

Greek For Gringos Lesson 2 Courtesy Essentials 2026 10 05

' 2026 Morning Update • Greek for Gringos • Mon, 05 Oct 2026 15:56:06 GMT • 2:37

Greek for Gringos Lesson 2: Courtesy Essentials

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

Devon: And I'm Devon. Lesson two is all about being polite: please, thank you, excuse me, and the magic words that get you out of any little mishap.

Maya: Five phrases today, and here's the best part: one Greek word does triple duty. Please, you're welcome, and also "yes, how can I help you?" It's parakalo.

Devon: Parakalo. (?????????)

Maya: That was parakalo: pah-rah-kah-LOH, stress the loh. Say it when you want something, say it when someone thanks you, and shopkeepers will say it to you the moment you walk in, meaning "what can I do for you?"

Devon: Parakalo. (?????????)

Maya: Next, thank you: efharisto.

Devon: Efharisto. (?????????)

Maya: Ef-hah-ree-STOH. Stress the stoh at the end. When someone thanks you in Greece, they often answer with a little blessing: na se kala, which means may you be well.

Devon: Na se kala. (?? '??? ????)

Maya: Nah-SEH kah-LAH. You don't have to memorize it today, but if a taverna owner says it to you, smile. You did something right.

Devon: Now, excuse me, or I'm sorry: signomi.

Maya: Signomi. (?????????)

Devon: That was seegh-NOH-mee. It starts with that throat sound, a soft g made in the back of your mouth. Use it when you bump into someone on a crowded ferry or squeeze past a table.

Maya: Signomi. (?????????)

Devon: And the phrase that saves you when you actually mess up: den pirazi, no problem, don't worry about it.

Maya: Den pirazi. (??? ????????)

Devon: Then pee-RAH-zee, stress the rah. Greeks say it warmly when a tourist fumbles something, which tells you everything about how they treat visitors.

Maya: Quick cultural note. Parakalo is the friendliest word in the country. When you enter a shop, the owner says parakalo before you've said a word. It means your presence is welcome. Say it back, and instantly you're not just a tourist, you're a guest.

Devon: Let's try a quick scene. I'm the guest at a hotel, and Maya is the receptionist. I just spilled my coffee on the map.

Maya: Parakalo! (?????????)

Maya: Efharisto. (?????????)

Devon: Three: excuse me.

Maya: Signomi. (?????????)

Devon: Beautiful. That's lesson two. Tomorrow: yes, no, and getting by. Yia sou!

Maya: Yia sou! (???? ???)