



≡ *Fast Talk*

Danish

Guaranteed to get you talking

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Before You Go

Many visitors to Denmark get around without speaking a word of Danish, but just a few phrases go a long way in making friends, inviting service with a smile, and ensuring a rich and rewarding travel experience – you could be invited in for some hygge, experience a sublime meal, or grab that great shopping bargain.

Danish belongs to the North Germanic language group, together with Swedish, Norwegian, Icelandic and Faeroese. Consequently, written Danish bears a strong resemblance to these languages. Spoken Danish, on the other hand, has evolved in a different direction, introducing sounds and pronunciation not found elsewhere.


PRONUNCIATION TIPS

Danish varies from island to island as well as from north to south, with each region having its distinct dialect. The translation and

pronunciation presented here follows the form of Danish known as **Nudansk**, (literally ‘Now Danish’). This is the form of Danish spoken in Copenhagen, and understood throughout the country.

Stressed syllables in multi-syllable words are printed here in italic type, and longer syllables have been split into more manageable lengths.

Danes do not necessarily pronounce what they write. The pronunciation of letters varies depending on the word, and written vowels and/or consonants will sometimes ‘disappear’ completely in the pronunciation. Unfortunately there are no hard and fast



rules as to how any given letter is to be pronounced. In general, the best advice for good pronunciation is to listen and learn. Good luck!

See page 12 for our pronunciation guide.

MUST-KNOW GRAMMAR

Danish has a polite form of address, using the personal pronouns **De** and **Dem**. The words and phrases in this book are mostly in the familiar form using **du** and **dig**, except where it's more appropriate to use the formal form. In general, use the formal form when speaking to senior citizens and officials, and the familiar form the rest of the time.

Fast Talk Danish

Don't worry if you've never learnt Danish (*dansk* **dansk**) before – it's all about confidence. You don't need to memorise endless grammatical details or long lists of vocabulary – you just need to start speaking. You have nothing to lose and everything to gain when the locals hear you making an effort. And remember that body language and a sense of humour have a role to play in every culture.

“you just need to start speaking”

Even if you use the very basics, such as greetings and civilities, your travel experience will be the better for it. Once you start, you'll be amazed how many prompts you'll get to help you build on those first words. You'll hear people speaking, pick up sounds and expressions from the locals, catch a word or two that you know from TV already, see something on a billboard – all these things help to build your understanding.



Phrases to Learn Before You Go

1. What are the opening hours?

Hvad er åbningstiderne?

va ehr āb-neengs-tee-thah-nah

Opening hours vary throughout the year, especially for sights and activities.

2. Thanks for the meal.

Tak for mad.

taht for math

After a meal you should always say **tak for mad** before getting up.

3. Which wine would you recommend?

Hvilken vin anbefaler du?

vil-gehn veen an-beh-fah-lah doo

When Danes raise their glasses to you and say **Skål!** it means 'Cheers!'

4. Can I address you with 'du'?

Må jeg sige du?

mā yai see-yeh doo

Danes generally only use the familiar form of address (**du** and **dig**) for everyone but senior citizens and officials.

5. Do you have plans for tonight?

Har du planer i aften?

hah doo pla-nah ee ahf-den

Danish kitchens close relatively early: aim to eat before 10pm, before 9pm or earlier in smaller towns.

10. *Phrases to Sound Like a Local*

Cool!

Cool!

kool

No worries. Ikke noget problem. ig nā-ehť pror-blehm

Sure.

Selvfølgelig.

seh-fer-lee

No way!

No way!

nāw way

Just joking!

Jeg laver bare fis!

yai la-vah bah fees

Too bad.

Bare ærgerligt

bah ehr-wa-leet

What a shame.

Sikke en skam.

sig-geh in sgahm

What's up?

Hvad sker der?

va sgeh dah

Well done!

Flot klaret!

flāt klah-ehť

Not bad.

Ikke dårligt.

ig dā-leet

10.

Phrases
to Start a Sentence**When is
(the next flight)?**Hvornår går (næste fly)?
*vor-nor gor nehs-deh flü***Where is
(the station)?**Hvor er (station)?
*vor ehř (sda-shorn)***Where can I
(buy a ticket)?**Hvor kan jeg (købe en billet)?
*vor ka yai (ker-beh in bi-leht)***Do you have
(a light)?**Har du (ild)?
*hah doo il***Is there
(a toilet)?**Er der (toilet)?
*ehř dehř (toy-leht)***I'd like
(a coffee).**Jeg vil gerne have (kaffe).
*yai vi gehř-neh ha (kah-feh)***I'd like to
(return this).**Jeg vil gerne (returnere dette).
*yai vi gehř-neh (reh-tooh-ni-ah di-deh)***Can I (enter)?**Må jeg (komme ind)?
*mā yai (kom-eh in)***Do I have to
(book a seat)?**Er det nødvendigt at (bestille plads)?
*ehř di nerth-vehn-deet at (bi-sdi-leh plas)***Can you (write
down the price)?**Kan du (skrive prisen)?
ka doo (sgree-veh pree-sehn)

Chatting & Basics

≡ Fast Phrases

Hello.	Hej/Dav/Goddag. inf/pol hai/dow/gor-da
Thank you.	Tak. tahk
Do you speak English?	Taler De engelsk? pol ta-lah dee ehng-ehlsk

Essentials

Goodbye.	Hej hej/Farvel. inf/pol hai hai/fah-vehl
Yes./No.	Ja./Nej. ya/nai
Excuse me.	Undskyld. ān-sgūl
May I? Do you mind?	Må jeg? Tillader De? pol mā yai? ti-la-thah dee
Sorry. (excuse me, forgive me)	Undskyld/Beklager. ān-sgūl/bi-kla-ah
Many thanks.	Mange tak. mahng-eh tahg
That's fine. You're welcome.	Det er i orden. Selv tak. di ehʀ ee órdehn. sehl tahk