



Kurdish (Sorani) Language Guide Script

Shannon: Hi there... I'm Shannon – are you with Kurdistan Adventures? I'm booked on the escorted tour.

Alan: *Cho-ni*. My name is Alan and yes, I am with Kurdistan Adventures. Come with me, and let's wait for the others over here.

Shannon: Yeah, no worries. *Cho-ni* means hello right?

Alan: *Bal-eh* – Yes that is correct. *Na* means no. You can also say *Cho-ni bashi* which translates to Hello – are you good?

Shannon: *Cho-ni bashi*?

Alan: *Bal-eh*. You will often then hear the response *bashi* – meaning I am good or *sar-chaw* or *bak-her beyt* which means you are welcome.

Shannon: OK. This Erbil Citadel is amazing. When was it built?

Alan: It is believed to have been continuously lived in for at least the last 8000 years.

Shannon: Wow - that's awesome! Hey Alan... Would you mind teaching me some more Kurdish phrases?

Alan: Of course – I would be honored to.

Shannon: I've heard a lot of men say Cak or Caka, when seeking someone's attention – what does this mean?

Alan: (laughing) you mean *Kak* or *Ka-Ka* – *Kak* is an honorific term for a man – it translates to friend.

Shannon: Oh... so I could say something like *Ka-ka Cho-ni* for Hello friend?

Alan: *Bal-eh, zor bash* – yes, very good. To say goodbye in Kurdish is *Khwah-hafeez*, *Khwah* being the word for “God” and *hafeez* meaning “protect”.

Shannon: *Khwah-hafeez* – that's easy to remember. What about “My name is Shannon” and “What's your name?” when meeting someone?



Alan: “My name is Shannon” would be *Min naw-em Shannon* and “What’s your name?” is *Naw-et chee-ya?*

Shannon: What about “please” and “thank you?”

Alan: Kurdish people will definitely appreciate these phrases. Please is *bey-zahmet* and thank you is *zor spas*.

Shannon: *Bey-zahmet* and *zor spas*. OK. Hey... how does someone say if they speak English?

Alan: (laughing) this is easy... *Inglizi ezani?*

Shannon: Do many Kurdish people speak English?

Alan: Some... it is getting better, particularly amongst the younger generation. Although you may hear *Inglizi nazanm* – meaning I don’t understand/speak English.

Shannon: (laughing) OK. That would explain some confused smiles, when I have spoken English to taxi drivers. What about basic numbers – how do I count to ten in Kurdish?

Alan: Yes - *Bal-eh*.

Alan: *Yak, doo, sei*

Shannon: *Yak, doo, sei*

Alan: *Chwar, penj, shash*

Shannon: *Chwar, penj, shash*

Alan: *Hawt, hasht, no, da*

Shannon: *Hawt, hasht, no, da*

Alan: *Bal-eh, zor bash* – very good Shannon but try to say the word – *hasht, no, da*.

Shannon: *Hasht, no, da*.

Alan: Oh excellent!



Shannon: Excellent, I guess I now know how to order up to 10 of something – say, what’s that cloudy white alcohol I see some Kurdish people drink in restaurants?

Alan: Ah – that is *Arak*. It is an aniseed flavoured drink that is mixed with water and ice. Kurdish people always mix in it in that order – many foreigners add the ice first which is a mistake.

Shannon: Ah OK. I’ll have to try that next time. Hey... how do I say “excuse me?”

Alan: This is *ba yarma-teet* and is a polite way to get anyone’s attention.

Shannon: And what about “how much is this?” and “this is too expensive”. I know these will be useful when shopping in the bazaar.

Alan: “How much is this?” is *ama ba chanda?* Often the answer will be given in Iraqi dinars or US dollars. “This is too expensive” is *ama zor grana*.

Shannon: OK. What about “Where is ...this?” and “Which way to...this?” – I know I am going to need these in a taxi.

Alan: OK. Where is – *lei chiya?* And which way to – *kamra guya?*

Shannon: OK, just one more Alan. How do you say such and such a word in Kurdish?

Alan: Very useful to know. *Ama ba zimani kurdi chi palet?*

Alan: Hey Shannon. I hope you find those Kurdish words useful. Let’s join the rest of the group and begin our Kurdistan Adventure!