



Lesson 3: This Please

Minta ini.

LESSON NOTES

In Indonesian, there actually is no one word that means "please" in this sense, surprisingly enough. Speakers of Indonesian must paraphrase in this instance. In order to ask for something, we must know the verb first, which is minta. This literally means "to request" or "ask for something".

However, this is not enough – you must actually mention requesting something to make this complete. So, let's try and build this up a bit, shall we? Let's start with the expression, "This please." which in Indonesian is Minta ini. This literally means "I ask for this". In English, "this" comes before please. In Indonesian the word order is the opposite. In Indonesian the word for "this", ini, follows minta. Let's take a look at the word for this. "This" in Indonesian is Ini.

A more formal way of saying "This, please" is Boleh minta ini? This is simply the phrase Minta ini. meaning "This please", preceded by a new word, boleh, which means 'may' or 'be permitted to'. Literally the entire phrase means "May I ask for this, please?"

Looking at the word for "this" warrants a look at the word for "that" which is itu. The phrase "That please." is Minta itu.

Of course, there is a more formal way of saying "That, please", which is Boleh minta itu?. We've already learned all the words in this phrase: boleh means 'may' or 'be permitted to', minta, means 'to request' or 'to ask for something', and itu means 'that'. Literally the entire phrase means "May I ask for that, please?"

PHRASES

Indonesian	English
Minta ini.	This please.
Boleh minta ini.	This please.
Minta itu.	That please.
Boleh minta itu.	That please.

QUICK TIP

In Indonesian, you should remember that there is no simple equivalent to the word "please" in the sense of asking for something. Instead, you must paraphrase it using the verb 'to ask for'/'to request'. This verb is *minta*. It's rather awkward, though, to say *minta* and point to something - you need to mention what you're pointing to after the verb, even if it's just mentioned as a demonstrative pronoun such as *ini* 'this' or *itu* 'that'. This results in *minta ini* '[I'm] asking for this' and *minta itu* '[I'm] asking for that'. To make this request more polite, you can add *boleh* to the beginning of the phrases.

QUICK TIP 2

When you point to something, it is considered rather uncouth to point with your index finger, although pointing at things is not as crass as pointing at people with your index finger. Alternate ways of pointing at things include pointing with your right thumb sticking out of a clenched fist (it's very important that it should be your right hand, since the left hand is considered ritually and physically unclean), pointing with your direct gaze very briefly, or sometimes even pointing with your pursed lips!