Basic Kannada for Travelers

This is a brief introduction to Kannada, a south Indian language spoken in the Karnataka state of India. This introduction provides basic instruction about pronunciation and important words and phrases. Kannada is one of the official languages of India, predominantly spoken in the state of Karnataka, including the city of Bangalore. During your stay in Karnataka, the ability to communicate in Kannada will greatly enhance your experience. Even if you do not plan on studying the language in-depth, we strongly suggest learning and using the basic greetings and phrases. The locals will greatly appreciate your efforts and will be all the more welcoming to you during your stay.

Pronunciation

Kannada is written in the Kannada script, which is also used to write some of the other native languages of Karnataka: Tulu, Kodava, Takk, and Konkani. The script has forty-nine characters; however different characters can be combined to form compound characters. In this guide we will not use the Kannada script, but a list of the Kannada characters can be found at the end of this document.

Kannada has thirteen vowel sounds:

a	'u' as in bud	a~	'a' as in play
aa / A	'a' as in father	ea	'e' as in hey
i	'y' as in happy	ai	'ai' as in buy / high
ee / I	'ea' as in bead	o	'o' as in row
u	'oo' as in good	O	'o' as in row
oo / U	'oo' as in food	au /ou	'au' as in how / pout
Ru	'r' as in hurting		

Kannada has 21 consonants:

b	'b' as in bed	p	'p' as in pig
c	's' as in supper		
	'k' as in kid	q	'q' as in quest
d	'd' as in dog	r	'r' as in row
			'r' as in feather
f	'ph' as in phone	s	'ss' as in hiss
			'z' as in haze
g	'g' as in go		
	'j' as in jello	t	't' as in top
h	'h' as in help	v	'v' as in victory
j	'dg' as in edge	w	'w' as in weight
k	'c' as in cat	x	'cks' as in kicks
			'z' as in haze

l	'l' as in love 'ie' as in pie 'ee' as in flee	y	'y' as in yes
m	'm' as in mother	z	'z' as in haze
n	'n' as in nice		

There are also two characters that are called yogavaahac, which are part-vowel and part-consonant. They are the anusvara (am) and the visarga (ah).

Greetings

Hello	Namaskara
How are you?	Neevu Chennaagidira
I am fine.	Naanu chennagiddene
Fine, thank you.	Chennagiddene. Dhanyavaada
Goodbye	Hogibitt barthene

Introductions

What is your name?	Nimma hessarenu?
My name is…	Nanna hesaru…
Nice to meet you.	Nimmannu nodi santhoshavaythu.

Etiquette

Please	Dayavit.t.u.
Thank you	Vandenegalo
You're Welcome	Tamage suswagatha
Yes	Havdu
No	Illa
Excuse me (getting attention)	Illinodi
Excuse me (begging pardon)	K-shamisi
I'm Sorry.	Nannindha thappaihu
Good morning	Shubha munjane
Good evening	Shubha sanje
Good night	Shubha ratri

Relationships

Mother	Amma / taayi
Father	Appa / tande
Son	Maga
Daughter	magaLu
Elder Brother	aNNa

Younger Brother	Tamma
Elder Sister	Akka
Younger Sister	Tangi
Grandfather	Ajja / taata
Grandmother	Ajji
Husband	ganDa
Wife	henDathi
Children	makkaLu

Food and Drinks

Breakfast	Thindi
Lunch	Oota
Eggs	Motte
Rice	Anna
Coffee	Kaapi
Water	Neeru
Beans	huraLikaayi
Potato	Aaloo geDDe
Apple	sEbu Orange kittaLe
Vegetables	Tarakaarigalu
Salad	kOsaMbari
Butter	beNNe
Milk	Haalu
Sugar	Sakkare
Tea	Chaa

Cost

How much is this?	Idhakke yeshtu
I don't want it.	Nanige beda.
Expensive	Dhubaari

Time of Day

Now	Iga Later Amele
Before	Modalu
Morning	Beligge
Afternoon	Madhyana
Evening	Samje
Night	Ratri

Useful Words and Phrases

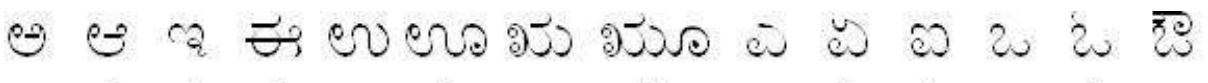
I can't speak Kannada (well).	Nanage Kannada barodilla.
Do you speak English? Help!	Nimage English baruththaa? Sahaaya maadi
Look out!	Jopaana
I don't understand	Nanage artha vaguthilla
Where is the toilet? Police!	Shouchalaya Arakshaka
I need your help.	Nimma sahaya bekagidhe.
I'm lost.	Nanage daari thappide.
I lost my bag.	Nanna cheela kaledu hoyithu.
I need a doctor	Nanage doctor beku.
Who?	Yaaru
Where?	Elli
When?	Yaavaga
Why?	Yaake/Eke
What?	Enu
Which?	Yaava/yavudu
I don't know.	Gottilla

Numbers

1	Ondhu	16	Hadinaru
2	Yeradu	17	Hadinelu
3	Mooru	18	Hadinentu
4	Naalku	19	Hathombathu
5	Aidhu	20	Ipathu
6	Aaru	30	Muvathu
7	Yelu	40	Nalavathu
8	Yentu	50	Aivathu
9	Ombattu	60	Arvathu
10	Hathu	70	Yapathu
11	Hannondu	80	Embathu
12	Hanneradu	90	Tombathu
13	Hadimooru	100	Nooru
14	Hadinalku	1,000	Ondu savira
15	Hadinaidhu	1,000,000	Hathu laksha

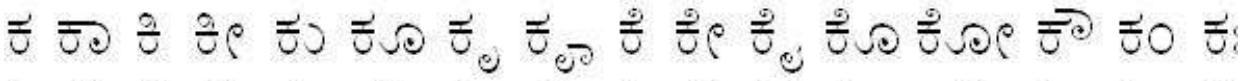
The Kannada Alphabet

Vowels



a	ā	i	ī	u	ū	ṛ	ṝ	e	ē	ai	o	ō	au
[ʌ]	[a:]	[i]	[i:]	[u]	[u:]	[ri/ru]	[ri:/ru:]	[e]	[e:]	[aj]	[o]	[o:]	[aw]

Vowel diacritics



ka	kā	ki	kī	ku	kū	kṛ	kṝ	ke	kē	kai	ko	kō	kau	kaṃ	kaḥ

Consonants



ka	[kʌ]	kha	[kʰʌ]	ga	[gʌ]	gha	[gʰʌ]	ṅa	[ŋʌ]				
ca	[ʧʌ]	cha	[ʧʰʌ]	ja	[ʤʌ]	jha	[ʤʰʌ]	ña	[ɲʌ]				
ṭa	[ʈʌ]	ṭha	[ʈʰʌ]	ḍa	[ɖʌ]	ḍha	[ɖʰʌ]	ṇa	[ɳʌ]				
ta	[tʌ]	tha	[tʰʌ]	da	[dʌ]	dha	[dʰʌ]	na	[nʌ]				
pa	[pʌ]	pha	[pʰʌ]	ba	[bʌ]	bha	[bʰʌ]	ma	[mʌ]				
ya	[jʌ]	ra	[rʌ]	la	[lʌ]	va	[ʋʌ]						
śa	[ɕʌ]	ṣa	[ʂʌ]	sa	[sʌ]			ha	[hʌ]				
ḷa	[lʌ]	kśa	[kʂʌ]	jña	[ʤɲʌ]								