

Intrepid Travel Language Guides

Malay Language Guide Script

Karthi: Halo, you want Satay Sir? Best in Petalang Street

Scott: Yeah, sure – why not! Load me up – what have you got?

Karthi: ayam or daging lembu

Scott: Umm... in English?

Karthi: chicken or beef?

Scott: Ahh say 3 ayam and 3 daging lembu. Hey, what is that guy over there selling?

Karthi: Nasi Lemak - a favourite Malay dish, rice with ikan bilis – dried fish - and you have it with cucumber, egg and peanuts. Malays usually have this for breakfast.

Scott: Nasi Lemak, looks good, I'll have to try it for breaky tomorrow. Seems like you Malays love your food!

Karthi: Ah yes, we love to eat – or Makan!

Scott: Makan. What is ikan and ayam?

Karthi: Ikan is fish, ayam is chicken. Your Malay isn't bad!

Scott: My Malay is non-existent! Can you help me with a few phrases? I'd be happy to recommend your stall to all my mates at the back-packers! I'm Scott by the way and this satay is bloody great.

Karthi: Sure man, no problem – I'm Karthi. Hey, you shouldn't use your left hand to eat – that's considered unclean.

Scott: Right, like in India – this is a Muslim belief right?

Karthi: Yes, most Malays are Muslims, our Holy Day is Friday so if you came to the market on at lunch Friday it would be pretty empty, our prayers are from around 11:30 to 2:30.

Scott: Ok – so very early or very late lunch on Fridays! I've got a few phrases I try to learn in each country I go to – the first few are pretty obvious – Hello, Good Morning, Good Afternoon and Goodbye. Wait, first – how do I say “My name is Scott”

Karhi: Nama Saya Scott – and to ask a person's name you say – Siapa nama awak?

Scott: Nama Saya Scott. Siapa nama awak?

Karhi: Hey, not bad. Hello is Halo. Good Morning is selamat pagi, Good Afternoon is selamat petang and Goodbye is Selamat tinggal. Goodnight is selamat malam. You will probably also hear selamat datang a lot – this means welcome.

Scott: Selamat pagi. Selamat Petang. Selamat malam and selamat tinggal. Kinda sounds Indonesian! What about please, thank you and excuse me.

Karhi: Indonesian and Malaysian are pretty similar, we can understand one another pretty easily. Malays are generally very courteous to one another and we show respect to elders, so please is sila, thank you is terima kasih, excuse me is maafkan saya. You'll do well if you use these.

Scott: So, please sila, terima kasih and excuse me maafkan saya. Yes?

Karhi: Ya. No is tidak. Also, don't point with your fingers, this is very rude, use your thumb to point.

Scott: Ok, point with my thumb, got it. How do I say 'How much is it?'

Karhi: This is 'berapa harga ini?'

Scott: Berapa harga ini? What about 'too expensive'

Karhi: This is 'ini sangat mahal'. But I don't think you'll need to say that around here – food at markets is very cheap and very tasty! Have you tried Malay chilli – sambal belachan?

Scott: Is that the pasty type chilli that is on the side of dishes? It's pretty hot man – I've had it once and it made my eyes water!

Karhi: (laughing) yeah, it's hot and Malays love it! You should mix it into food not eat it on its own man!

Scott: (smiling) That kinda makes sense really! Malaysians seem to speak really quickly, how do I say "Please say that more slowly"

Karhi: This is sila bercakap perlahan-lahan.

Scott: So sila bercakap perlahan-lahan. What about "I don't understand"

Karhi: This is saya tak faham. Most Malays speak some English, so with your few Malay phrases and a few smiles you will easily get by.

Scott: This satay is bloody great – load me up again! How do I say "I like this"

Karhi: Saya suka ini and "I don't like this" is saya tidak suka ini.

Scott: I'm heading up to Penang tomorrow – I hear there is a great night market in Kota Bharu.

Karthi: Yeah, you should try the nasi kerabu – the blue rice!

Scott: Truly?! Gotta give that a go. How do I ask for directions, like “Where is” and “Which way to?”

Karthi: Di manakah and Arah ke mana?. Also, bagaimana arah jalan ke? This is “how do I get to”

Scott: So, di manakah, arah ke mana and bagaimana arah jalan ke.

Karthi: Not bad man, not bad.

Scott: Ok, what about some travel stuff – I'm getting the train up to Penang so what about train, taxi, bus and boat!

Karthi: Train is keretapi, bus is bas, taxi is teksi, boat is perahu.

Scott: Keretapi, bas, teksi and perahu. What about ticket?

Karthi: This is tiket.

Scott: Of course! Ok – now some accommodation – what about “Ada bilik untuk saya?” and “Boleh saya lihat” – always important to look first, man have I stayed in some dives!

Karthi: (laughing) Have you a room is Ada bilik untuk saya. May I see it is Boleh saya lihat. Remember – always take your shoes off before you go inside, leave them at the door.

Scott: So, Ada bilik untuk saya and Boleh saya lihat. And shoes off! What about some numbers – what is 1-10.

Karthi: Satu, dua, tiga, empat, lima, enam, tujuh, lapan, sembilan, sepuluh.

Scott: Ok – slowly now – how do I say that?

Karthi: Please speak slowly is Sila bercakap perlahan-lahan.

Scott: Sila bercakap perlahan-lahan. Ok so, Satu, dua, tiga....

Karthi: empat, lima, enam

Scott: empat, lima enam

Karthi tujuh, lapan, sembilan, sepuluh

Scott: tujuh, lapan, sembilan, sepuluh.

Karthi: (laughing) You almost sound local!

Scott: (laughing) thanks man, you're too kind! We're nearly finished, I promise – a few last ones... like today, tomorrow and now.

Karthi: today is hari ini, tomorrow is esok, now is sekarang and yesterday is kemarin.

Scott: Hari ini, esok, sekarang and kemarin. Oh, now.. if I get sick (smiling) not that I'm suggesting your satay is dodgy... what about hospital and doctor.

Karthi: (smiling) My satay is number one man, you won't get sick from me – maybe that guy over there though... hospital is rumah sakit and doctor is doktor.

Scott: so rumah sakit and doktor. Hey what about 'stop thief' – I've heard a few stories about the mean streets of KL!

Karthi: (laughing) Man, you don't look like you've got much to steal! You say stop pencuri oh and police is ... polis

Scott: So...stop pencuri and police is polis

Karthi: Spoken like a true Malay bandit!!