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A Little Bit of Language Can Go a Long Way!



Lesson 3: Getting What You Want Using Finnish

Tämä, kiitos.

LESSON NOTES

Today's phrase will help you take matters into your own hands! In today's lesson we'll take a look at the word "Please," which will be very important when you need to ask for something.

In Finnish, "Please" is kiitos. You might remember from the earlier lesson that kiitos means "thank you" as well in Finnish.

Let's take a closer look at kiitos. The easiest way to use this word is by pointing at something and saying, Tämä, kiitos ("This one, please"), or Tuo, kiitos ("That one, please").

Please remember that in Finland it is a little rude to point at people. But pointing at things, especially when you are trying to buy something at the market or when it helps to illustrate your point, is perfectly okay. Just make sure you use kiitos ("thank you") when the object is handed to you.

Another translation of "please" could be the phrase ole hyvä. You might remember that this means "You're welcome," "Here you go," or "There you go" as well. We use this phrase to ask someone to do something for us and it is usually followed by a verb. Here's an example: Ojentaisitko sen minulle, ole hyvä ("Please hand it to me"). In this type of phrase the verb is in conditional form. Here's another example that you may hear at the airport: Avaisitko sen, ole hyvä. ("Please open it"). All of these sentences with the phrase ole hyvä are polite and formal.

PHRASES

Finnish	English
Ole hyvä.	Please. (followed by a verb)
Tämä, kiitos.	This please.
Tuo, kiitos.	That please.

VOCABULARY

Finnish	English
kiitos	please
tämä	this
tuo	that

QUICK TIP

We have learned the sentence Tämä, kiitos. ("This, please"). We may need to spend some time with the grammar here. The first word tämä ("this") is in the nominative. If you want to express that you want something, you have to use the accusative form of the noun. The accusative form is used when defining the object of the phrase. For example, Haluan tämän, kiitos. ("I want this one, please"). The easiest way to understand the accusative case is to say that a noun is in the accusative if it is the object in the sentence. This statement, although somewhat simplified, will help us understand Finnish grammar a bit more. Now try linking these sentences together: "This looks good. I want this, please. Please hand it to me." In Finnish it would go, Tämä näyttää hyvältä. Haluan tämän. kiitos. Antaisitko sen minulle, ole hyvä. Don't forget to thank the person who is helping you so much.

QUICK TIP 2

Ole hyvä, as we have mentioned before, is a formal way to ask someone to do something. You might catch Finns saying please (pronounced exactly like in English) or even jooko. The second one has a meaning of "Yes?" or "Don't you?" These forms, especially the second one, are very informal and usually only between friends. Do not try to use them in an office or to your superiors. However, if you're in a conversation with some Finnish friends in a bar, try to slip in a long Please ("Pleeease") when asking them to get the next round! You will surely get an appreciative pat on the back.