

THE SURVIVAL SYLLABUS

The syllabus has been divided into eight sections on the basis of information revealed during the interviews. The sections have been ranked and numbered according to the number of interviewees indicating that they used items in the sections divided by the number of items. So the section Greetings and being polite was the most useful one. Items which occur in more than one section are indicated by numbers in brackets. So, I want ... in Section 2 also occurs in Sections 5, 6, and 9. The slash (/) indicates alternatives.

1. Greetings and being polite

Hello/Good morning etc. + reply [there are many cultural variants of these, including Where are you going?, Have you eaten?]

How are you? + reply e.g. Fine, thank you.

Goodbye

Thank you + reply e.g. It's nothing, You're welcome.

Please

Excuse me [sorry]

It doesn't matter

Delicious (6)

Can I take your photo?

2. Buying and bargaining

I want ... (4, 6)

Do you have ...?/Is there ...?

Yes (8)

No (8)

This (one), That (one) [to use when pointing at goods]

There isn't any

How much (cost)? (5, 6)

A cheaper one (5)

NUMBERS (5, 7) (These need to be learned to a high degree of fluency)

UNITS OF MONEY (5, 6)

UNITS OF WEIGHT AND SIZE

How much (quantity)?

half
all of it
(one) more
(one) less

Excuse me [to get attention] (4)

Too expensive

Can you lower the price? + reply (Some countries do not use bargaining. In others it is essential.)

NAMES OF IMPORTANT THINGS TO BUY (These may include stamps, a newspaper, a map.)

3. Reading signs

Gents
Ladies

Entrance/In
Exit/out
Closed

4. Getting to places

Excuse me (to get attention) (2)
Can you help me?

Where is ...? (5)
Where is ... street?
What is the name of this place/street/station/town?

Toilet
Bank
Department store
Restaurant
Airport
Train station
Underground
Bus station
Hospital
Doctor
Police
Post-office
Telephone
Market
I want ... (2, 5, 6)

How far?/Is it near?

How long (to get to ...)?

Left

Right

Straight ahead

Slow down (Directions for a taxi.)

Stop here

Wait

Ticket

When

5. Finding accommodation

Where is ... (4)

Hotel

How much (cost)? (2, 6)

A cheaper one (2)

I want ... (2,4,6)

Leave at what time?

NUMBERS (2, 7)

today

tomorrow

6. Ordering food

How much (cost)? (2, 5)

The bill, please

I want ... (2, 5, 9)

NAMES OF A FEW DISHES AND DRINKS

A FEW COOKING TERMS

Delicious (1)

7. Talking about yourself and talking to children

I am (name)

Where do you come from?

I am (a New Zealander)/I come from (New Zealand)

What do you do?

I am a (teacher)/tourist

You speak (Chinese)!

A little/very little

What is your name? (Especially for talking to children.)

How old are you? + reply

NUMBERS (2, 5)

I have been here ... days/weeks/months

I am sick

8. Controlling and learning language

Do you understand?

I (don't) understand

Do you speak English? (7)

Yes (2)

No (2)

Repeat

Please speak slowly

I speak only a little (Thai)

What do you call this in (Japanese)?