



Lesson 1: How to Say Thank You in Vietnamese

Cảm ơn.

LESSON NOTES

Wherever your destination may be, manners are a must! Vietnam is no different. So in our very first lesson, we'll be teaching you a simple phrase that is bound to come in handy throughout your trip to Vietnam. I can't stress this enough: A little a bit of language can go a long way!

In Vietnamese, "Thank you" is Cảm ơn.

The first word, cảm , means "to feel."

After this comes ơn, meaning "favor"

As Vietnamese is a tonal language, it is important to correctly pronounce the tones, as an incorrect pronunciation of a tone can change the meaning of a word and in turn, the meaning of the phrase. In the case of Cảm ơn, which means "Thank you", the first tone is the broken falling tone. The second tone is the flat tone.

All together, that's Cảm ơn.

You can emphasize Cảm ơn by adding nhiều lắm, which means literally "a lot" or "so much."

That makes Cảm ơn nhiều lắm, which would be equivalent to "Thank you very much," a politer expression than just Cảm ơn.

If you want to emphasize the degree of politeness you can follow Cảm ơn with the corresponding personal pronoun of the person you are addressing:

ông: Sir or Mr. - this is used for males 50 years and older

bà: Madam or Mrs. - this is used for females 50 years and older

anh: he or young man

chi: Mrs., Miss or young woman

cô: Miss or young girl

There will be occasions when you will really want to show your appreciation and politeness. On these occasions, one can further increase the politeness level by inserting the word xin that means "to ask" or "to beg" before the phrase Cảm ơn.

So "Thank you" in formal Vietnamese is Xin cảm ơn.

PHRASES

Vietnamese	English
Có nhiều sữa ở trong chai.	There is lots of milk in the bottle.
Có nhiều người ở trong phòng.	There are many people in the room.
Tôi thích nhà hàng này lắm.	I like this restaurant very much.
Cám ơn vì món quà của bạn.	Thank you for your gift.
Tôi cảm thấy mệt.	I feel tired.

VOCABULARY

Vietnamese	English
nhiều	much, many
lắm	much, many, very
ơn	obligation
cám ơn	thank you
cảm (cảm)	to feel

QUICK TIP

During your trip, there will be a multitude of situations in which you will be likely to use Cảm ơn. The following are some of these situations:

When the receptionist welcomes you to the hotel

When the waiter brings your food or drinks

When an old friend says how well you look

When someone gives you directions

When someone compliments you on your Vietnamese

QUICK TIP 2

If you are unsure how old someone is, it is best to just stick with Cảm ơn nhiều. ("Thank you very much.")