te**, ث **se** use the same skeleton. Their difference is in the number and position of dots. Letter ن **nun** may also be included here, although its final shape is deeper and rounded.

To write **bād** 'wind', we need:

b = initial shape of letter be	=	ب
ā = medial shape of vowel ā	=	ا
d = letter dāl	=	د

Here is the result: باد

To write **tip** 'brigade', we need:

t = initial shape of letter te	=	ت
i = medial shape of vowel i	=	ی
p = final shape of letter pe	=	پ

Here is the result: تیپ

To write **na** 'no', we need:

n = initial shape of letter nun	=	ن
a = final joined shape of vowel a	=	ه

Here is the result: نه

To write **bad** 'bad', we need:

b = initial shape of letter be	=	ب
a = medial shape of vowel a	=	ـ
d = letter dāl	=	د

Here is the result: بد

Note: The medial shape of vowel **a** is not a letter and therefore not included in the skeleton of the word. This is why ب and د are connected. This rule applies to all instances where a vowel is represented by a sign placed above or below a preceding letter.

Letters ج jim, چ ce, ح he-jimi, خ xe use the same skeleton. Their difference is in the number and position of dots. To write cāp 'printing', we need:

c = initial shape of letter ce = چ
 ā = medial shape of vowel ā = ا
 p = final shape of letter pe = پ
 Here is the result: چاپ

To write jip 'jeep', we need:

j = initial shape of letter jim = ج
 i = medial shape of vowel i = ی
 p = final shape of letter pe = پ
 Here is the result: جیب

To write jet 'jet', we need:

j = initial shape of letter jim = ج
 e = medial shape of vowel e = اِ
 t = final shape of letter te = ت
 Here is the result: جت

To write pic 'screw', we need:

p = initial shape of letter pe = پ
 i = medial shape of vowel i = ی
 c = final shape of letter ce = چ
 Here is the result: پیچ

Letters س sin and ش šin use the same skeleton. Their difference is in dots.

To write the English loanword sālz 'size', we need:

s = initial shape of letter sin = س
 āi = medial shape of vowel āi = ای
 z = letter ze = ز
 Here is the result: سایز

To write riš 'beard', we need:

r = letter re = ر
 i = medial shape of vowel i = ی
 š = final shape of letter šin = ش
 Here is the result: ریش

Letters **ف** *fe* and **ق** *qāf* use a more or less similar skeleton. The final shape of **ق** *qāf* is deeper and rounded. To write **فیض** 'fiche', 'docket', we need:

f = initial shape of letter **ف** = ف
 i = medial shape of vowel **ی** = ی
 š = final shape of letter **ش** = ش
 Here is the result: **فیض**

To write **فاقر** 'beggar', we need:

f = initial shape of letter **ف** = ف
 a = medial shape of vowel **ا** = ا
 q = medial shape of letter **ق** = ق
 i = medial shape of vowel **ی** = ی
 r = letter **ر** = ر
 Here is the result: **فاقر**

To write **رفیق** 'friend', we need:

r = letter **ر** = ر
 a = medial shape of vowel **ا** = ا
 f = medial shape of letter **ف** = ف
 i = medial shape of vowel **ی** = ی
 q = final shape of letter **ق** = ق
 Here is the result: **رفیق**

Letters **ک** *kāf* and **گ** *gāf* use the same skeleton – the latter has an additional stroke close to, and parallel with the original. To write **جاک** 'jack', we need:

j = initial shape of letter **ج** = ج
 a = medial shape of vowel **ا** = ا
 k = final shape of letter **ک** = ک
 Here is the result: **جاک**

To write **کج** 'tilted', we need:

k = initial shape of letter **ک** = ک
 a = medial shape of vowel **ا** = ا
 j = final shape of letter **ج** = ج
 Here is the result: **کج**

To write **gac** 'chalk', we need:

g = initial shape of letter **gāf** = گ

a = medial shape of vowel **a** = ا

c = final shape of letter **ce** = چ

Here is the result: گچ

To write **barg** 'leaf', we need:

b = initial shape of letter **be** = ب

a = medial shape of vowel **a** = ا

r = letter **re** = ر

g = final shape of letter **gāf** = گ

Here is the result: برگ

To economise on space, we will use a slightly different method of presenting examples for the remaining letters. Reading from right to left, you will see the 'ingredients' of each word separated by a space. This is followed by the word in its normal shape.

Note the two shapes of letter **lām** ل in the following examples:

Lee لی = لی

kilo کیلو = کیلو

elephant فیل = فیل

Eileen آیلین = آیلین

Note: A combination of letter **lām** ل and the first letter (**alef**) used in the vowel **ā** often looks like this لا when standing alone; and like this لا when joined up to a preceding letter, e.g.

a town لار = لار

class کلاس = کلاس

Note the two shapes of letter **mim** م in these examples:

mode, fashion مد = مد

mile میل = میل

property, belonging مال = مال

May; alcoholic drink می = می

omelette املت = املت

family, relatives **fāmlī** فامیل = فامیل

timer **tāimer** تایمر = تایمر

James **Jeimz** جیمز = جیمز

zoom **zum** زوم = زوم

team **tim** تیم = تیم

atom **atom** اتم = اتم

Letter **ه** **he-do-cešm** has four shapes:

hall **hāl** هال = هال

hotel **hotel** هتل = هتل

spring (season) **bahār** بهار = بهار

Fahrenheit **fārenhāit** فارنهایت = فارنهایت

quince (fruit) **beh** به = به

Note: After an unjoinable letter, the initial shape is used in the middle of a word; and the final separate shape at the end of a word:

mouth **dahān** دهان = دهان

ten **dah** ده = ده

king **šāh** شاه = شاه

mountain **kuh** کوه = کوه

The vowel **oi** is very rare in Persian. The only example normally given is **xoi**, the name of a town in Iran. Here is how it is written:

(town) **xoi** خوی = خوی

Vowel **ui** occurs mostly in literary Persian, as in **gūi** 'ball' and **būi** 'smell'. A more common example is **ruīdād** 'event'.

Letters **ص** **sād** and **ض** **zād** use the same skeleton. The latter has one dot over it. Note their two shapes:

hundred **sād** صد = صد

chair **sendali** صندلی = صندلی

insistence **esārār** اصرار = اصرار

half nesf	نصف = ن ص ف
destination maqsad	مَقْصَد = م ق ص د
special maxsus	مَخْصُوص = م خ ص و ص
greedy haris	حَرِيص = ح ر ي ص
multiplication zarb	ضَرْب = ض ر ب
ready hāzer	حَاضِر = ح ا ض ر
presence hozur	حُضُور = ح ض و ر
loan qarz	قَرْض = ق ر ض
ill mariz	مَرِيض = م ر ي ض

Letters ط **tā** and ظ **zā** use the same skeleton but the latter has a dot over it. They have only one shape:

parrot tuti	ط و ط ي = ط و ط ي
divorce talāq	ط ل ا ق = ط ل ا ق
floor, storey tabaqe	ط ب ا ق ه = ط ب ا ق ه
relationship rābete	ر ا ب ط ه = ر ا ب ط ه
relevance rabt	ر ب ط = ر ب ط
recording zabt	ض ب ط = ض ب ط
noon zohr	ظ ه ر = ظ ه ر
appearance zāher	ظ ا ه ر = ظ ا ه ر
view, opinion nazar	ن ظ ر = ن ظ ر
purpose, aim manzur	م ن ظ و ر = م ن ظ و ر
protector hāfez	ح ا ف ظ = ح ا ف ظ

Letters ع **ein** and غ **qein** use the same skeleton. The latter has a dot over it. They have four shapes:

festival `id	ع يد = ع يد
then, afterwards ba`d	ب ع د = ب ع د
quarter rob`	ر ب ع = ر ب ع

sadness **qam** غَم = غَم

cave **qār** غَار = غَار

occupation (job) **šoql** شُغْل = شُغْل

blade **tiq** تَيْغ = تَيْغ

advertisement **tabliq** تَبْلِيغ = تَبْلِيغ

Note: After an unjoinable letter, the initial shape is used in the middle of a word; and the final separate shape at the end of a word:

thunder **ra`d** رَعْد = رَعْد

divine law **šar`** شَرَع = شَرَع

gardener **bāqbān** بَاغْبَان = بَاغْبَان

garden **bāq** بَاغ = بَاغ

chicken, hen **morq** مَرُغ = مَرُغ

The glottal stop (CD1; 8)



The glottal stop (ʔ) is the sound of 't' in words like 'water' when pronounced with a Cockney (east London) accent. The glottal stop can occur in all three positions: beginning, middle or end of a word. At the beginning of a word, it may be represented by:

- the initial form of any of the vowels described above – using the first letter in the alphabet: ا (see Table 2 on p. xxi); or by:
- the initial form of letter **ein** ع (see Table 1 on pp. xviii–xix).

Occurring in the medial or final position, the glottal stop may be represented by:

- An appropriate shape of letter ع **ein** (e.g. **ba`d** 'then'; **ra`d** 'thunder'); or by:
- A feature called **hamze**, which will be explained below.

The generic shape of **hamze** is (ء). In Persian, the **hamze** sign occurs in the middle or at the end of a word. Depending on the spelling of the word, it is placed over one of these letters (carriers):

ا ن و

Examples:

head, apex **ra`s** رَأْس = رَأْس
 impact, effect **ta`sir** تَأْثِير = تَأْثِير
 boss **ra`is** رَئِيس = رَئِيس
 responsible **mas`ul** مَسْئُول = مَسْئُول
 question **so`āl** سَوْأَل = سَوْأَل
 faithful, a believer **mo`men** مُؤْمِن = مُؤْمِن

In the final position, the **hamze** sign may occur on its own:

badness, evil **su`** سُوء = سُوء
 an essay **enšā`** اِنْشَاء = اِنْشَاء
 object, thing **šei`** شَيْء = شَيْء

The glottal stop is often replaced by a softer sound, or omitted altogether, when it occurs in the middle or at the end of a word – particularly in casual speech. Consider the word **ba`d** 'then', which is pronounced **ba:d** in casual speech. To compensate for the loss of the glottal stop, the preceding vowel **a** is prolonged. (Note: The spelling is not affected.) It is this increased length of the vowel that distinguishes this word from: **ba:d** 'bad'. The **hamze** occurring between vowels may be replaced by **y**,

asset **dārā`i** دَارَائِي = دَارَائِي
 asset **dārāyi** دَارَائِي = دَارَائِي

or simply ignored resulting in a soft glide from the first vowel to the second, e.g.

presentation, offering **erā`e** اِرَائِه = اِرَائِه

being pronounced **erāe**. Spelling is not affected.

In the final position, it is completely ignored, even in spelling:

signature **emzā`** اِمْضَاء = اِمْضَاء
 signature **emzā** اِمْضَا = اِمْضَا

Note: Vowels occurring at the beginning of a word use the first letter of the alphabet | **alef** or letter ع **ein** as a 'carrier'. Since all vowels occurring

initially normally begin with a glottal stop regardless of the 'carrier' used, the use of the glottal stop symbol (ء) in the initial position was considered unnecessary and therefore omitted from the English transcription.

So far, we have seen the last letter in the alphabet, **ی** *ye*, representing different vowels (see Table 2 on p. xxi). But it can also act as a consonant. When it does, it sounds like 'y' in such English words as: 'yes', 'you', 'yard'. What distinguishes 'east' from 'yeast' is the presence of the 'y' sound in the latter! The symbol used to represent Persian sound **ی** is **y**. This sound can occur before a vowel or after a consonant or a 'glottal stop'. Examples:

یا = **yā** or

یک = **yek** one

کانادایی = **kānādāyi** Canadian

نفی = **nafy** (pronounced as one syllable) negation

سعی = **sa`y** (pronounced as one syllable) attempt

رای = **ra`y** (pronounced as one syllable) vote

Other signs used in the Persian script

tašdid (gemination) = (ّ)

Gemination is the double pronunciation of a sound (normally a consonant) within a word. The letter representing that sound is written only once, but with a **tašdid** sign over it to show that the sound of that letter should be pronounced long. Examples:

بچه = **bacce** child

صرافی = **sarrāfi** foreign exchange bureau

Sometimes the presence of **tašdid** creates a difference in meaning, as in:

بنا = **banā** a building

بنا = **bannā** builder

ماده = **māde** female (animal)

ماده = **mādde** substance, matter

tanvin = (̣)

This sign normally appears over an **alef** (ا). The combination is pronounced **an**. Examples:

about (in the region of) **hodudan** حُدُوداً = حُ د و د ا

approximately **taqriban** تَقْرِيباً = ت ق ر ي ب ا

sokun = (ˆ)

Normally placed over a consonant, this sign shows that the consonant is not followed by a vowel. It may be used to prevent confusion. For instance, to ensure that the English loanword 'mask' is pronounced correctly in Persian, i.e. as one syllable **māsk** (rather than **māsek**, etc.), a *sokun* may be placed over the **s**, thus:

mask **māsk** ماسک = م ا س ڪ

This sign has been used with the letter **vāv** و to represent a **w** sound in the vowel **ou**, e.g.

show **šou** شَوْ = ش و ˆ

new **nou** نَوْ = ن و ˆ

The short alef = (ˆ)

Used in words of Arabic origin, this sign represents an **ā** sound. Its most common position is over letter **ye** (ي). The combination is pronounced **ā**. Examples:

Moses **musā** مُوسَى = م و س ي ˆ

Jesus **isā** عِيسَى = ع ي س ي ˆ

even (though) **hattā** حَتَّى = ح ت ي ˆ

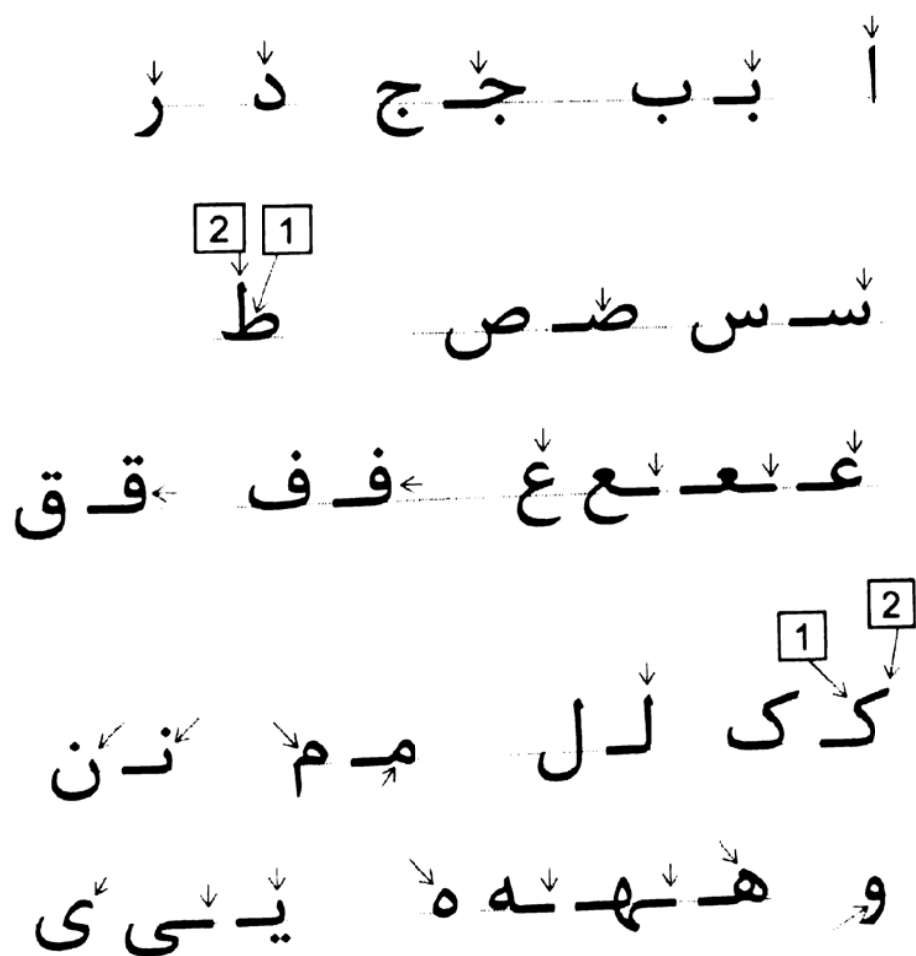
We have now covered all the various shapes of Persian vowels and consonants, as well as the other signs used in the script. Here are some brief guidelines for Persian writing.

Guidelines for Persian writing

The sample below shows three things:

- 1 How to write each letter, i.e. where to begin (the arrow shows the starting point).
- 2 How to position each letter in relation to the 'carrier line' on which we write.
- 3 Proportions: how large or small each character should be.

Note: To economise on space, only the first member of each family of letters sharing the same skeleton is shown here.



Reading exercise

The exercise below is to help revise all of the above. Tables 1 and 2 on pp. xviii–xix and xxi may be used as a source of reference in the future and, if needed, when attempting the following exercise. (The answers are given at the end of 'Key to the exercises', p. 360.)

Match the English-Persian equivalents.

- | | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 hard saxt | 25 boss ra`is | 49 Pope pāp |
| 2 e.g. masalan | 26 photograph aks | 50 AIDS eidz |
| 3 nail mix | 27 asphalt āsfālt | 51 bottle botri |
| 4 essence zāt | 28 poor faqir | 52 decision tasmim |
| 5 sauce sos | 29 Tehran tehrān | 53 question so`āl |
| 6 good xub | 30 nine noh | 54 responsible mas`ul |
| 7 guarantor zāmen | 31 gas gāz | 55 hall hāl |
| 8 five panj | 32 rival harif | 56 spoon qāšoq |
| 9 mask māsk | 33 furniture mobl | 57 cheque cek |
| 10 yard yārd | 34 lamp lāmp | 58 passport pāsport |
| 11 downside zir | 35 shah šāh | 59 atom atom |
| 12 posing ġest | 36 size sāiz | 60 often aqlab |
| 13 a minor saqir | 37 pilgrim hāji | 61 building banā |
| 14 service servis | 38 greedy haris | 62 asset dārā`i |
| 15 parrot tuti | 39 ill mariz | 63 apex, head ra`s |
| 16 protection hefz | 40 citizen tābe` | 64 no na |
| 17 tasty laziz | 41 a blade tiq | 65 oppressed mazlum |
| 18 then ba`d | 42 nearly taqriban | 66 fuse fiuz |
| 19 beard riš | 43 hundred sad | 67 morning sobh |
| 20 oppression zolm | 44 a fly magas | 68 badness su` |
| 21 signature emzā` | 45 believer mo`men | 69 child bacce |
| 22 builder bannā | 46 visa vizā | 70 agent ma`mur |
| 23 one third sols | 47 kilo kilu | |
| 24 asset dārāyi | 48 absorption jazb | |

آتَم ...	تَصْمِيم ...	ذات ...	صَد ...	ماسک ...
آسفالت ...	تَقْرِيْباً ...	رئيس ...	صَغِير ...	مُبَل ...
أغلب ...	تِهْران ...	رأس ...	ضامِن ...	مَثلاً ...
إمضاء ...	تِيغ ...	ریش ...	طوطی ...	مَرِيض ...
إيدز ...	ثُلث ...	زیر ...	ظَلَم ...	مَسْئول ...
بچه ...	جذب ...	ژست ...	عَكس ...	مَظْلوم ...
بطری ...	چک ...	سؤال ...	فَقِير ...	مَغْس ...
بعد ...	حاجی ...	سایز ...	فِيوز ...	مُؤْمِن ...
بنا ...	خَرِيص ...	سَخْت ...	قَاشِق ...	مِيخ ...
بنا ...	خَرِيْف ...	سِرْوِيس ...	كِيْلُو ...	نِه ...
پاپ ...	حِفْظ ...	سُس ...	گاز ...	نُه ...
پاسپورت ...	خوب ...	سوء ...	لامپ ...	ويزا ...
پنج ...	دارائی ...	شاه ...	لَذِيذ ...	هال ...
تابع ...	دارایی ...	صُبْح ...	مَأْمور ...	يارد ...

Unit One

سلام **salām**

Greetings

In this unit we will look at how to:

- exchange greetings at various times of the day and say 'goodbye'
- introduce yourself
- say 'thank you'
- use the polite form for 'you', 'he', 'she'
- ask simple 'yes/no' questions in the present tense





Dialogue 1



Greeting and leave-taking (CD1; 12)

It's 8 a.m. at the office. Members of staff greet each other briefly and go into their offices. Later in the evening, they say goodbye.

A: سلام، صبح به خیر.

B: سلام، صبح به خیر.

A: خدا حافظ، شب به خیر.

B: خدا حافظ، شب به خیر.

A: salām. sob(h) be-xeir.

B: salām. sob(h) be-xeir.

A: xodā (h)āfez. šab be-xeir.

B: xodā (h)āfez. šab be-xeir.

A: *Hello. Good morning.*

B: *Hello. Good morning.*

A: *Goodbye. Goodnight.*

B: *Goodbye. Goodnight.*



Vocabulary

سلام	salām	hello
صبح	sob(h)	morning
به خیر	be-xeir	may it be good
خدا	xodā	God
حافظ	hāfez	protector

شب	šab	night
روز	ruz	day
ظهر	zohr	noon
عصر	asr	(late) afternoon
سفر	safar	journey

Language and culture notes



How to say 'good morning'

Here is the formula:

صبح **sob(h)** morning + به خیر **be-xeir** may it be good =
صبح به خیر **sob(h) be-xeir** Good morning

The same formula can be used to say:

شب به خیر	šab be-xeir	Goodnight
سفر به خیر	safar be-xeir	(Have a) good journey

More formal:

روز به خیر	ruz be-xeir	Good day
ظهر به خیر	zohr be-xeir	Good mid-day/noon
عصر به خیر	asr be-xeir	Good (late) afternoon

Note: Younger people are expected to say سلام **salām** 'hello' first.

Exercise 1

Match a letter with a number. Follow the example.



- | | | | | |
|---|------------|-----------------------|-----|------------------|
| 1 | صبح | sobh | [b] | (a) night |
| 2 | سلام | salām | [] | (b) morning |
| 3 | شب | šab | [] | (c) hello |
| 4 | خدا حافظ | xodā hāfez | [] | (d) good morning |
| 5 | صبح به خیر | sob(h) be-xeir | [] | (e) goodnight |
| 6 | شب به خیر | šab be-xeir | [] | (f) goodbye |

Exercise 2

Can you say these in Persian?



- 1 Good day.
- 2 Good afternoon.
- 3 (Have a) good journey.
- 4 Good mid-day/noon.



Dialogue 2



Introducing yourself (CD1; 14)

Mr Reza Hooshangi (H) has just been called by the information desk officer (O) at the airport in Tehran.

H: سلام خانم.

O: سلام آقا. بفرمایید.

H: ببخشید، من هوشنگی هستم. رضا هوشنگی.

O: آها بله، این تلفن برای شماست.

H: مرسی خانم. الو؟ ...

H: salām xānom.

O: salām āqā. befarmāyid.

H: bebaxšid, man hušangi hastam. rezā hušangi.

O: āhā bale, in telefon barāye šomāst.

H: mersi xānom. alou? ...

H: *Hello madam.*

O: *Hello sir. What can I do for your?*

H: *Sorry (to bother you). I am Hooshangi. Reza Hooshangi.*

O: *Ah yes, this telephone call's for you.*

H: *Thank you madam. Hello? ...*



Vocabulary

خانم	xānom	madam
آقا	āqā	sir, gentleman
بفرمایید	befarmāyid	Please go ahead. OR: What can I do for you?*
ببخشید	bebaxšid	sorry, forgive (me)*
من	man	I
هوشنگی	hušangi	Hooshangi (surname)
رضا	rezā	Reza (male name)

هستم	hastam	(I) am
آها	āhā	Ah, Aha, Oh
بله	bale	yes
این	in	this
تلفن	telefon	telephone (call)
برای	barāye	for
شما	šomā	you (f)
برای شماست	barāye šomāst	(it)'s for you
مرسی	mersi	thanks
الو	alou	hello (telephone)
بودن	budan	to be
خوب	xub	fine, good, well
هست	hast	is (normally emphatic)
دکتر	doktor	doctor
اما	ammā	but
ایشون	išun	s/he (polite); (originally) they
خانم	xānom-e	Ms/Mrs
آقای	āqāye	Mr
خوش حال	xoš-hāl	happy
پیغام	peiqām	message
هدیه	hedye	present, gift
بسته	baste	parcel, gift
کامران	kāmran	Kamran (male name or surname)
احمدی	ahmadi	Ahmadi (surname)
بلیت	belit	ticket
هم	ham	too, also
خیلی	xoili	very; many; much
ممنون	mamnun	obliged, grateful

*Both of these are 'imperative' forms. For a grammatical explanation, please see 'Imperative' on pp. 93ff, 100ff, 374.



Language and culture notes

Personal pronouns

من	man	ا	ما	mā	we
تو	to	you (<i>inf</i>)	شما	šomā	you (<i>f, pl</i>)
او	u	he, she	آنها	ānhā	they
آن	ān	it, that			

Verb 'to be' in the present simple tense

How to say 'I am fine'; 'you are fine'; etc.

Verb بودن **budan** 'to be'

من خوب هستم.	man xub hastam.	I am fine.
تو خوب هستی.	to xub hasti.	You (<i>inf</i>) are fine.
او خوب است.	u xub ast.	He/She is fine.
آن خوب است.	ān xub ast.	It/That is fine.
ما خوب هستیم.	mā xub hastim.	We are fine.
شما خوب هستید.	šomā xub hastid.	You are fine.
آنها خوب هستند.	ānhā xub hastand.	They are fine.

The verb normally comes at the end of the sentence.

The word است **ast** is the normal equivalent for the English word 'is' when there is no emphasis on it. However, when the English word 'is' does carry a stress for emphasis, its Persian equivalent would be هست **hast**. Compare:

او دکتر است. u doktor ast. S/he is a doctor. [No stress on 'is']

او دکتر هست اما ... u doktor **hast** ammā ...

S/he is a doctor but ... [e.g. s/he doesn't have a surgery.]

After some vowels (such as ā) است **ast** 'is' often loses its vowel. Thus, شما **šomā** 'you' followed by است **ast** becomes شماست **šomāst** as in this sentence from Dialogue 2:

این تلفن برای شماست. **In telefon barāye šomāst.**

This telephone call's for you. (Note a similar shortening of 'is' in the English translation.)

In colloquial Persian, the sequence of sounds **ān** is often pronounced **un**. Thus, آن **ān** 'that'/'it' and آنها **ānhā** 'they' will be written as اون **un** and اونها **unhā** in this book to reflect their colloquial pronunciation. Similarly, the sound combination **ām** is often pronounced **um** in some words, e.g. کدام **kodām** 'which' and آرام **ārām** 'calm', which are pronounced کدوم **kodum** and آروم **ārum** respectively.

Polite forms of 'you', 'he', 'she'

تو **to** 'you' and its verb forms are generally used among children and between close friends and relatives of similar age or social status (spouses, siblings). شما **šomā** 'you' and its verb forms are used between strangers and those who have a formal relationship, such as business people in formal meetings. A senior in age or status may use تو **to**, and receive شما **šomā**, when talking with a junior (compare with French *tu* and *vous*). If unsure, use شما **šomā**.

A more polite form for او **u** 'he'/'she', would be ایشان **išun** used with a plural verb form. For example, when introducing Ms or Mr Johnson, we can say:

ایشون خانم جانسون هستند. **išun xānom-e jānson hastand.**
She is Ms Johnson.

ایشون آقای جانسون هستند. **išun āqāye jānson hastand.**
He is Mr Johnson.

Note: A direct Persian translation of 'This is Ms/Mr Johnson' would be impolite in this context. It would, however, be acceptable when introducing a person in a photograph (see U2D2).

Questions

While a statement has a falling tone, a 'yes/no' question uses a rising tone, as in English. Unlike English, no change in word order is necessary. Compare:

شما دکتر هستید. **šomā doktor hastid.** You are a doctor.
(Falling tone)

شما دکتر هستید؟ **šomā doktor hastid?** Are you a doctor?
(Rising tone)



Exercise 3

Using the information in the box on p. 6, replace the word خوب **xub** 'fine' with خوش حال **xoš-hāl** 'happy', to produce the Persian equivalents of 'I am happy'; 'you are happy', and so on.



Exercise 4

Can you say these in Persian?

- 1 Hello sir. I am Peter Brown.
- 2 Oh yes, this message is for you.
- 3 This present is for you.
- 4 This present is for Mr Ahmadi.
- 5 This parcel is for Ms Ahmadi.
- 6 This is Ms Ahmadi. (introducing)
- 7 This is Mr Kamram. (introducing)
- 8 Are you Ms Johnson?



Comprehension (CD1; 16)

A has just called into a travel agency. B is the travel agent.

- A: سلام آقا.
B: سلام خانم. عصر به خیر. بفرمایید.
A: عصر به خیر. ببخشید، شما آقای کامران هستید؟
B: بله، بفرمایید.
A: من احمدی هستم.
B: آها بله، خانم احمدی، این بلیت برای شماست. این پیغام هم برای شماست.
A: خیلی ممنون.
B: سفر به خیر.

A: مرسی. خدا حافظ.

B: خدا حافظ.

A: salām āqā.

B: salām xānom. asr be-xeir. befarmāyid.

A: asr be-xeir. bebaxšid, šomā āqāye kāmran hastid?

B: bale, befarmāyid.

A: man ahmadi hastam.

B: āhā bale, xānom-e ahmadi, in belit barāye šomāst. in peiqām ham barāye šomāst.

A: xeili mamnun.

B: safar be-xeir.

A: mersi. xodā hāfez.

B: xodā hāfez.

-
- 1 What time of the day is it?
 - 2 What does A want to know?
 - 3 Who is A? (What's her name?)
 - 4 What two things is B offering A?
 - 5 What is B wishing?

Unit Two

احوال پرسى **ahvālporsi**

Enquiring about health



In this unit we will look at how to:

- say 'How are you?' and respond to a similar question
- introduce yourself, say 'Pleased to meet you', and reciprocate
- enquire about other people
- express possession



Dialogue 1



How're you? (CD1; 17)



Bahman (B) is ringing his close friend Ali (A). Here are extracts from their conversation.

- A: الو؟
 B: علی جان، سلام.
 A: سلام، چطوری؟
 B: خوبم، مرسی. تو چطوری؟
 A: بد نیستم، مرسی. بابا چطورند؟ ماما خوبند؟
 B: بد نیستند، ممنون. شما چطورید؟ خانواده خوبند؟
 A: همه خوبند، مرسی. خب، احمد چطوره؟
 B: یک کم خسته است.
 A: از چی؟ از زندگی؟
 B: نه بابا! از کار! خیلی تنبله.
 [a few minutes later]
 B: خب، فعلاً خدا حافظ.
 A: خدا حافظ.

- A: alou?
 B: ali jān, salām.
 A: salām, ceto(u)ri?
 B: xubam, mersi. to ceto(u)ri?
 A: bad nistam, mersi. bābā ceto(u)rand? māmān xuband?
 B: bad nistand, mersi. Šomā ceto(u)rid? Xānevāde xuband?
 A: hame xuband, mersi. xob, ahmad ceto(u)re?
 B: yek kam xaste ast [xastast].
 A: az ci? az zendegi?
 B: na bābā! az kār! xeili tanbale.
 [a few minutes later]
 B: xob, fe(ˈ)lan xodā (h)āfez.
 A: xodā (h)āfez.

- A: Hello?
 B: (lit) Dear Ali, hello.
 A: Hello, how're you?
 B: I'm fine, thank you. How're you? [singular, informal]
 A: I'm not bad, thanks. How's [your] dad? Is [your] mum well?
 B: They're not bad, thanks. How're you [plural, i.e. people on your side]? Are [your] family well?
 A: They're all fine, thanks. So, how's Ahmad?
 B: He's a little tired.
 A: Of what? Of life?
 B: Oh no! [He's tired] of work! He's very lazy.
 [a few minutes later]
 B: OK, goodbye for now.
 A: Goodbye.



Vocabulary

علی	ali	male name
جان	jān	dear
چطور	ceto(u)r	how
چطوری	ceto(u)ri	how're you (<i>inf</i>)
خوب	xub	good, well, fine
خوبم	xubam	I'm fine
بد	bad	bad
نیستم	nistam	I'm not
بابا	bābā	dad
چطورند	ceto(u)rand	how's s/he (<i>f</i>)
مامان	māmān	mum, mom
خوبند	xuband	s/he's well (<i>f</i>)
نیستند	nistand	they're not
ممنون	mamnun	grateful; thank you; thanks
چطورید	ceto(u)rid	how're you (<i>plural</i>)
خانواده	xānevāde	family
خوبند	xuband	they're well
همه	hame	all

خب	xob	So; OK (then)
احمد	ahmad	male name
چطوره	ceto(u)re	how's
یک	yek	a, an; one
کم	kam	little
خسته	xaste	tired
از	az	of; from
چی	ci	what
زندگی	zendegi	life
نه	na	no
نه بابا!	na bābā!	Oh no! [Certainly not! No way!]
کار	kār	work
خیلی	xelli	very
تنبل	tanbal	lazy
فعلاً	fe`lan	for now

Language and culture notes



Contraction

How to say 'I'm fine', 'you're fine', etc.

Verb بودن **budan** 'to be' in reduced form

(من) خوبم.	(man) xub-am.	I'm fine.
(تو) خوبی.	(to) xub-i.	You're fine. (<i>sing, inf</i>)
(او) خوبه.	(u) xub-e.	He/She's fine.
(اون) خوبه.	(un) xub-e.	It/That's fine.
(ما) خوبیم.	(mā) xub-im.	We're fine.
(شما) خوبید.	(šomā) xub-id.	You're fine. (<i>pl/f</i>)
(اون‌ها) خوبند.	(unhā) xub-and.	They're fine.

In the box above, what comes after the word خوب **xub** 'fine' are the reduced forms of the verb بودن **budan** 'to be' introduced on p. 6 – compare. They also act as **personal endings** for other verbs. Since

these endings indicate 'person', the personal pronouns are often omitted as redundant – hence the brackets. These unstressed endings are *very important* and must be learned at an early stage.

Note: In casual speech, the second- and third-person plural endings *-id* and *-and* are slightly modified as *-in* and *-an*, respectively. So, here are the more casual forms of the last two lines in the box on p. 13:

(شما) خوبین.	(šomā) xub-in.	You're fine.
(اون‌ها) خوبن.	(unhā) xub-an.	They're fine.

To avoid confusion, these casual forms will not be used in this book. For added clarity, and only at this introductory stage, these endings have been written after a hyphen (-) in the English transcription. However, in the rest of the book, they will appear without a hyphen to reflect the Persian spelling. Exercise 1 below should provide good practice.



Exercise 1

Using the box on p. 13, replace the word *xub* 'fine' with *خوش حال xoš-hāl* 'happy', to produce the Persian equivalents of 'I'm happy', 'you're happy', and so on. Example:

(من) خوش‌حالم. (man) xoš-hālam. I'm happy.

Note: Two vowels do not normally follow each other 'comfortably' within the same word – they create an inconvenient sound known as a 'glottal stop' (see pp. xxxi–xxxiii). [Try saying 'a egg' in English!] So, we either put a buffer between them (e.g. a soft *y* sound) or get rid of one of the vowels, often the shorter one. Reduced forms of the verb بودن *budan* 'to be' (see the box on p. 13) begin with a vowel. So, if the word before them ends in a vowel, such adjustment is normally made. The most notorious of these vowels are *ā* and *e*, as demonstrated in the two following boxes.

*Note: For the third person singular ('s/he, it') the original *است ast* is used with a slight modification.

Reduced forms of verb 'to be' after the vowel **ā**
(e.g. اینجا **injā** here)

من اینجا	man injām	I'm here
تو اینجا	to injāyi	You're here
او اینجاست*	u injāst	S/he's here
ما اینجا	mā injāyim	We're here
شما اینجا	šomā injāyid	You're here
اون‌ها اینجا	unhā injānd	They're here

Reduced forms of verb 'to be' after vowel **o**
(e.g. گرسنه **gorosne** hungry)

من گرسنه	man gorosn(e)am	I'm hungry
تو گرسنه	to gorosnei	You're hungry
او گرسنه است*	u gorosn(e)ast	S/he's hungry
ما گرسنه	mā gorosneim	We're hungry
شما گرسنه	šomā gorosneid	You're hungry
اون‌ها گرسنه	unhā gorosn(e)and	They're hungry

Negative forms of the verb 'to be' in the present tense

How to say 'I am not', 'you are not', and so on.

Negative forms of verb بودن **budan** 'to be'

من ... نیستم.	man ... nistam.	I am not ...
تو ... نیستی.	to ... nisti.	You are not ... (sing, inf)
او ... نیست.	u ... nist.	He/She is not ...
اون ... نیست.	un ... nist.	It/That is not ...
ما ... نیستیم.	mā ... nistim.	We are not ...
شما ... نیستید.	šomā ... nistid.	You are not ... (pl/f)
اون‌ها ... نیستند.	un(h)ā ... nistand.	They are not ...

Note: Unlike English, the Persian verb بودن **budan** 'to be' has no reduced negative forms. Therefore, ما ... نیستیم **mā ... nistim** would be an equivalent to these English sentences:

We are not . . . ; We aren't . . . ; We're not . . .



Exercise 2

We all had lunch an hour ago. None of us are گرسنه **gorosne** 'hungry' now. Complete the following sentences to express this.

1. _____ من گرسنه **man gorosne** _____ I am not hungry.

Example: من گرسنه نیستم. **man gorosne nistam.**

2. _____ ما گرسنه **mā gorosne** _____ We are not hungry.

3. _____ تو گرسنه **to gorosne** _____ You are not hungry. (*inf*)

4. _____ اون‌ها گرسنه **unhā gorosne** _____ They are not hungry.

5. _____ شما گرسنه **šomā gorosne** _____ You are not hungry.

6. _____ او گرسنه **u gorosne** _____ S/he is not hungry.

Questions

While a statement has a falling tone, a 'yes'/'no' question uses a rising tone, as in English. Unlike English, no change in word order is necessary.

شما خوبید.	šomā xubid.	You're good/well/fine/OK. (falling)
شما خوبید؟	šomā xubid?	Are you good/well/fine/OK? (rising)
شما خسته‌اید؟	šomā xasteid?	Are you tired? (rising)
شما دکترید؟	šomā doktorid?	Are you (a) doctor? (rising)

As in English, questions beginning with the following question words have a falling tone.

چه	ce	what	چی	ci	what (col)
کی	ki	who	کی	kei	when
چرا	cerā	why	کدوم	kodum	which
چطور	ceto(u)r	how	چگونه	cegune	how (more literary)
کجا	kojā	where	کو	ku	Where is it? (col)
چند	cand	how many	چندتا	cand tā	how many (more col)
چقدر	ceqadr	how much	چند وقت	cand vaqt	how long

Note: The above question words normally carry the sentence stress. After چند/چندتا **cand tā/cand** 'how many', the noun takes a singular form.

چیہ؟	cie?	What is it?
کیہ؟	kie?	Who is it/he/she?
چطورہ؟	ceto(u)re?	How is it/he/she?
کجااید؟	kojāyid?	Where are you?
چندتا ماشین؟	cand tā māšīn?	How many cars?

Exercise 3

Can you say these in Persian?

- | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 How're you? (Inf) | I'm not bad, thank you. |
| 2 How're you? (f) | I'm a little tired. |
| 3 How's Mum/Dad? | S/he's fine, thanks. |
| 4 How're the family? | They're fine, thanks. |
| 5 How's Parviz? | He's fine, thanks. |
| 6 Are you OK/well/fine? | I'm fine, thanks. |
| 7 Are you tired? | No, I'm not. I'm a bit hungry. |





Dialogue 2



Pleased to meet you! (CD1; 20)

Ahmadi (A) is mingling among his guests. He's just met a new face (B).

A: سلام. من احمدی هستم. اسم شما چیه؟

B: سلام. من بهزادی هستم.

A: خوش وقتم.

B: من هم همین طور.

A: خب، حالتون چطوره؟

B: خوبم، مرسی. شما چطورید؟

A: بد نیستم، ممنون.

[pointing to some pictures on the wall, B asks]

B: این آقا کیه؟

A: اون پدرمه.

B: پدرتون ماشاءالله خیلی خوش تیپ‌اند!

A: خیلی ممنون.

B: این خانم کیه؟

A: اون مادرمه.

A: salām. man ahmadi hastam. esm-e šomā cie?

B: salām. man behzādi hastam.

A: xoš-vaqtam.

B: man (h)am hamin-to(u)r.

A: xob, hāletun ceto(u)re?

B: xubam, mersi. šomā ceto(u)rid?

A: bad nistam, mamnun.

[pointing to some pictures on the wall, B asks]

B: in āqā kie?

A: un pedarame.

B: pedaretun māšā(a)llā(h) xeili xoš-tipand!

A: xeili mamnun.

B: in xānom kie?

A: un mādarame.

A: Hello. I am Ahmadi. What's your name?

B: Hello. I am Behzadi.

A: I'm pleased (to meet you).

B: Same here. (or: Me too.)

A: So, how're you? (lit How's your health?)

B: I'm fine, thank you. How're you?

A: I'm not bad, thank you.

[pointing to some pictures on the wall, B asks]

B: Who's this gentleman?

A: That's my father.

B: Your father is very handsome, may God preserve him!

A: Thanks very much.

B: Who's this lady?

A: That's my mother.

Vocabulary

احمدی	ahmadi	Ahmadi (family name)
اسم	esm	name
چی	ci	what
چیہ	cie	what's
بہزادی	behzadi	Behzadi (family name)
خوش وقت	xoš-vaqt	pleased
خوش وقتم	xoš-vaqtam	I'm pleased
هم	hem	too, also
همین طور	hamin-to(u)r	same way
حال	hāl	health
حالتون	hāletun	your health
ممنون	mamnun	grateful, obliged
این	in	this
آقا	āqā	gentleman
کی	ki	who
کیہ	kie	who's (who is)
اون	un	that
پدر	pedar	father
پدرم	pedaram	my father



پدرتون	pedaretun	your father
ماشاءالله	māšā(a)llā(h)	May God preserve him
خیلی	xeili	very
خوش تیپ	xoš-tib	handsome
خانم	xānom	lady
مادر	mādar	mother
مادرم	mādaram	my mother
آپارتمان	āpārtēmān	flat, apartment
کامپیوتر	kāmpiuter	computer
آدرس	ādres	address
ملیت	melliyat	nationality
شماره تلفن	šomāre telefon	telephone number
تاریخ	tārix	date
تولد	tavallod	birth
تاریخ تولد	tārix-e tavallod	date of birth
و	va (col o)	and



Language and culture notes

Complimenting

It is generally unacceptable for a man to compliment another man on the appearance of his female folks (wife, sister, mother, etc.). A socially acceptable compliment is normally preceded by the Arabic phrase ماشاءالله **māšā(a)llā(h)**. Literally, it means 'Whatever God wills' but functionally it is intended to ward off the evil eye!

Politeness

We use plural verb forms when talking about an older person. Examples:

بابا چطورە؟ **bābā ceto(u)re?**

How's [your] dad? (Grammatically correct, but socially inappropriate)

بابا چطورند؟ **bābā ceto(u)rand?**

How's [your] dad? (Polite)

The magical functions of 'ezāfe'

Here is an exciting piece of Persian grammar. It is efficient, consistent and easy to learn. Compare it with English, and judge for yourself!

Put simply, **ezāfe** is the vowel sound **e** which is normally added to a noun. When you add **ezāfe** to a word, you are in fact sending the following message to your listener:

I'm going to give you more information about the word you have just heard!

Here is the generic formula for the use of **ezāfe**: NOUN + **e** + more information

In the English transcription, **ezāfe** will be shown as **-e**.

Note: **ezāfe** does not carry a stress.

Some of the main functions of **ezāfe** are outlined below.

Expressing possession: How to say 'your name'

Formula: Belonging + **e** + owner

Examples:

تلفنِ جک	telefon-e jak	Jack's telephone
تلفنِ شما	telefon-e šomā	your telephone (f)
اسمِ شما	esm-e šomā	your name (f)

Exercise 4

Can you give the Persian equivalents of these phrases using **ezāfe**? 

Follow the example.

1 My car	ماشین من	māšīn-e man
2 My telephone	_____	_____
3 His/her name	_____	_____
4 Our flat/apartment	_____	_____
5 Their computer	_____	_____

Linking a forename to a surname

حسن احمدی **hasan-e ahmadi** (Mr) Hassan Ahmadi

With foreign names, no linking sound is normally added:

جورج نیکسون **jorj nikson** George Nixon

Linking two nouns

Examples:

فیلمِ تایتنیک	film-e tāitanik	the film <i>Titanic</i>
خیابانِ آکسفورد	xiābān-e āksford	Oxford Street
میدانِ آکسفورد	meidān-e āksford	Oxford Circus
میدانِ راسل	meidān-e rāsel	Russell Squire
میدانِ ونک	meidān-e vanak	Vanak Square (Tehran)
محلِ تولد	mahall-e tavalloḍ	place of birth
تاریخِ تولد	tārix-e tavalloḍ	date of birth
جشنِ تولد	jašn-e tavalloḍ	birthday celebration/party

Linking a noun and an adjective

Formula: noun + **e** + adjective

Examples:

فیلمِ بد	film-e bad	bad film
تلفنِ همراه	telefon-e hamrāh	mobile telephone
تلفنِ همگانی	telefon-e hamegāni	public telephone
آپارتمانِ قشنگ	āpārtēmān-e qašang	nice apartment/flat

Note: Regardless of its function, **ezāfe** is slightly modified as **ye** when it comes after a vowel.

سینما	sinemā	cinema
سینمایِ ایران	sinemā-ye irān	Iran's cinema
جا	jā	place/seat
جایِ شما	jā-ye šomā	your place/seat
بابا	bābā	dad
بابایِ خوب	bābā-ye xub	good dad
مو	mu	hair
مویِ من	mu-ye man	my hair
خونه	xune	house
خونه‌یِ ما	xune-ye mā	our house

شماره	šomāre	number
شماره‌ی تلفن	šomāre-ye telefon	telephone number

Exercise 5



Choose a word from each set and make pairs using the appropriate form of **ezāfe**. The first two have been done for you.

Set (a)			Set (b)		
فیلم	film	film	بد	bad	bad
بابا	bābā	dad	خوب	xub	good
ماشین	māšīn	car	بلند	boland	long
مو	mu	hair	بزرگ	bozorg	large
لباس	lebās	clothes, dress	مشکی	meški	black
بو	bu	smell	بور	bur	blond(e)
خونه	xune	house	شیک	šik	chic

- | | | | |
|-----------------|---|-----------|--------------------|
| 1 Bad film | = | فیلم بد | film-e bad |
| 2 Good dad | = | بابای خوب | bābā-ye xub |
| 3 Black car | = | _____ | _____ |
| 4 Blond(e) hair | = | _____ | _____ |
| 5 Chic dress | = | _____ | _____ |
| 6 Good smell | = | _____ | _____ |
| 7 Long hair | = | _____ | _____ |
| 8 Large house | = | _____ | _____ |

Possessive endings

We can also show possession by using the following (unstressed) **possessive endings**. Here, they are used with the word سوپ **sup** 'soup'.

سوپم	supam	my soup
سوپت	supet	your soup (<i>inf</i>)
سوپش	supesh	his/her/its soup
سوپمون	supemun	our soup
سوپتون	supetun	your soup (<i>f</i>)
سوپشون	supeshun	their soup

In literary Persian, some of the above are written and pronounced slightly differently:

سوپت	supat	your soup (<i>inf</i>)
سوپش	supaš	his/her/its soup
سویمان	supemān	our soup
سوپتان	supetān	your soup (<i>f</i>)
سویشان	supešān	their soup

The pattern **هالتون چطوره؟** **hāletun ceto(u)re?** 'how're you?' in Dialogue 2 above literally means 'How's your health?' The word for 'health' is **حال** **hāl**.



Exercise 6

Repeat Exercise 4 using appropriate possessive endings. Follow the example.

1 My car	ماشینم	māšīnam
2 My telephone	_____	_____
3 His/her name	_____	_____
4 Our flat/apartment	_____	_____
5 Their computer	_____	_____

How to say 'mine', 'yours', and so on

Ezāfe is also used to produce **possessive pronouns**. For example:

مال	māl	property
مال من	māl-e man	mine (<i>lit</i> property of me)
مال شما	māl-e šomā	yours (<i>lit</i> property of you)
مال کی	māl-e ki	whose (<i>lit</i> property of whom)

Demonstratives

How to say 'this'/'these'; 'that'/'those'

این	in	this	اینها	inhā	these
اون	un	that	اونها	unhā	those

Examples:

این چیه؟	In cie?	What's this?
اون تلفنه.	un telephone.	That's/it's (a) telephone.
این تلفن مال کیه؟	In telefon māl-e kie?	Whose telephone is this?
<i>(lit Whose property is this telephone?)</i>		
اون تلفن مال منه.	un telefon māl-e mane.	That telephone is mine.

Note how we say 'these/those telephones' in Persian:

این / اون تلفن ها	In/un telefonhā	these/those telephones
<i>(lit this/those telephones)</i>		

(For plural markers, see pp. 33ff.)

How to say 'so/nor am I', 'so/nor do I', 'so/nor have I', and so on

For all the above, and other similar ones, Persian uses:

من هم همین طور	man (h)am hamin-to(u)r	Same here (<i>lit</i> I also in the same way)
----------------	------------------------	--

Note: The only part that changes is the subject:

ما هم همین طور	mā ham hamin-to(u)r	So are we, etc.
علی هم همین طور	ali ham hamin-to(u)r	So is Ali, etc.

Exercise 7

Respond to the statements in Persian. Follow the example.

I'm hungry.

1 So am I.

2 So are we.

3 So is Peter.

من هم همین طور.

man ham hamin-to(u)r.



I live in London.

4 So do I. _____

5 So does s/he. _____

I've seen *Titanic*.

6 So have I. _____

I didn't sleep well last night.

7 Nor did we. _____

I won't come to this restaurant again!

8 Nor will I. _____



Exercise 8

Complete these questions with the help of the English translations.

1 چیه _____ **cie?** What's your name? (f)

Example: اسمتون چیه؟ **esmetun cie?** What's your name? (f)

2 چیه _____ **cie?** What's his/her address?

3 چیه _____ **cie?** What's their nationality?

4 چیه _____ **cie?** What's your date of birth? (f)

5 چنده؟ _____ **cande?** What's your phone number? (inf)



Exercise 9

Can you say these in Persian?

1 How's your mother? She's fine, thanks.

2 What's your job? I'm a doctor.

3 Your flat is pretty/nice. Thank you.

4 Who's this? That's my brother.

5 What's that? It's my lunch.

6 Where's your car? It's here. Where's yours?

7 Whose car is this? It's mine.

Comprehension (CD1; 22)



This morning, B, a Londoner, received a phone call from an Iranian colleague, Ahmad Kazemi (A).

- A: سلام. احمد کاظمی هستم.
 B: سلام، حالتون چطوره؟
 A: خوبم، مرسی. حال شما چطوره؟
 B: بد نیستم، مرسی. کجایید؟
 A: لندن.
 B: کدوم هتل؟
 A: هتل تهران.
 B: تنهایی؟
 A: نه، پدر، مادر، خواهر و برادرم هم این جا هستند.
 B: هتلتون کجاست؟
 A: خیابان ریجنت. نزدیک میدان آکسفورد.
 B: هتل چطوره؟
 A: بد نیست. کوچکه اما قشنگه.

- A: salām. ahmad-e kāzemi hastam.
 B: salām, hāletun ceto(u)re?
 A: xubam, mersi. hāl-e šomā ceto(u)re?
 B: bad nistam, mersi. kojāyid?
 A: landan.
 B: kodum hotel?
 A: hotel(-e) tehrān.
 B: tanhāyid?
 A: na, pedar, mādar, xāhar va barādaram ham injā hastand.
 B: hoteletun kojāst?
 A: xiābān-e rijent. nazdik-e meidān-e āksford.
 B: hotel ceto(u)re?
 A: bad nist. kuceke ammā qašange.

- 1 From which city is A phoning?
- 2 Who is he with?
- 3 Where is he staying?
- 4 What do we know about the location/landmarks?
- 5 How does he feel about the accommodation?

Unit Three

كجایی هستید؟ **kojāyi hastid?**

Where are you from?



In this unit we will look at how to:

- seek and give personal details: gender, nationality, marital status, place of birth, hobbies, occupation, place of work
- introduce B to C
- pay, and respond to, compliments
- talk about age
- use numbers



Dialogue 1

**Party game: Who am I? (CD1; 23)**

At an Iranian party held in London, each guest is given the picture of a well-known figure. The winner will be the first person to identify another guest by merely asking questions.

- A: شما زن هستید؟
 B: نه.
 A: ملیتتون چیه؟
 B: بریتانیایی هستم.
 A: شما متأهلید؟
 B: بله.
 A: خانمتون کجایی هستند؟
 B: اون هم بریتانیاییه.
 A: محل تولدتون کجاست؟
 B: لندن.
 A: سرگرمی هاتون چیه؟
 B: موسیقی، ورزش، مطالعه.
 A: کارتتون چیه؟
 B: کارمند هستم.
 A: محل کارتتون کجاست؟
 B: لندن، خیابان داوینگ، پلاک ۱۰
 A: شما نخست وزیر هستید؟
 B: بله، متشکرم.

- A: *šomā zan hastid?*
 B: *na.*
 A: *melliyaṭetun cie?*
 B: *beritāniāyi hastam.*
 A: *šomā mota`ahhelid?*
 B: *bale.*
 A: *xānometun kojāyi hastand?*
 B: *un (h)am beritāniāyie.*

- A: mahall-e tavalloDETUN kojāST?
B: landan.
A: sargarmihātun cie?
B: musiqi, varzeš, motāle`e.
A: kāretun cie?
B: kārmand hastam.
A: mahall-e kāretun kojāST?
B: landan, xiābān-e dāwning, pelāk-e dah.
A: šomā noxost-vazir hastid?
B: bale, mot(a)šakkeram.

- A: *Are you a woman?*
B: *No.*
A: *What's your nationality?*
B: *I'm British.*
A: *Are you married?*
B: *Yes.*
A: *Where does your wife come from?*
B: *She too is British.*
A: *Where's your place of birth?*
B: *London.*
A: *What are your hobbies?*
B: *Music, sport, reading.*
A: *What's your job?*
B: *I'm a (civil) servant.*
A: *Where's your place of work?*
B: *London, Downing Street, No. 10.*
A: *Are you the Prime Minister?*
B: *Yes, thank you.*
-

Vocabulary



زن	zan	woman
نه	na	no
ملىت	melliyat	nationality
چى	ci	what
چيه	cie	what's
بريتانيايى	beritāniāyi	British
متاهل	mota`ahhel	married
بله	bale	yes
خانم	xānom	wife, madam
كجا	kojā	where
كجايى	kojāyi	where from
هم	ham	too, also
محل	mahell	place
تولد	tavallod	birth
كجاست	kojāst	where's
لندن	landan	London
سرگرمى	sargarmi	hobby
سرگرمى ها	sargarmihā	hobbies
موسيقى	musiqi	music
ورزش	varzeš	sport
مطالعه	motāle`e	reading
كار	kār	job, work
كارمند	kārmend	(civil) servant
خيابان	xiābān	street
خيابان داوېنىنگ	xiābān-e dāwning	Downing Street
پلاك	pelāk	(house) number
نخست وزير	noxost-vazir	Prime Minister
متشكر	mot(a)šakker	thankful, grateful



Language and culture notes

How to describe nationality

Here is the formula:

Place name + سی i	→ Native of that place
ایران irān Iran	→ ایرانی irāni Iranian
انگلیس engelis England	→ انگلیسی engelisi English
اسکاتلند eskātland Scotland	→ اسکاتلندی eskātlandi Scottish
پاکستان pākestān Pakistan	→ پاکستانی pākestāni Pakistani
ژاپن gāpon Japan	→ ژاپنی gāponi Japanese

When a name ends in a vowel, the ending یی **-yi** is used:

بریتانیا beritāniā Britain	→ بریتانیایی beritāniāyi British
آمریکا āmrikā America	→ آمریکایی āmrikāyi American
کانادا kānādā Canada	→ کانادایی kānādāyi Canadian
استرالیا osterāliā Australia	→ استرالیایی osterāliāyi Australian

If a place name already ends in سی i, the following forms may be used:

لیبی **libi** Libya →

- 1 لیبیایی **libiāyi** Libyan (person)
- 2 اهل لیبی **ahl-e libi** a native of Libya
- 3 ساخت لیبی **sāxt-e libi** made in Libya

Word stress is shifted over to the suffix in all the above cases.



Exercise 1

Fill in the right column. Follow the example.

Place name	Native
1 تهران tehrān Tehran	تهرانی tehrāni From Tehran
2 لندن landan London	_____ Londoner
3 پاریس pāris Paris	_____ Parisian
4 مشهد mashhad Mashhad	_____ From Mashhad
5 اصفهان esfahān Esfahan	_____ From Esfahan
6 ایتالیا itāliā Italy	_____ Italian

Exercise 2



You have met a Persian speaker at a social gathering. Find out:

- 1 If he/she is Iranian.
- 2 If he/she is married.
- 3 Where he/she was born.
- 4 Where he/she works.
- 5 Where his wife/her husband comes from.
- 6 What his/her hobbies are.

Plural of nouns

The most common way to make a noun plural is by adding the suffix **ها -hā**:

تلفن **telefon** telephone → تلفن‌ها **telefonhā** telephones
سرگرمی **sargarmi** hobby → سرگرمی‌ها **sargarmihā** hobbies

With inanimate nouns, the verb can take a singular form:

اپراتورها خوبند	operātor(h)ā xuband.	The operators are good.
کامپیوترها خرابند	kāmpiuter(h)ā xarāband.	The computers are broken/down. OR:
کامپیوترها خرابه	kāmpiuter(h)ā xarābe.	The computers are (lit is) broken/down.

The **ه h** of the plural marker is often dropped in speech, hence the brackets in the English transcription above.

For animate nouns, the suffix **ان -ān** (or **یان -yān** after a vowel) is normally used in more formal contexts.

مرد mard	man	مردان mardān	men
دوست dust	friend	دوستان dustān	friends
آقا āqā	gentleman	آقایان āqāyān	gentlemen
دانشجو dānešju	student	دانشجویان dānešjuyān	students

Adjectives can also be pluralised in Persian:

خوب xub	good	خوبان xubān	the good (i.e. good people)
بزرگ bozorg	big; great	بزرگان bozorgān	great people

The plural endings introduced above carry the word stress.



Exercise 3

Write the plural of these nouns. Follow the example.

- | | | | | | | | |
|---|----------|------------------|-----------|---|-------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| 1 | آپارتمان | āpārtēmān | flat | → | آپارتمان‌ها | āpārtēmānhā | flats |
| 2 | ماشین | māšīn | car | → | _____ | _____ | cars |
| 3 | روزنامه | ruznāme | newspaper | → | _____ | _____ | newspapers |
| 4 | ایرانی | irāni | Iranian | → | _____ | _____ | Iranians |
| 5 | دوست | dust | friend | → | _____ | _____ | friends |
| 6 | خوش‌رو | xoš-ru | friendly | → | _____ | _____ | friendly people |



Exercise 4

Can you say these in Persian?

- 1 Where are you from?
- 2 I'm from London/Manchester.
- 3 I'm Italian/German/Spanish/French.
- 4 My place of birth is London/Paris/New York.
- 5 My hobbies are music and reading.
- 6 My watch is made in Japan.



Dialogue 2

Introducing **B to C** (CD1; 25)

Mr Ahmadi (A) has invited his colleague, Mr Morris (B), for dinner.
A introduces Mr Morris to his wife, Shahin (C).

- A: آقای موریس همکارم (هستند)، و ایشون خانمم هستند.
C: خوشوقتم.
B: من هم همین طور. آپارتمان قشنگی دارید.
C: متشکرم. لطف دارید.

- A: āqā-ye moris hamkāram (hastand), va išun xānomam hastand.
C: xošvaqtam.
B: man (h)am hamin-to(u)r. āpārtemān-e qašangi dārid.
C: mot(a)šakkeram. lotf dārid.

- A: *Mr Morris (is) my colleague, and this (lit she) is my wife.*
C: *I'm pleased (to meet you).*
B: *So am I. You have a nice flat.*
C: *Thank you. That's very kind of you (lit You have kindness).*

Vocabulary



آقای	āqā-ye	Mr
همکار	hamkār	colleague
ایشون	išun	he, she (pol)
خانم	xānom	wife
خوشوقت	xošvaqt	pleased
آپارتمان	āpārtemān	apartment, flat
قشنگ	qašang	nice, pretty
دارید	dārid	you have
داشتن (دار)	dāštan (dār)	to have
متشکر	mot(a)šakker	grateful
لطف	lotf	kindness



Language and culture notes

The verb 'to have'

All Persian verbs (infinitives) end with these two sounds **-an**, e.g. بودن **budan** 'to be', داشتن **dāštan** 'to have'. Persian verbs have two stems (or roots): *present stem* and *past stem*, used for present and past tenses, respectively. The past stem is regularly obtainable from the infinitive by omitting the last two sounds **-an**. The present stem of most verbs is irregular. Therefore, with every new verb introduced, its present stem is placed in round brackets after it. (**Note:** Where applicable, the literary form of a present stem will appear in square brackets.)

بودن (هست) **budan (hast)** to be (For this verb, see p. 6.)
 داشتن (دار) **dāštan (dār)** to have

To say 'I have', 'you have', etc., in Persian, follow this formula:

Present stem + Personal ending

(For personal endings, see pp. 13ff.)

من ماشین دارم.	man māšīn dāram.	I have (a) car.
تو ماشین داری.	to māšīn dāri.	You (<i>inf</i>) have (a) car.
او ماشین داره.	u māšīn dāre.	He/she (<i>inf</i>) has (a) car.
ما ماشین داریم.	mā māšīn dārim.	We have (a) car.
شما ماشین دارید.	šomā māšīn dārid.	You have (a) car.
اون‌ها ماشین دارند.	unhā māšīn dārand.	They have (a) car.

To make this verb negative, add نَ **na-** to the beginning:

من ماشین ندارم.	man māšīn nadāram.	I don't have (a) car.
-----------------	---------------------------	-----------------------

Note: The stress is shifted over to نَ **na-**.

As will be seen below, we do not need the Persian equivalent of 'a' (indefinite article) for this pattern. Hence, the word 'a' appears in brackets in the English translations.

The verb داشتن **dāštan** 'to have' is used to talk about age, for example:

من ۲۰ سال دارم. **man bist sāl dāram.**
 I am 20 years old. (*lit* I have twenty year(s).)

شما چند سال دارید؟ **šomā cand sāi dārid?**
How old are you? (lit How many year(s) do you have?)

Note: Nouns following numbers come in the singular.

Exercise 5

Match a letter with a number to produce the equivalents of 'I have', 'you have', etc. Follow the example.



- | | | | | | | |
|---|--------|------|-------|-----|-------|--------|
| 1 | من | man | [c] | (a) | داری | dāri |
| 2 | تو | to | [] | (b) | داریم | dārim |
| 3 | او | u | [] | (c) | دارم | dāram |
| 4 | ما | mā | [] | (d) | دارید | dārid |
| 5 | شما | šomā | [] | (e) | دارند | dārand |
| 6 | اون‌ها | unhā | [] | (f) | داره | dāre |

Exercise 6

Make these sentences negative, by following the example.



- man telefon dāram. I have (a) telephone.
man telefon nadāram. I don't have (a) telephone.
- to belit dāri. You have (a) ticket.
- u bist o panj sāi dāre. He/she is 25 years old.
- mā otāq-e xālī dārim. We have vacant rooms.
- šomā vaqt dārid. You have time.
- unhā pul dārand. They have money.

Cardinal Numbers (CD1; 28)



You will note that from 21 onwards we add و o 'and' between numbers

0	۰	صفر	sefr
1	۱	یک	yek
2	۲	دو	do
3	۳	سه	se
4	۴	چهار	cahār (col cār)
5	۵	پنج	panj
6	۶	شش	šeš (col šîš)

7	۷	هفت	haft
8	۸	هشت	hašt
9	۹	نه	noh
10	۱۰	ده	dah
11	۱۱	یازده	yāzdah
12	۱۲	دوازده	davāzdah
13	۱۳	سیزده	sizdah
14	۱۴	چهارده	cahārdah (col cārdah)
15	۱۵	پانزده	pānzdah (col punzdah)
16	۱۶	شانزده	šānzdah (col šunzdah)
17	۱۷	هفده	hefdah (col hivdah)
18	۱۸	هجده	hejdah (col hiǧdah)
19	۱۹	نوزده	nuzdah
20	۲۰	بیست	bist
21	۲۱	بیست و یک	bist o yek
22	۲۲	بیست و دو	bist o do
29	۲۹	بیست و نه	bist o noh
30	۳۰	سی	si
31	۳۱	سی و یک	si o yek
40	۴۰	چهل	cehel (col cel)
50	۵۰	پنجاه	panjāh
60	۶۰	شصت	šast
70	۷۰	هفتاد	haftād
80	۸۰	هشتاد	haštād
90	۹۰	نود	navad
100	۱۰۰	صد	sad
101	۱۰۱	صد و یک	sad o yek
110	۱۱۰	صد و ده	sad o dah
199	۱۹۹	صد و نود و نه	sad o navad o noh
200	۲۰۰	دویست	devist (col divist)
300	۳۰۰	سیصد	sisad
400	۴۰۰	چهارصد	cahārsad (col cārsad)
500	۵۰۰	پانصد	pānsad (col punsad)
600	۶۰۰	ششصد	šešsad
700	۷۰۰	هفتصد	haftsad (col hafsad)
800	۸۰۰	هشتصد	haštsad (col hašsad)
900	۹۰۰	نهصد	nohsad
1,000	۱۰۰۰	هزار	hezār
1,001	۱۰۰۱	هزار و یک	hezār o yek

1,985	۱۹۸۵	هزار و نهصد و هشتاد و پنج	hezār o nohsad o haštād o panj
2,769	۲۷۶۹	دو هزار و هفتصد و شصت و نه	do hezār o haftsad o šast o noh
10,524	۱۰۵۲۴	ده هزار و پانصد و بیست و چهار	dah hezār o pānsad o bist o cahār
100,000	۱۰۰۰۰۰	صد هزار	sad hezār
1,000,000	۱۰۰۰۰۰۰	یک میلیون	yek milyun
1,365,497	۱۳۶۵۴۹۷	یک میلیون و سیصد و شصت و پنج هزار و چهارصد و نود و هفت	yek milyun o sisad o šast o panj hezār o cahārsad o navad o haft

After a number or چند تا **cand tā** 'how many', the noun comes in the singular.

چند تا ماشین؟	cand tā māšīn?	How many cars (<i>lit car</i>)?
پنج ماشین	panj māšīn	five cars (<i>lit car</i>)

Indefinite and definite articles

Generally, Persian does not distinguish between 'a car' and 'the car', as in:

ماشین خرابه.	māšīn xarābe.	The car is broken.
ماشین دارید؟	māšīn dārid?	Do you have a car?

Here is another example:

آپارتمان قشنگه.	āpārtemān qašange.	The flat is nice.
آپارتمان دارید؟	āpārtemān dārid?	Do you have a flat?

To indicate the indefinite, we use **ye(k)** 'one' before the noun:

یک آپارتمان در تهران داره و یک خونه در مشهد.
ye(k) āpārtemān dar tehrān dāre va ye(k) xune dar mašhad.
 He has a flat in Tehran and a house in Mashad.

A less colloquial form uses the unstressed suffix **-i** (or **-yi** if the noun ends in a vowel):

آپارتمانی	āpārtēmāni	a flat, an apartment
بابا	bābā	dad
بابایی	bābāyi	a dad
دانشجو	dānešju	student
دانشجویی	dānešjuyi	a student

When the noun is qualified by an adjective, the ending goes after the adjective:

آپارتمان قشنگی دارید. **āpārtēmān-e qašangi dārid.**
You have a nice flat.



Exercise 7

Can you say these in Persian?

- 1 You have a nice car/garden/house!
- 2 That's very kind of you (to say so).
- 3 I'm sorry, I don't have time.
- 4 How old is he? He's 30 years old.
- 5 This is my friend Peter. He's English. This is my mother.
- 6 Pleased to meet you. So am I.
- 7 How many Iranian friends do you have?
- 8 I have five Iranian friends.



Comprehension (CD1; 30)

You have received a recorded message from your Iranian Internet friend.

سلام. من پرویز علیزاده هستم. من متأهل هستم. خانمم معلم انگلیسیه. ما مسلمان هستیم. محلّ تولّد من مشهده. من کارمند هستم. ۲۵ سال دارم. خانمم ۳۱ سال داره. محلّ تولّدش آمریکاست اما ملیتش ایرانیه. سرگرمی من سینما و سرگرمی خانمم نقاشیه. ما یک آپارتمان کوچک ولی قشنگ در تهران داریم.

salām. man parviz-e alizāde hastam. man mota`ahhel hastam. xānomam mo`allem-e engelisie. mā mosalmān hastim. mahall-e tavallod-e man mašhade. man kārmand hastam. si o panj sāl dāram. xānomam si o yek sāl dāre. mahall-e tavallodeš āmrikāst ammā melliyateš irānie. sargarmi-e man sinemā va sargarmi-e xānomam naqqāšie. mā yek āpārtemān-e kucek vali qašang dar tehrān dārim.

- 1 What is your friend's **full name**?
- 2 What does he do **for a living**?
- 3 Where was he born?
- 4 What is his wife's **job**?
- 5 Where was she born?
- 6 What is her **nationality**?
- 7 What **religion** do they follow?
- 8 What do we know about **their age**?
- 9 What do they do **in their spare time**?
- 10 What type of home do **they have**, and in which town?
- 11 Identify a word that shows **he is happy** with his home.

Unit Four

آخر هفته چه کار کردید؟

āxare-hafte ce-kār kardid?

What did you do at the weekend?



In this unit we will look at how to:

- talk about past events
- ask, and respond to, questions about last weekend
- talk about a film you saw, a birthday party you attended
- make comments about food
- talk about what happened on each day of the week
- make longer sentences in Persian



Pol-e Khajoo, Esfahan. Photograph by Donal O'Leary.

Dialogue 1



Wish you were there! (CD1; 31)



Simin (S) and her colleague Parviz (P) are talking about what they did last weekend.

- S: آخر هفته خوش گذشت؟
 P: بله، جاتون خالی بود!
 S: خب، چه کار کردید؟ کجا رفتید؟
 P: شب جمعه رفتیم سینما. یک فیلم ایرانی دیدیم.
 S: خوب بود؟
 P: کمدی بود. خیلی خندیدیم. شما چه کار کردید؟
 S: پنجشنبه بعد از ظهر، مهمون داشتیم. جشن تولد پسرم بود.
 P: بهبه! تولدش مبارک!
 S: ممنون.
 P: غذا چطور بود؟
 S: عالی! دست پخت شوهرم بود!
 P: البته، بدون شک!

S: āxar-e hafte xoš gozašt?

P: bale, jātun xāli bud!

S: xob, ce-kār kardid? kojā raftid?

P: šab-e jom`e raftim sinemā. ye(k) film-e irāni didim.

S: xub bud?

P: komedi bud. xeili xandidim. šomā ce-kār kardid?

S: panj-šanbe ba`d-az-zohr, mehmun dāštīm. jašn-e tavallod-e pesaram bud.

P: bah-bah! tavallodeš mobārak!

S: mamnun.

P: qazā cetour bud?

S: āli! dast-poxt-e šouharam bud!

P: albatte, bedun-e šak!

S: *Did you have a good weekend? (lit Did the weekend pass pleasantly?)*

- P: Yes, you should have been there! (lit Your place was vacant!)
- S: So, what did you do? Where did you go?
- P: On Thursday evening (lit eve of Friday) we went to the cinema. We saw an Iranian film.
- S: Was it good?
- P: It was a comedy. We laughed a lot. What did you do?
- S: On Thursday afternoon, we had (some) guests. It was my son's birthday celebration/party.
- P: Wow! Happy Birthday to him! (lit May his birth be blessed.)
- S: Thanks.
- P: How was the food?
- S: Excellent! It was my husband's cooking/cuisine!
- P: Of course, without a doubt!

**A
CB**
Vocabulary

آخر	āxar	end
هفته	hafte	week
آخر هفته	āxar-e hafte	weekend
خوش	xoš	pleasant(ly)
گذشتن (گذر)	gozaştan (gozar)	to pass
بله	bale	yes
جا	jā	place
جاتون	jātun	your place
خالی	xāli	vacant
بودن	budan	to be
خب	xob	so
چه کار	ce-kār	what activity
کردن	kardan	to do
کجا	kojā	where
رفتن	raftan	to go
شب	šab	night, eve
جمعه	jom`e	Friday
سینما	sinemā	cinema
یک	yek	one, a, an

فیلم	film	film
ایرانی	irāni	Iranian
دیدن	didan	to see
خوب	xub	good
کمدی	komedi	comedy
خیلی	xeili	a lot, very
خندیدن	xandidan	to laugh
پنجشنبه	panj-šanbe	Thursday
بعد از ظهر	ba`d-az-zohr	afternoon
مهمون	mehmun	guest
جشن	jašn	celebration
تولد	tavallod	birth(day)
پسر	pesar	son, boy
به به!	bah-bah!	Wow!
مبارک	mobārak	blessed
ممنون	mamnun	(I'm) grateful, thank you
غذا	qazā	food
چطور	cetour	how
عالی	āli	excellent
دست پخت	dast-poxt	cooking, cuisine
شوهر	šouhar	husband
البته	albatte	of course
بدون	bedun-e	without
شک	šak	doubt

Language and culture notes



Past simple tense

How to say: 'I went'

Here is the formula:

Past stem of verb + personal ending (see pp. 13ff)

All Persian verbs (infinitives) end with the sounds **-an**. To get the past stem of a verb, we omit these two sounds. The verb 'to go' is رفتن **raftan**. Its past stem is رفت **raft**.

من رفتم	man raftam	I went
تو رفتی	to rafti	You (<i>inf</i>) went
او رفت*	u raft	He/she went
ما رفتیم	mā raftim	We went
شما رفتید	šomā raftid	You went
اون‌ها رفتند	un(h)ā raftand	They went

*In this tense, no personal ending is used for the third-person singular (i.e. he, she, it, etc.)

For the negative, we add the (stressed) prefix **نَ na-**:

من نرفتم	man naraftam	I didn't go
تو نرفتی	to narafti	You didn't go
او نرفت	u naraft	He/she didn't go

If the verb begins with a vowel, the negative prefix is slightly modified as: **نای nay-**:

او آمد	umad	He/she came
نیامد	nayumad	He/she didn't come



Days of the week (CD1; 34)

شنبه	šanbe	Saturday (first day of the week)
یکشنبه	yek-šanbe	Sunday
دوشنبه	do-šanbe	Monday
سه‌شنبه	se-šanbe	Tuesday
چهارشنبه	c(ah)ār-šanbe	Wednesday
پنجشنبه	panj-šanbe	Thursday
جمعه	jom`e	Friday (weekend)

Examples:

روز **ruz** day

(a) جمعه (روز) **(ruz-e) jom`e** (on) Friday (one-off event: past or future)

(b) جمعه‌ها **jom`ehā** (on) Fridays (regular events)

- (c) روزهای جمعه **ruzhā-ye jom`e** on Fridays (*lit* (on the) days of Friday)
- (d) شب جمعه **šab-e jom`e** Thursday evening/night (*lit* eve of Friday) (one-off event: past or future)
- (e) شبهای جمعه **šabhā-ye jom`e** Thursday evenings/nights (*lit* eves of Friday) (regular events)

Note: (d) and (e) are the forms commonly used in Iran. Alternatively, you can use a direct translation of the forms used in English:

پنجشنبه شب(ها) **panj-šanbe šab(hā)** Thursday evening(s)

Exercise 1

Tell a Persian speaker what happened on different days of the week. Follow the example.



- 1 On Saturday, Ahmad came to London.

شنبه، احمد به لندن اومد. **šanbe, ahmad be landan umad.**

- 2 On Sunday, we went to the supermarket.
- 3 On Monday, we went to an Iranian restaurant.
- 4 On Tuesday, I went to a birthday party. Ahmad didn't come.
- 5 On Wednesday, we went to a swimming pool.
- 6 On Thursday, Ahmad went to Iran.
- 7 On Friday, my parents came to my home.

Reduction

In casual speech, the sentence **man be sinemā raftam** 'I went to the cinema' is often reduced to:

رفتَم سینما. **raftam sinemā.** I went to the cinema.

In this reduction, three things happen:

- (a) The subject is omitted because the personal ending attached to the verb indicates the subject.
- (b) The preposition **به** 'to' is omitted.
- (c) The verb **رفتَم** 'I went' is placed before **سینما** **sinemā** 'cinema'.

(b) and (c) normally occur when verbs of motion are involved (such as 'to go', 'to come', 'to take', 'to bring'). Here is an example with the verb **اومدن** **umadan** 'to come':

Ahmad came here yesterday.

Full form: دیروز، احمد به اینجا
اومد. **diruz, ahmad be injā umad.**

Reduced form: دیروز، احمد اومد اینجا. **diruz, ahmad umad injā.**



Exercise 2

Repeat Exercise 1, this time using the reduced form. Example:

- 1 On Saturday, Ahmad came to London.
شنبه، احمد اومد لندن. **šanbe, ahmad umad landan.**

How to say 'Did you have a good weekend?'

We literally say: 'Did the weekend pass pleasantly?'

The verb used is گذشتن **gozaştan** to pass.

Here is the sentence:

آخر هفته خوش گذشت؟ **āxar-e hafte xoş gozaşt?**

This is a very versatile pattern. It can be used to ask the following questions simply by replacing the underlined bits:

ایران خوش گذشت؟ **irān xoş gozaşt?**

Did you have a good time in Iran? (Did you enjoy your visit to Iran?)

تعطیلات خوش گذشت؟ **ta`tilāt xoş gozaşt?**

Did you enjoy [your] holiday?

مهمونی خوش گذشت؟ **mehmuni xoş gozaşt?**

Did you enjoy the party?

A common reply to the above question is:

بله، جاتون خالی (بود). **bale, jātun xāli (bud).**

(lit) Yes, your place (was) vacant. (Wish you were there.

OR: You should have been there. OR: You were missed!)

The verb used is: بودن **budan** to be. However, this is often omitted – hence بود **bud** 'was' is in brackets.

Note: This is a polite, almost socially expected, response. It is not as dramatic as suggested by the literal translations in English! It is used when we talk about a pleasant experience. It is an Iranian way of sharing that pleasant experience with others, albeit verbally. It does not cost much; but it does a lot in creating rapport.

How to say 'What did you do?'

We use the word کار **kār** which has various meanings: work, job, activity. We combine چه **ce** 'what' and کار **kār** 'activity' to produce چه کار **ce-kār** 'what activity' or simply 'what' in English. The verb used is: کردن **kardan** 'to do'. Here is the result:

چه کار کردید؟ **ce-kār kardid?** What did you do?

How to say 'I went to London by taxi yesterday.'

Here is the formula:

Subject + Time + Manner + Place + Verb

- (a) من رفتم. **man raftam.** I went.
 (b) من به لندن رفتم. **man be landan raftam.** I went to London.
 (c) من دیروز به لندن رفتم. **man diruz be landan raftam.** I went to London yesterday.
 (d) من دیروز با تاکسی به لندن رفتم. **man diruz bā tāksi be landan raftam.** I went to London by taxi yesterday.

Note: We use the same pattern to say:

من دیروز با احمد به لندن رفتم.

man diruz bā ahmad be landan raftam.

I went to London with Ahmad yesterday. (بā **bā** = by, with)

من امروز دیر به کلاس اومدم.

man emruz dir be kelās umadam.

I came to the class late today. OR: I was late. (دیر **dir** = late)

Exercise 3

Put these jumbled sentences in order, and then translate them into English. The first one has been done for you.

لندن - رفتیم - مترو - به - دیروز - ما - با 1
landan - raftim - metro - be - diruz - mā - bā

ما دیروز با مترو به لندن رفتیم.

mā diruz bā metro be landan raftim.

We went to London by metro yesterday.



- 2 کلاس - به - اومدید - امروز - شما - دیر
kelās - be - umadid - emruz - šomā - dir
- 3 هواپیما - ایران - اون‌ها - سه‌شنبه - به - رفتند - روز - با
havāpeimā - irān - unhā - se-šanbe - be - raftand - ruz-e - bā
- 4 با - رفتم - به - من - شنبه - خانمم - روز - سوپرمارکت
bā - raftam - be - man - šanbe - xānomam - ruz-e - supermārkēt
- 5 ما - شوهرش - او - به - اومد - با - یکشنبه - منزل - روز
mā - šouhareš - u - be - umad - bā - yek-šanbe - manzel-e - ruz-e

How to say 'I saw a film in London yesterday.'

Here is the formula:

Subject + Time + Place + Object + Verb

من دیدم.	man didam.	I saw.
من یک فیلم دیدم.	man yek film didam.	I saw a film.
من دیروز یک فیلم دیدم.	man diruz yek film didam.	I saw a film yesterday.

من دیروز در لندن یک فیلم دیدم.
man diruz dar landan yek film didam.
 I saw a film in London yesterday.



Exercise 4

Can you say these in Persian? The first one has been done for you.

- 1 I ate/had lunch in a restaurant yesterday.
 من دیروز در رستوران ناهار خوردم.
man diruz dar resturān nāhār xordam.
- 2 I read a book in the library yesterday.
- 3 I saw a film in the cinema last night.
- 4 I ate a sandwich at work this morning.
- 5 I cooked an Iranian dish at home today.
- 6 I saw a good programme on TV this afternoon.
- 7 What did you do at the weekend?
- 8 Nothing! I slept all day! I was tired.

- 9 I went to a birthday party on Friday.
10 We had a good time – wish you were there!

Dialogue 2



Nothing to write home about! (CD1; 36)



Two cousins are talking about last weekend. Saman (S) male;
Marjan (M) female.

- S: آخر هفته خوش گذشت؟
M: تعریفی نداشت!
S: چطور مگه؟
M: کار خاصی نکردم. تو خونه موندم و تلویزیون تماشا کردم. آخر هفته‌ی تو چطور بود؟
S: بد نبود. برای شام از سوپرمارکت یک ساندویچ و یک پیتزا خریدم. من ساندویچو خوردم؛ دوستم پیتزارو خورد. بعد تا صبح شطرنج بازی کردیم!
M: بردی یا باختی؟
S: مساوی شدیم!

S: āxar-e hafte xoš gozašt?

M: ta'rifi nadāšt!

S: cetour mage?

M: kār-e xāssi nakardam. tu xune mundam o televizion tamāšā kardam. āxar-e hafte-ye to cetour bud?

S: bad nabud. barāye šām az supermārket ye(k) sāndevic o ye(k) pitzā xaridam. man sāndevic-o xordam; dustam pitzā-ro xord. ba'd tā sobh šatranj bāzi kardim!

M: bordi yā bāxti?

S: mosāvi šodim!

S: *Did you have a good weekend?*

M: *Nothing to write home about!*

S: *But why? (How come?)*

M: *I didn't do anything special. I stayed at home and watched TV. How was your weekend?*

S: *It wasn't bad. For dinner I bought a sandwich and a pizza from the supermarket. I ate the sandwich; my friend ate the pizza. Then we played chess until the (following) morning!*

M: *Did you win or lose?*

S: *We drew!*



Vocabulary

تعریف	ta`rif	compliment
تعریفی	ta`rifi	a compliment
داشتن	dāštan	to have
نداشت	nadāšt	it did not have
تعریفی نداشت	ta`rifi nadāšt	nothing to write home about (<i>lit</i> it didn't have any compliment)
چطور	cetour	how
مگه	mage	but
چطور مگه؟	cetour mage?	But why? How come? (<i>lit</i> How but?)
هیچ	hic	none; nil
کار	kār	work, job, activity
خاص	xāss	special, specific
کردن	kardan	to do
نکردم	nakardam	I didn't do
تو	tu	in
خونه	xune	house, home
موندن	mundan	to stay
تلویزیون	televizion	television
تماشا	tamāšā	watching
تماشا کردن	tamāšā kardan	to watch (<i>lit</i> to do watching)
بودن	budan	to be
بود	bud	(it) was
نبود	nabud	(it) wasn't
برای	barāye	for
شام	šām	dinner
از	az	from
سوپرمارکت	supermārkēt	supermarket
ساندویچ	sāndevic	sandwich

پیتزا	pitzā	pizza
خریدن	xaridan	to buy
خریدم	xaridam	I bought
خوردن	xordan	to eat
خوردم	xordam	I ate
دوست	dust	friend
دوستم	dustam	my friend
خورد	xord	(s/he) ate
بعد	ba`d	then, afterwards
تا	tā	until
صبح	sobh	morning
شطرنج	šatranj	chess
بازی کردن	bāzi kardan	to play
بردن	bordan	to win
بردی	bordi	you won
یا	yā	or
باختن	bāxtan	to lose
باختی	bāxti	you lost
مساوی	mosāvi	equal
شدن	šodan	to become
مساوی شدیم	mosāvi šodim	we drew (<i>lit</i> we became equal)

Language and culture notes



Compound verbs

One-word verbs, such as خوردن **xordan** 'to eat', دیدن **didan** 'to see' are called 'simple verbs'. The bulk of Persian verbs are of a compound nature. A compound verb normally consists of two (or more) words. Here is the formula:

noun/adjective/adverb/preposition + simple verb =
compound verb

Perhaps the largest number of compound verbs are produced with the help of these two verbs:

کردن	kardan	to do; to make
شدن	šodan	to become

Examples:

تلفن کردن	telefon kardan	to telephone; to make a telephone call
کار	kār	work
کار کردن	kār kardan	to work
باز	bāz	open
باز کردن	bāz kardan	to open (something); <i>lit</i> to make open
باز شدن	bāz šodan	(for something) to open; <i>lit</i> to become open
حاضر	hāzer	ready
حاضر کردن	hāzer kardan	to make ready
حاضر شدن	hāzer šodan	to get ready

Therefore, it is well worth learning their structural behaviour at an early stage, i.e. now!

Their past stem is کرد **kard** and شد **šod** respectively. Examples:

امروز کار کردم.	emruz kār kardam.	I worked today.
در باز شد.	dar bāz šod.	The door opened.

The compound verbs used in Dialogue 2 above are:

تماشا	tamāšā	watching
تماشا کردن	tamāšā kardan	to watch
بازی	bāzi	game; playing
بازی کردن	bāzi kardan	to play (a game)

Definite article for a direct object را (rā)

How to say 'I ate the sandwich.'

The word را **rā** plays an important role in Persian grammar. It shows that the word (or phrase) immediately before it, is the direct object of the sentence. Since this concept does not exist in English, let us familiarise ourselves with the idea using English examples first!

Direct or indirect object?

A direct object is one that is affected directly by the verb.

Example:

(a) I bought Peter a sandwich.

In the above sentence, the word 'sandwich' is the direct object because it was the sandwich that was bought, not Peter! ('Peter' is the indirect object: I bought a sandwich for Peter.)

When you refer to the same 'sandwich' again, you say 'the sandwich':

(b) He ate the sandwich.

Now the word 'sandwich' is a definite direct object. In Persian, such an object is normally followed by the word ل , رā . No ل , رā is needed for (a) because 'a sandwich' is indefinite.

One more condition: If there is a preposition before the object, no ل , رā is used after it:

He looked at the sandwich. (Preposition 'at')

I said to Peter/him/them . . . (Preposition 'to')

To sum up, when the object is 'definite/specific' and known to both the speaker and the listener, we normally use ل , رā after the object. Consider this pair:

(a) I ate lunch at 1 o'clock.

(b) I ate my lunch at 1 o'clock.

In a Persian translation of the above sentences, ل , رā is not used in (a) because the speaker is talking about 'lunch' in general; while it is used in (b) because he is referring specifically to 'his lunch'.

More examples:

In the Persian equivalents of the following sentences, we use ل , رā after the object (underlined):

He ate it.

I saw Peter.

I invited him/his brother/them.

She called me/us.

For ease of reference, the word ل , رā will be called the 'object marker'.



Exercise 5

Based on the above, which of the objects (underlined) in the following sentences would be followed by the object marker **l, rā** if they were translated into Persian? Tick the appropriate box [✓].

Note: This exercise is purely in English! It is intended to help us understand the concept.

	[Yes]	[No]
1 I saw <u>James</u> .	[✓]	[]
2 I bought him <u>a drink</u> .	[]	[]
3 I bought Susan <u>a sandwich and a cake</u> .	[]	[]
4 She ate <u>the sandwich</u> .	[]	[]
5 But she didn't eat <u>the cake</u> .	[]	[]
6 I looked at <u>her</u> .	[]	[]
7 I said to <u>her</u> . . .	[]	[]
8 I had/ate <u>dinner</u> at 8 o'clock.	[]	[]
9 I had/ate <u>my dinner</u> at 8 o'clock.	[]	[]
10 I didn't invite <u>them</u> .	[]	[]

The 'Golden Rules' for the use of the object marker:

l, rā is used after a word if all these conditions are met:

- 1 The word must be the object of the sentence.
- 2 It must be the direct object of the sentence.
- 3 It must be definite or specific (i.e. not general).
- 4 It must not be preceded by a preposition.

In casual speech, **l, rā** is reduced to **o, ro** after a vowel, and **o** after a consonant. In the English transcription, these will be shown as **-ro** and **-o** respectively.

Note: The colloquial pronunciation of **o, va** meaning 'and' is also **o**. To prevent confusion between this and **-o** (as the colloquial form of **l, rā**) a hyphen is placed before the object marker. Furthermore, in the Persian script, the object marker **o -o** is connected (or positioned close) to the object, while the **o o** meaning 'and' is preceded by a space. Examples:

دیروز احمدو دیدم. **diruz ahmad-o** I saw Ahmad yesterday.
didam.

دیروز احمد و پروینو دیدم.
diruz ahmad o parvin-o didam.
I saw Ahmad and Parvin yesterday.

You will also note that the direct object marker goes after the last object. Where the colloquial forms **و -o** and **رو -ro** are likely to cause confusion in the Persian script, the full form **را rā** will be used.

Now, let us consider the examples used in Dialogue 2 above. Saman says:

- (a) یک ساندویچ و یک پیتزا خریدم. **yek sāndevic o yek pitzā xaridam.**
I bought a sandwich and a pizza.
- (b) من ساندویچو خوردم. **man sāndevic-o xordam.** I ate the sandwich.
- (c) دوستم پیتزارو خورد. **dustam pitzā-ro xord.** My friend ate the pizza.

In (a) no object marker is used because the objects are indefinite: 'a sandwich' and 'a pizza'. In (b) and (c) the object marker is used because the objects are now definite: 'the sandwich' and 'the pizza'.

On condition 4 of the 'Golden Rules' mentioned above: There are a few verbs in Persian that can be used with or without a preposition.

نگاه کردن **negāh kardan** to look

- (a) به من نگاه کرد. **be man negāh kard.** S/he looked at me.
- (b) منو نگاه کرد. **man-o negāh kard.** S/he looked at me.

گوش کردن **guš kardan** to listen

- (c) به حرف من گوش نکرد. **be harf-e man guš nakard.** S/he didn't listen to my advice.
- (d) حرف منو گوش نکرد. **harf-e man-o guš nakard.** S/he didn't listen to my advice.

In (a) and (c) no object marker is used because the object is preceded by a preposition. In (b) and (d) the object marker is used because there is no preposition before the object in the Persian sentences.

Note: Unlike Persian, both English verbs need a preposition – except when you say 'She looked me in the eye!'

How to say 'He bought me a drink.'

We say the equivalent of 'He bought a drink for me.'

برای **barāye** for نوشیدنی **nušidani** drink

او برای من یک نوشیدنی خرید. **u barāye man yek nušidani xarid.**



Exercise 6

With the help of the English translations, put the object marker **را**, **rā** in the blanks where needed.

- 1 من امروز او _____ دیدم. **man emruz u _____ didam.**
I saw him/her today.
- 2 من آب _____ زیاد خوردم. **man āb _____ ziād xordam.**
I drank a lot of water.
- 3 من این آب _____ نخوردم چون گرم بود. **man in āb _____ naxordam con garm bud.**
I didn't drink this water because it was warm.
- 4 احمد برای من بستنی و کیک _____ خرید. **ahmad barāye man bastani o keik _____ xarid.**
Ahmad bought (some) ice-cream and cake for me.
- 5 من کیک _____ خوردم. **man keik _____ xordam.**
I ate the cake.
- 6 اما بستنی _____ نخوردم چون حالم خوب نبود. **ammā bastani _____ naxordam con hālam xub nabud.**
But I didn't eat the ice-cream because I was not feeling well.

Exercise 7

Repeat Exercise 5, but this time translate the sentences into Persian. For vocabulary, you may need to refer to the glossaries at the end of the book.



How to say 'I took Ahmad to London by taxi yesterday.'

A basic formula for this sentence pattern is:

Subject + Time + Object + Manner + Place + Verb

من دیروز احمد را با تاکسی به لندن بردم.
man diruz ahmad rā bā tāksi be landan bordam.

Exercise 8

Can you say these in Persian?



- 1 Did you have a good holiday?
- 2 Yes, wish you were there!
- 3 Nothing to write home about!
- 4 We didn't do anything special.
- 5 We stayed at home and watched the rain!
- 6 What was your weekend like?
- 7 I worked on Saturday.
- 8 On Sunday, I went to my friend's home.
- 9 We ate some Iranian food.
- 10 I cooked it!
- 11 We watched an Iranian film.
- 12 We played backgammon.
- 13 On Monday, my parents came to my house.
- 14 We had lunch together.
- 15 My father washed the dishes!

Comprehension (CD1; 38)



Simin is talking about Mahnaz. Listen to the recording and answer the questions in English.

شب یکشنبه رفتم جشن تولد دوستم مهناز. جاتون خالی خیلی خوش گذشت. منزلش زیاد دور نیست، اما با اتوبوس رفتم چون هوا سرد بود. پنجاه تا مهمون داشت! غذا عالی بود! دست پخت مادرش بود. شوهرش ظرف‌هارو شست. من چای درست کردم. چای‌رو با کیک خوردیم. بستنی هم خوردیم. بعد از شام، یک فیلم کمدی دیدیم. خیلی خندیدیم. بعد به موسیقی ایرانی گوش کردیم و رقصیدیم. بعد هدیه‌هارو به مهناز دادیم. خیلی خوش حال شد.

šab-e yek-šanbe raftam jašn-e tavallod-e dustam mahnāz. jātun xāli xeili xoš gozašt. manzeleš ziād dur nist, ammā bā otobus raftam con havā sard bud. panjāh tā mehmun dāšt! qazā āli bud! dast-poxt-e mādareš bud. šouhareš zarfhā-ro šost. man cāi dorost kardam. cāi-ro bā keik xordim. bastani ham xordim. ba`d-az šām, yek film-e komedi didim. xeili xandidim. ba`d be musiqi-e irāni guš kardim o raqsidim. ba`d hedyehā-ro be mahnāz dādim. xeili xoš-hāl šod.

- 1 Where did Simin go?
- 2 When did she go?
- 3 What was the occasion?
- 4 Who is Mahnaz?
- 5 How do we know Simin enjoyed the event?
- 6 How did Simin travel to the venue, and why?
- 7 Who else was at the venue?
- 8 What is Simin's opinion of the food?
- 9 Who was the cook?
- 10 What happened to the dishes?
- 11 How did Simin help?
- 12 What did they have for dessert?
- 13 Why did they laugh after dinner?
- 14 Why does she mention Iranian music?
- 15 Why was Mahnaz happy?

Unit Five

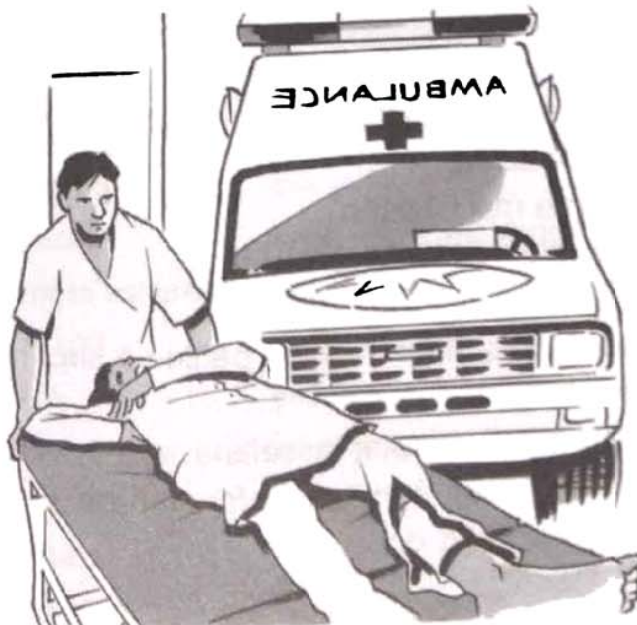
منزلتون کجاست؟

manzeletun kojāst?

Where's your home?

In this unit we will look at how to:

- seek and give your home address, and refer to landmarks
- ask about the availability of facilities
- express regret
- use ordinal numbers (first, second, etc.)
- ask and answer questions about family and relatives
- say how often you do things
- make comparisons
- express an opinion





Dialogue 1



Giving your details (CD1; 39)

Mrs Rezaee (R) is phoning for an ambulance for her husband, who has just fallen down the stairs. Here's an extract from her conversation with the hospital telephonist (T).

- T: اسم بیمار چیه؟
 R: حسن احمدی.
 T: آدرستون چیه؟
 R: تهران، خیابان مهر، پلاک ۸، طبقه‌ی ششم، آپارتمان ۱۲.
 T: کجای خیابون مهر هستید؟
 R: سینما حافظ می‌دونید کجاست؟
 T: بله.
 R: درست روبه‌روی سینما هستیم، په‌لوی سوپرمارکت.
 T: آسانسور دارید؟
 R: داریم، اما خرابه، متأسفانه.
 T: ای وای! خب، عیب نداره. شماره تلفنتون چنده؟
 R: ۳۵۱۷۴۲

T: *esm-e bimār cie?*

R: *hasan-e ahmadi.*

T: *ādresetun cie?*

R: *tehrān, xiābān-e mehr, pelāk-e hašt, tabaqe-ye šešom, āpārtemān-e davāzdah.*

T: *kojā-ye xiābun-e mehr hastid?*

R: *sinemā hāfez midunid kojāst?*

T: *bale.*

R: *dorost ru-be-ru-ye sinemā hastim, pahlu-ye supermārkēt.*

T: *āsānsor dārid?*

R: *dārim, ammā xarāb-e, mota(‘)assefāne.*

T: *ei vāi! xob, eib nadāre. šomāre telefonetun cande?*

R: *si o panj, hefdaḥ, cel o do.*

- T: *What's the name of the patient?*
 R: *Hassan Ahmadi.*
 T: *What's your address?*
 R: *Tehran, Mehr Street, No. 8, 6th floor, Flat 12.*
 T: *Where in Mehr Street are you (located)?*
 R: *Do you know where Hafez cinema is?*
 T: *Yes.*
 R: *We're just opposite the cinema, next to the supermarket.*
 T: *Do you have a lift?*
 R: *We do, but it's broken, I'm afraid.*
 T: *Oh dear! OK, never mind. What's your phone number?*
 R: *35-17-42.*

Vocabulary



بیمار	bimār	patient
آدرس	āдрес	address
طبقه	tabaqe	floor
ششم	šešom	sixth
کجا	kojā	where
کجای	kojā-ye	where in; which part of
می‌دونید	midunid	you know
دونستن (دون)	dunestan (dun)	to know
درست	dorost	just, exactly
روبروی	ru-be-ru-ye	opposite; facing
پهلوی	pahlu-ye	next to
آسانسور	āsānsor	lift, elevator
اما	ammā	but
خراب	xarāb	broken (not working)
متأسفانه	mota`assefāne	unfortunately
ای وای!	ei vāi!	Oh dear!
عیب	eib	problem
عیب نداره	eib nadāre	no problem (<i>lit</i> it doesn't have a problem)
شماره	šomāre	number
تلفن	telefon	telephone
چند	cand	what; how much



Language and culture notes

Prepositions

Here are some common prepositions and prepositional phrases. There are more in the glossaries.

Note: In casual speech, the **ی** **-ye** is often dropped.

روی	ru-ye	on
زیر	zir-e	under
توی	tu-ye	in (col)
در	dar	in (I)
جلوی	jelo-ye	in front of
بیرون	birun-e	outside (of)
بالای	bālā-ye	above, over
پهلوی	pahlu-ye	next to
پشت	pošt-e	behind
پایین	pāyin-e	below, beneath
کنار	kenār-e	by (the side of)
داخل	dāxel-e	inside (of)
روبه روی	ru-be-ru-ye	opposite, facing
(در) طرف چپ	(dar) taraf-e cap-e	(on) the left side of
(در) طرف راست	(dar) taraf-e rāst-e	(on) the right side of



Exercise 1

Fill in the blanks with the appropriate preposition.

- ۱- ساندویچتون _____ میزه.
1 **sāndevicetun** _____ **mize**.
Your sandwich is on the table.
- ۲- مداد _____ میزه.
2 **medād** _____ **mize**.
The pencil is under the table.
- ۳- توالت _____ سوپرمارکته.
3 **tuālet** _____ **supermārkete**.
The toilet is inside the supermarket.