
Survival-Kit
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Your first steps into the land of long words and unexpected vowels.

🇭🇺 Absolute Beginner · Free Guide 01

In this kit you will be able to:

Say hello (and goodbye!)

Introduce yourself

Master the magic words

Order something without panicking

Survive your first Hungarian conversation

Mission 01: Make Contact!

You've arrived in Hungary. People are talking, signs look unfamiliar, and someone has just said something that sounds suspiciously like szia. Good news: you're already learning.

Hungarian	English	When to use it?
Szia!	Hi!/Bye!	Informal, one person
Sziasztok!	Hi!/Bye!	Informal, several people
Jó reggelt!	Good morning!	Polite
Jó napot!	Good afternoon! Hello!	Polite, formal
Jó estét!	Good evening!	Polite
Viszlát!	Good bye!	Polite
Szervusz!	Hi!/Bye!	Informal, one person, casual
Csókolom!	Hello! /Good bye!	Informal, one person For eldery woman

Szia works both when you arrive and when you leave.

Sziasztok is what you say to a group of friends.

Jó napot is a useful choice when speaking to strangers, shop assistants, or someone you address formally.

When in doubt, start with Jó napot kívánok! It's a polite, complete greeting.

You: Jó napot kívánok!



Shop assistant: Jó napot!

You: Köszönöm! (thank you)



Shop assistant: Szívesen! (you're welcome!)

You: Viszlát!



Shop assistant: Viszlát!

Mission 02: Be Polite, Travel Further

You don't need 5,000 words to get started. But a few polite expressions will take you surprisingly far.





Igen	Yes
Nem	No
Köszönöm	Thank you
Köszönöm szépen	Thank you very much
Kérem	Please / Here you are, depending on context
Legyen szíves...	Please... / Would you be so kind...
Szívesen	You're welcome
Elnézést	Excuse me
Bocsánat	Sorry / Excuse me
Semmi baj	No problem
Rendben	All right / Okay
Nem értem	I don't understand
Nem tudom	I don't know
Beszél angolul?	Do you speak English? (formal)
Segítsen, kérem!	Please help me! (formal)

The three expressions you need immediately

1. **Elnézést!**
Use this to get someone's attention, pass through a crowd, or politely interrupt.

2. **Nem értem.**
You don't understand. That's perfectly fine. You are learning.

3. **Beszél angolul?**
Ask whether someone speaks English. Remember, not everyone will, especially outside major tourist areas.

A tiny cultural tip :Hungarian has formal and informal ways of addressing people.

→ With friends, family, and people you're on informal terms with, you'll often use te (you).

→ With strangers, older people, or in professional situations, formal address is often appropriate.

You don't need to master the whole system today. Start by recognising that politeness in Hungarian isn't just about saying please and thank you.

Mini-mission: Can you say these three sentences without looking at the table?

- Thank you very much.
- I don't understand.
- Excuse me.

Mission 03: You're a Person, Not Just a Tourist!

You've reached the village square. Someone smiles and asks you a question.
Time to introduce yourself.

Hogy hívnak? What's your name? (informal)
Hogy hívják? What's your name? (formal)
A nevem... My name is...
... vagyok. I am...

Honnan jöttél? Where are you from? (informal)
Honnan jött? Where are you from? (formal)
...-ból jöttem. / ...-ből jöttem. I came from...

Örülök, hogy megismertelek.
Nice to meet you. (informal)
Örülök, hogy megismerhetem.
Nice to meet you. (formal)

Magyarország = Hungary
Anglia = England
Franciaország = France
Németország = Germany
Törökország = Türkiye

Note: Hungarian country names and their suffixes can change depending on the word. For now, learn the complete examples rather than trying to memorise every rule.

Szia! A nevem Alex. Angliából jöttem. Örülök, hogy megismertelek!

English: Hi! My name is Alex. I'm from England. Nice to meet you!

Your turn! Fill in the gaps.

Szia! A nevem _____.

_____-ból/-ből jöttem.

Örülök, hogy megismertelek!

Now try saying it aloud three times.
First, slowly.
Second, without looking.
Third, as if you're actually meeting someone.
Rover's tip: Don't wait until your pronunciation is perfect. Communication comes before perfection.

Mission 04: The Bakery Test

Your shepherd has been travelling all morning. The sheep are hungry. You're hungry. The bakery is open. There is only one problem: the menu is in Hungarian.
Let's fix that.

Szeretnék egy kávét.	I'd like a coffee.
Egy vizet szeretnék.	I'd like a water.
Egy teát kérek.	A tea, please.
Kaphatok egy...	Can I have a...?
Mennyibe kerül?	How much does it cost?
Kártyával fizetek.	I'm paying by card.
Készpénzzel fizetek.	I'm paying in cash.
A számlát, kérem.	The bill, please.
Elvitelre, kérem.	To take away, please.

Five words worth recognising

Víz = Water
Kávé = Coffee
Tea = Tea
Kenyér = Bread
Pékség = Bakery



Jó napot kívánok!
Hello!

Jó napot kívánok! Mit kér?
Hello! How can i help you?

Egy kávét szeretnék!
I'd like a coffee

Más lesz?
Anything else?

Nem, köszönöm.
No, thank you.

800 forint lesz.
That'll be 800 forints.

Kártyával fizetek.
I'm paying by card.

Mini-mission: Imagine you are at a bakery.
Order a coffee, ask the price, and thank the shop assistant.
Bonus points if you can do it without reading the English translations.

Mission 05: When things go wrong

Even experienced travellers get lost, and in Hungary, you might find yourself looking at a street sign wondering whether you've accidentally entered a spelling competition. Don't panic. Learn these phrases first.

Hol van a mosdó? - Where is the toilet?
Hol van a buszmegálló? - Where is the bus stop?
Hol van a vasútállomás? - Where is the railway station?
Segítség! - Help!
Eltévedtem. - I'm lost.
Nem beszélek jól magyarul. - I don't speak Hungarian well.
Tudna segíteni? - Could you help me?
Meg tudná ismételni? - Could you repeat that?
Lassabban, kérem. - More slowly, please.
Le tudná írni? - Could you write it down?

STEP 1 — Admit the problem	STEP 2 — Ask for help	STEP 3 — Ease the conversation
Elnézést, eltévedtem. Excuse me, I'm lost.	Tudna segíteni? Could you help me?	Lassabban, kérem. More slowly, please.

What if you understand absolutely nothing?
Use this:

Elnézést, nem beszélek jól magyarul. Beszél angolul?

(Excuse me, I don't speak Hungarian well. Do you speak English?)

It's a long sentence, so practise it in chunks.

1. Elnézést.
2. Nem beszélek jól magyarul.
3. Beszél angolul?

You don't have to say everything perfectly. You need to make yourself understood.
Important: In an actual emergency, seek immediate help. This guide is a language-learning resource, not a substitute for emergency services.

Mission 06: Pack Light, Speak More

Imagine you're heading out for another day of wandering through Hungary.
You don't want to carry an entire textbook. You want the essentials.
Here is your pocket-sized survival list.

Greetings
Szia! — Hi! / Bye!
Jó napot kívánok! — Hello! (formal)
Viszlát! — Goodbye!

Politeness
Köszönöm. — Thank you.
Kérem. — Please / Here you are.
Elnézést. — Excuse me.
Bocsánat. — Sorry.

Communication
Igen. — Yes.
Nem. — No.
Nem értem. — I don't understand.
Nem tudom. — I don't know.
Lassabban, kérem. — More slowly, please.
Beszél angolul? — Do you speak English? (formal)

Everyday life
Mennyibe kerül? — How much does it cost?
Egy vizet szeretnék. — I'd like a water.
Hol van a mosdó? — Where is the toilet?
Tudna segíteni? — Could you help me?

Your five golden phrases

If you remember only five expressions from this guide, make them these:

1. Jó napot kívánok!	A polite greeting.
2. Köszönöm szépen.	Thank you very much.
3. Elnézést.	Excuse me.
4. Nem értem.	I don't understand.
5. Mennyibe kerül?	How much does it cost?

These five expressions won't make you fluent. They will, however, help you take your first steps towards interacting with Hungarian speakers.

Rover's challenge: Save this page to your phone. Read it once before leaving the house, then try using one phrase in a real interaction.

Mission 07: Your first challenge

Mission Complete? Not Quite!
You've collected your first Hungarian phrases. Now let's see whether you can use them.
No dictionary. No translating app. Just you and your survival kit.

Challenge 1 — Match the phrases

Match each Hungarian phrase to its English meaning.

1. Nem értem.	A. How much does it cost?
2. Köszönöm szépen.	B. Where is the toilet?
3. Mennyibe kerül?	C. I don't understand.
4. Hol van a mosdó?	D. Thank you very much.
5. Viszlát!	E. Goodbye!

Challenge 2 — Complete the conversation

Fill in the missing Hungarian expressions.

You: _____! (Good afternoon!)
Shop assistant: Jó napot kívánok! Mit kér?
You: _____. (A water, please.)
Shop assistant: Tessék.
You: _____! (Thank you very much!)

Challenge 3 — Introduce yourself

Szia! A nevem _____.
_____-ból/-ből jöttem.
Örülök, hogy megismertelek!

Challenge 4 — Your real-life mission Within the next 24 hours:

- Say szia or jó napot aloud five times.
- Memorise three phrases from the pocket cheat sheet.
- Use at least one phrase in a real interaction, if the opportunity arises.

The point isn't to be perfect.
The point is to stop treating Hungarian as a language you can only understand from a distance.

Answer key
Challenge 1: 1–C, 2–D, 3–A, 4–B, 5–E.
Challenge 2:

- Jó napot kívánok!
- Kérek egy vizet.
- Köszönöm szépen!

Challenge 3: Answers will vary according to your name and country of origin.

FINAL SECTION – YOUR NEXT ADVENTURE

You've found your first trail. Where will it take you?
You can now greet people, introduce yourself, order a coffee, and ask for help.
But what happens when you want to make friends, find your first job, understand official paperwork, or finally catch the joke everyone around you is laughing at?
That's where our journey continues.

GET BY — Build your everyday Hungarian and learn to handle the basics with confidence.

CONNECT — Prepare for your first job, everyday conversations, and the practical situations that come with living in Hungary.

BELONG — Go beyond survival. Develop your communication skills, handle formal situations, negotiate and discover the Hungarian expressions that make you sound more natural.

No boring textbook marathons.
No pressure to be perfect.
Just practical Hungarian, personalised lessons, and a little adventure along the way.

