



# Swahili

**PHRASEBOOK & DICTIONARY**

## **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**

For easy navigation, this book is in sections. The Basics chapters are the ones you'll thumb through time and again. The Practical section covers basic travel situations like catching transport and finding a bed. The Social section gives you conversational phrases, pick-up lines, 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. Sustainable Travel, finally, completes this book. Remember the colours of each section and you'll find everything easily; or use the comprehensive Index. Otherwise, check the two-way traveller's Dictionary 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. Start with them to get a feel for how the language sounds. The pronunciation chapter in Basics will explain more, but you can be confident that if you read the coloured phrase, you'll be understood. As you become familiar with the spoken language, move on to using the actual text in the language which will help you perfect your pronunciation.

### **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. They start with the phonetic guide (because you'll hear it before you know what's being said) and then lead in to the language and the English translation.

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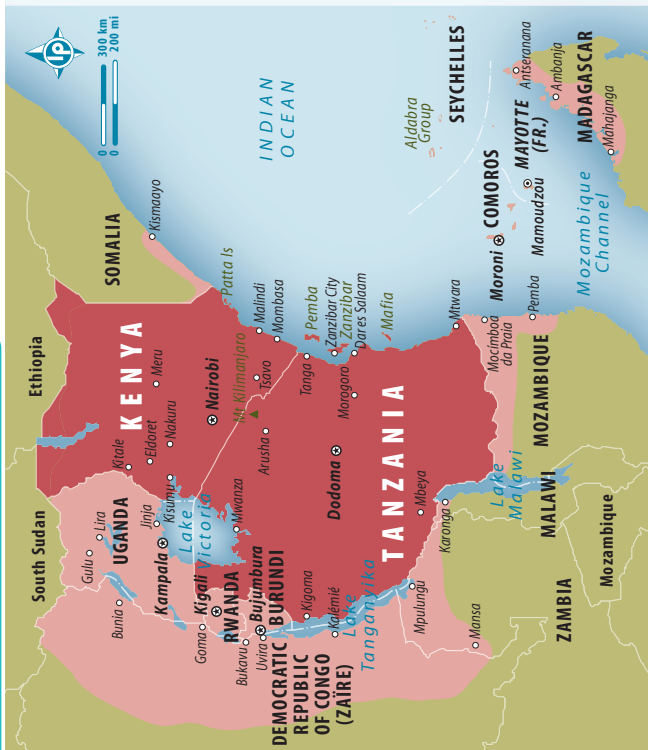
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## swahili



- national language
- widely spoken



For more details, see the **introduction**.

## getting around

### kutembea

Which ... goes to (Mbeya)?	... ipi huenda (Mbeya)?	... ee-pee hoo-ayn-da (m-bay-a)
Is this the ... to (Mombasa)?	Hii ni ... kwenda (Mombasa)?	hee nee ... kwayn-da (mohm-ba-sa)
boat	Boti	boh-tee
bus	Basi	ba-see
ferry	Kivuko	kee-voo-koh
minibus	Daladala/	da-la-da-la/
	Matatu Tan/Ken	ma-ta-too
train	Treni	tray-nee
When's the ... bus?	Basi ... itaondoka lini?	ba-see ... ee-ta-ohn-doh-ka lee-nee
first	ya kwanza	ya kwan-za
last	ya mwisho	ya mwee-shoh
next	ijayo	ee-ja-yoh



### Is the ... going today/tomorrow?

... itaenda leo/kesho?

... ee-ta-ayn-da lay-oh/kay-shoh

### What time does it leave?

Itaondoka saa ngapi?

ee-ta-ohn-doh-ka sa n-ga-pee

### What time does it get to (Kisumu)?

Itafika (Kisumu)

ee-ta-fee-ka (kee-soo-moo)

saa ngapi?

sa n-ga-pee

### How long will it be delayed?

*Itachelewa kwa  
muda gani?*

*ee·ta·chay·lay·wa kwa  
moo·da ga·nee*

### Is this seat free?

*Kuna nafasi hapa?*

*koo·na na·fa·see ha·pa*

### That's my seat.

*Hiki ni kiti changu.*

*hee·kee nee kee·tee chan·goo*

### Please tell me when we get to (Moshi).

*Niambie tukifika  
(Moshi).*

*nee·am·bee·ay too·kee·fee·ka  
(moh·shee)*

### Please stop here.

*Simama hapa,  
tafadhali.*

*see·ma·ma ha·pa  
ta·fa·dha·lee*

### How long do we stop here?

*Tutakaa hapa kwa  
muda gani?*

*too·ta·ka ha·pa kwa  
moo·da ga·nee*

### I'm sorry, I've changed my mind.

*Samahani,  
nimebadili nia.*

*sa·ma·ha·nee  
nee·may·ba·dee·lee nee·a*



### hop on, hop off

The most common word people call out to get a bus to stop is *shusha* *shoo·sha* (drop off). It's also considered slang. Pay attention to the way East Africans deliver the line. If you casually call *shusha* the same way when you want to get off, you can sometimes bring an entire bus to laughter.

On the other hand, if you're standing by the side of the road and you want to get a local bus to stop, simply extend your arm fully and flap your hand like a whale's tail.

# tickets

## tiketi

<b>A ... ticket to (Iringa).</b>	<i>Tiketi moja ya ... kwenda (Iringa).</i>	<i>tee-kay-tee moh-ja ya ... kwayn-da (ee-reen-ga)</i>
<b>1st-class</b>	<i>daraja la kwanza</i>	<i>da-ra-ja la kwan-za</i>
<b>2nd-class</b>	<i>daraja la pili</i>	<i>da-ra-ja la pee-lee</i>
<b>child's</b>	<i>mtoto</i>	<i>m-toh-toh</i>
<b>one-way</b>	<i>kwenda tu</i>	<i>kwayn-da too</i>
<b>return</b>	<i>kwenda na</i>	<i>kwayn-da na</i>
	<i>kurudi</i>	<i>koo-roo-dee</i>
<b>student</b>	<i>mwanafunzi</i>	<i>mwa-na-foon-zee</i>
<b>I'd like a/an ... seat.</b>	<i>Nataka kiti ...</i>	<i>na-ta-ka kee-tee ...</i>
<b>aisle</b>	<i>jirani ya njia</i>	<i>jee-ra-nee ya n-jee-a</i>
<b>nonsmoking</b>	<i>kutovuta sigara</i>	<i>koo-toh-voo-ta see-ga-ra</i>
<b>smoking</b>	<i>kuvuta sigara</i>	<i>koo-voo-ta see-ga-ra</i>
<b>window</b>	<i>jirani ya dirisha</i>	<i>jee-ra-nee ya dee-ree-sha</i>
<b>Is there (a) ...?</b>	<i>Kuna ...?</i>	<i>koo-na ...</i>
<b>air conditioning</b>	<i>a/c</i>	<i>ay-see</i>
<b>blanket</b>	<i>blanketi</i>	<i>blan-kay-tee</i>
<b>sick bag</b>	<i>mfuko wa kutapikia</i>	<i>m-foo-koh wa koo-ta-pee-kee-a</i>
<b>toilet</b>	<i>choo</i>	<i>choh</i>
<b>Where do I buy a ticket?</b>		
<i>Ninunue tiketi wapi?</i>		<i>nee-noo-noo-ay tee-kay-tee wa-pee</i>
<b>Do I need to book?</b>		
<i>Ni lazima nifanye buking?</i>		<i>nee la-zee-ma nee-fa-nyay boo-keeng</i>
<b>How much is it?</b>		
<i>Ni bei gani?</i>		<i>nee bay ga-nee</i>