

## make the most of this phrasebook ...

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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. 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. You don't even need to look at the language itself, but you'll get used to the way we've represented particular sounds. The pronunciation chapter in Basics 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. 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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# hungarian



**official language**      **minority language**

Areas delineated as Hungarian minority language areas are approximate only. For more details, see the **introduction**.

# ABOUT HUNGARIAN

bevezetés

Hungarian is a unique language. Though distantly related to Finnish, it has no significant similarities to any other language in the world. If you have some background in European languages you'll be surprised at just how different Hungarian is. English actually has more in common with Russian and Sinhala (from Sri Lanka) than it does with Hungarian.

So how did such an unusual language end up in the heart of the European continent? The answer lies somewhere beyond the Ural mountains in western Siberia, where the nomadic ancestors of today's Hungarian speakers began a slow migration west about 2000 years ago. At some point in the journey the group began to split. One group turned towards Finland while the other continued towards the Carpathian Basin, arriving in the late 9th century. Calling themselves Magyars (derived from the Finno-Ugric words for 'speak' and 'man') they cultivated and developed the occupied lands. By 1000AD the Kingdom

of Hungary was officially established. Along the way Hungarian acquired words from other languages like Latin, Persian, Turkish and Bulgarian, yet today the language has changed remarkably little.

Hungarian is also spoken as a minority language in certain parts of Eastern Europe, such as Slovakia and much of Croatia, the region of Serbia and Montenegro known as Voivodina, and parts of Austria, Romania and the Ukraine. This is a

## at a glance ...

**language name:**

Hungarian

**name in language:**

*magyar* *mo-dyor*

**language family:**

Finno-Ugric

**approximate number of speakers:** more than

14.5 million worldwide

**close relatives:**

Finnish

**donations to English:**

goulash, paprika, vampire

legacy of WWI. After their victory, the Allies redivided parts of Europe and formed new nations, with Hungary losing a third of its territory. A great deal of the fierce national pride felt by Hungarians can be traced back to this event.

Hungarian is a language rich with complexities of grammar and expression. These characteristics can be both alluring and intimidating to those who experience it. 'The Hungarian language is at one and the same time our softest cradle and our most solid coffin', lamented modern poet Gyula Illyés. Indeed, some have suggested that the flexibility of the tongue, combined with Hungary's linguistic isolation, has encouraged the culture's strong tradition of poetry and literature. Word order in Hungarian is fairly free, and it has been argued that this stimulates creative or experimental thinking. For this same reason, however, the language is resistant to translation and much of the nation's literary heritage is still unavailable to English speakers. Another theory holds that Hungary's extraordinary number of great scientists is also attributable to the language's versatile nature.

Whatever the case, Hungarian needn't be intimidating for visitors. This book gives you all the practical phrases you need to get by, as well as all the fun, spontaneous phrases that lead to a better understanding of Hungary and its people. Once you've got the hang of how to pronounce Hungarian words, the rest is just a matter of confidence. You won't need to look very far to discover the beauty of the language and you may even find yourself unlocking the poet or scientist within. Local knowledge, new relationships and a sense of satisfaction are on the tip of your tongue. So don't just stand there, say something!

## abbreviations used in this book

a	adjective	n	noun
f	feminine	pl	plural
inf	informal	pol	polite
lit	literal translation	sg	singular
m	masculine	v	verb

The Hungarian language may look daunting with its long words and unusual-looking accents, but it is surprisingly easy to pronounce. Like in English, Hungarian isn't always written the way it's pronounced, but just stick to the coloured phonetic guides that accompany each phrase or word and you can't go wrong.

## vowel sounds

Hungarian vowel sounds are similar to those found in the English words listed in the table below. The symbol  $\bar{\phantom{a}}$  over a vowel, like  $\bar{a}$ , means you say it as a long vowel sound. The letter **y** is always pronounced as in 'yes' (see **consonant sounds**).

symbol	english equivalent	hungarian example(s)	transliteration
aa	father	<i>hátizsák</i>	<i>haa·ti-zhaak</i>
ay	tray (similar to ai in main)	<i>én</i>	<i>ayn</i>
e	bed	<i>zsebkés</i>	<i>zheb·kaysh</i>
ee	meet	<i>cím</i>	<i>tseem</i>
eu	her or French <i>neuf</i>	<i>zöld</i>	<i>zeuld</i>
i	hit	<i>rizs</i>	<i>rizh</i>
o	hot	<i>gazda</i>	<i>goz·do</i>
oy	boy	<i>megfojt, komoly</i>	<i>meg·foyt, kaw·moy</i>
aw	law but short	<i>kor</i>	<i>kawr</i>
u	pull	<i>utas</i>	<i>u·tosh</i>
ew	like i but with rounded lips, like u in French <i>tu</i>	<i>csütörtök</i>	<i>chew·teur·teuk</i>



## consonant sounds

Remember, always pronounce **y** like the 'y' in 'yes', but without a vowel sound. We've also used the ' symbol to show this **y** sound when it's attached to **n**, **d**, and **t** and at the end of a syllable. You'll also see double consonants like **bb**, **dd** or **tt** – draw them out a little longer than you would in English.

symbol	english equivalent	hungarian example(s)	transliteration
b	box	<i>bajusz</i>	<i>bo-yus</i>
ch	cheese	<i>család</i>	<i>cho-laad</i>
d	dog	<i>dervis</i>	<i>der-vish</i>
d'	dune (British)	<i>poggyász</i>	<i>pawd'-dyaas</i>
f	fox	<i>farok</i>	<i>fo-rawk</i>
g	go	<i>gallér, igen</i>	<i>gol-layr, i-gen</i>
dy	dune (British)	<i>magyar</i>	<i>mo-dyor</i>
h	hat	<i>hát</i>	<i>haat</i>
j	joke	<i>dzsem, hogy</i>	<i>jem, hawj</i>
k	king	<i>kacsa</i>	<i>ko-cho</i>
l	let	<i>lakat</i>	<i>lo-kot</i>
m	magic	<i>most</i>	<i>mawsht</i>
n	no	<i>nem</i>	<i>nem</i>
n'	canyon	<i>hány, mennyi</i>	<i>haan', men'-nyi</i>
p	pig	<i>pamut</i>	<i>po-mut</i>
r	run (but rolled)	<i>piros</i>	<i>pi-rawsh</i>
s	sit	<i>kolbász</i>	<i>kawl-baas</i>
sh	ship	<i>tojást</i>	<i>taw-yaasht</i>
t	tin	<i>tag</i>	<i>tog</i>
t'	tube (British)	<i>báty</i>	<i>baat'</i>
ts	rats	<i>koncert</i>	<i>kawn-tsert</i>
ty	tube (British)	<i>kártya</i>	<i>kaar-tyo</i>
v	vent	<i>vajon</i>	<i>vo-yawn</i>
y	yes	<i>hajó, melyik</i>	<i>ho-yāw, me-yik</i>
z	zero	<i>zab</i>	<i>zob</i>
zh	pleasure	<i>zsemle</i>	<i>zhem-le</i>