

Greek For Gringos Lesson 1 Greetings 2026 10 04

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Maya: Yia sou, and welcome to Greek for Gringos, the show where two gringos teach you the Greek you actually need for Greece. I'm Maya.

Devon: And I'm Devon. Lesson one is all about greetings, because in Greece, how you say hello matters. Greeks are warm people, and a good greeting opens every door.

Maya: We'll teach you six phrases today. For each one, I'll tell you what it means and how to say it, and then you'll hear it the way a Greek would say it. Let's start with the big one: hello to a friend.

Devon: Yia sou. (???? ???)

Maya: That was yia sou. It means hi or hello, said to one person you know, like a friend. The yia rhymes with ya in yacht, and sou sounds like sue.

Devon: Yia sou. (???? ???)

Maya: Now, if you're talking to a stranger, an older person, or a group, you show a little respect and say yia sas.

Devon: Yia sas. (???? ???)

Maya: Same yia, but sas like sahs. Greeks notice when visitors use the polite form, and they love it.

Maya: Next, good morning: kalimera.

Devon: Kalimera. (?????????)

Maya: Kah-lee-MEH-rah. Stress the meh. You'll hear this everywhere before noon, from hotel clerks to ferry captains.

Maya: Good evening is kalispera.

Devon: Kalispera. (?????????)

Maya: Kah-lee-SPEH-rah. And good night, when you're heading off: kalinichta.

Devon: Kalinichta. (?????????)

Maya: Kah-lee-NEEKH-tah. That guttural kh is like clearing your throat softly. Don't worry, we'll drill that sound all month.

Devon: And when it's time to leave for good, you say adio.

Maya: Ah-DEE-oh. Just like the Spanish adios, and that's no coincidence, they share roots.

Devon: Adio. (?????)

Maya: Quick cultural note. In Greece, greetings come with warmth. Friends trade a kiss on each cheek, shopkeepers will greet you like family by day two, and nobody thinks you're overdoing it if you say kalimera to everyone you pass on a village street. Say it first, and say it smiling.

Devon: Alright, let's put it together. You're walking into a taverna in the evening. I'll be the owner.

Maya: Kalispera! (?????????)

Devon: Yia sas! (???? ???)

Maya: Two: good morning.

Devon: Kalimera. (?????????)

Maya: Three: goodbye.

Devon: Adio. (?????)

Maya: Beautiful. That's lesson one. Tomorrow, we learn how to be polite: please, thank you, and excuse me. Yia sas!

Devon: Yia sas! (???? ???)