Ask for help: please and thank you

English Pre-A1 starter

What this topic teaches

When you are new to a language, the most useful words ask for help. This topic gives you five short **requests** and one way to say thanks.

- You will ask for help or for a thing: *Help, please. Water, please.*
- You will ask someone to say it again or more slowly: *Again, please. Slowly, please.*
- You will say thank you: *Thank you.*
- Memory hook: what you need + *please*. Two words can be a whole polite request.

Help and please

Request	Meaning	Chinese
Help, please.	I need help.	
Water, please.	I would like some water.	

- *please* makes a request **polite**. Put it after the thing you need, or before it: *Please help.*
- *please* helps, but your tone and the situation matter too. A loud, angry *please* is not polite.

Again and slowly

Request	Meaning	Chinese
Again, please.	say it one more time	
Slowly, please.	say it less fast	

- Choose by the problem. Too fast? → *Slowly, please.* Need to hear the words again? → *Again, please.*
- You can ask for both: *Again, slowly, please.*

Thank you

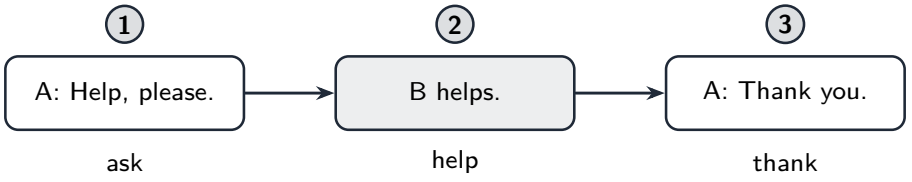
Thank you. thanks a person after they help.

- *Thank you* does **not** ask for anything. It closes the request.
- *Thanks* is a shorter, more informal form.

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■ **Two turns in order**

A: Help, please.
B: Yes? (B helps.)
A: Thank you.



Ask first, then the help, then thank you

First ask, then thank. *Thank you* before the help makes no sense.

Watch out: traps for Chinese speakers

- △ **Do not say Goodbye when you need help.** *Goodbye* ends the conversation. Start with *Help, please.*
- △ **Do not choose a phrase only because it has "please".** *Water, please* will not help if you did not hear the words. Use *Again, please.*
- △ **"Thank you" is two words.** Do not write *Thankyou*. *Thank* also needs *you*: not *Thank.*
- △ **"Again" is not "Sorry".** In Chinese, a word for *sorry* can ask someone to repeat. At this level, *Again, please* is the clearest request.

Say it aloud

Say each request with a calm, friendly voice.

- Help, please.
- Water, please.
- Again, please.
- Slowly, please.
- Thank you.

Practise with a partner: your partner speaks fast; you say *Slowly, please.* Your partner says it again slowly; you say *Thank you.*

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Check yourself

Answer first, then read the explanation.

1. Your teacher speaks too fast. What do you say? – **Slowly, please.**
2. You did not hear the words. What do you say? – **Again, please.**
3. You are thirsty. What do you say? – **Water, please.**
4. Someone helps you. What do you say? – **Thank you.**
5. A student needs help and says *Goodbye.* What is wrong? – *Goodbye* ends the exchange; say **Help, please.**

■ Practice: put the turns in order

(a) Thank you. (b) Again, please. (c) (A repeats the words.)

Answer. b, c, a: ask, then the help, then thanks.

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