

acknowledgments

This 5th edition of Lonely Planet's Hindi, Urdu & Bengali phrasebook is based on the previous editions by the Lonely Planet Language Products team and translators Richard Delacy and Shahara Ahmed.

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make the most of this phrasebook ...

Anyone can speak another language! It's all about confidence. Don't worry if you can't remember your school language lessons or if you've never learnt a language before. Even if you learn the very basics (on the inside covers of this book), your travel experience will be the better for it. You have nothing to lose and everything to gain when the locals hear you making an effort.

finding things in this book

This book is divided into a Hindi/Urdu part and a Bengali part – for ease of navigation, both are subdivided into the same sections. The Tools chapters are the ones you'll thumb through time and again. The Practical sections cover basic travel situations like catching transport and finding a bed. The Social sections give you conversational phrases and the ability to express opinions – so you can get to know people. Food has a section all of its own: gourmets and vegetarians are covered and local dishes feature. Safe Travel equips you with health and police phrases, just in case. Remember the colours of each section and you'll find everything easily; or use the comprehensive Index. Otherwise, check the two-way traveller's Dictionaries for the word you need.

being understood

Throughout this book you'll see coloured phrases on each page. They're phonetic guides to help you pronounce the language – you don't even need to look at the language if you're not familiar with the Hindi, Urdu or Bengali script. The pronunciation for Hindi and Urdu words and phrases is generally the same, but where they differ we've given a different pronunciation guide for each, preceded by ① for Hindi and ② for Urdu. The pronunciation chapter in Tools will explain more, but you can feel confident that if you read the coloured phrase slowly, you'll be understood.

communication tips

Body language, ways of doing things, sense of humour – all have a role to play in every culture. 'Local talk' boxes show you common ways of saying things, or everyday language to drop into conversation. 'Listen for ...' boxes supply the phrases you may hear and 'signs' boxes show you signs you might encounter.

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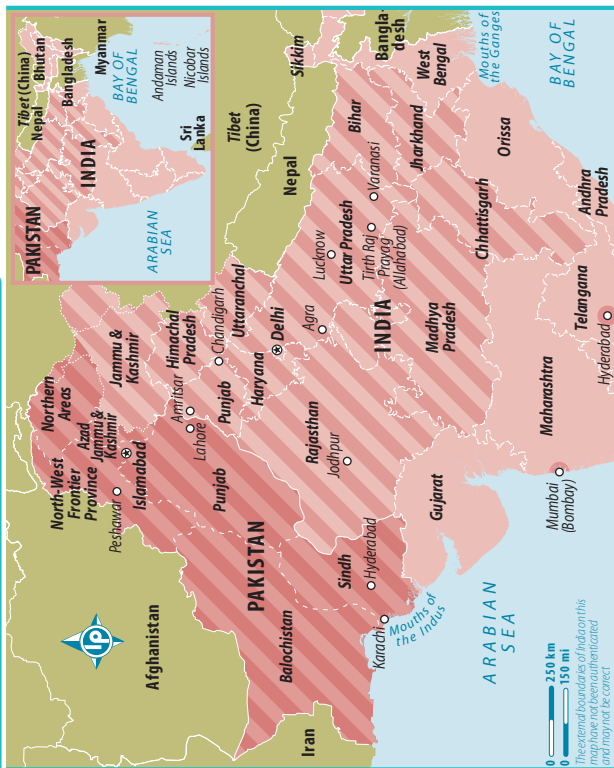
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hindi & urdu



- official language (Hindi)
- widely understood (Hindi & Urdu)
- official language (Urdu)

For more details, see the introduction, page 11.

BASICS > pronunciation

तल्फ़ • उच्चारणें

Many of the Hindi and Urdu sounds are also found in English. As ever, no book will replace listening to the language, but as a guide it can get you started.

vowel sounds

The length of a vowel is distinctive, so work on getting the differences between short vowels (like **a**) and long vowels (like **aa**) right.

vowel sounds		
symbol	english equivalent	hindi/urdu example
a	run	<i>pa-ti</i>
aa	father	<i>pi-taa</i>
ai	aisle	<i>sa-mai</i>
ay	day	<i>pay-se</i>
au	cow	<i>au-rat</i>
e	bed	<i>de-kaa</i>
ee	bee	<i>pat-nee</i>
i	bit	<i>mil-naa</i>
o	go	<i>bol-naa</i>
oo	fool	<i>dood</i>
u	put	<i>sun-naa</i>

consonant sounds

There's a difference between 'aspirated' consonants (pronounced with a strong puff of air, like saying 'h' after the sound) and 'unaspirated' ones. There are also 'retroflex' consonants, where you bend your tongue backwards to make the sound. Our simplified pronunciation guide doesn't include these distinctions – however, you'll be understood just fine if you follow our system.