

Thai Language

The Thai language is very different from the English

Phonetics

English is a non-phonetic language. The sound cannot readily be defined from the written character. Thai, on the other hand is phonetic. The sound can be recognised by the character, and it follows a logical pattern. This is easy to understand when reading from English to Thai, but extremely confusing from Thai to English.

Grammar

Thai grammar is remarkable simple. There are no tenses, as in English. There are no complicated grammatical rules to follow, unlike in English, which actually has fourteen different tenses. The past, present and future are explained by using time words such as yesterday, last week, now, or tomorrow, next week etc. Thai does use form “will” or “going to” some time in the future. One unique aspect of the Thai language is “noun classifiers” or words that are added after a noun to denote its identity. There are many different classifiers for different objects or groups of objects and this can be confusing.

Another basic difference between English and Thai is that adjectives follow nouns, which is the opposite of English such as “red book” become “book red” and this rule is uniform.

Pronunciation

Pronunciation is one of the most difficult in studying Thai language, next to tonalities. The way to learn it with full understanding is always remember that Thai words are a combination of tiny little words stuck together and each word has its own meaning.

Tones

There are five separate tones in the Thai language, and one particular tone is specific to each word. Various tones can denote a totally different meaning to a word that has the same spelling. The five tones are; High tone, Rising tone, Mid tone, Falling tone and low tone.

Grammar

Sentence structure: is similar to English – Subject+verb+Object;

I eat rice	Chan gin khaw	ฉันกินข้าว
He goes to school	Khao pai rohng-rian	เขาไปโรงเรียน

Negatives

By adding the word “Mai” (ไม่) (present tense) or “Mai dai” (ไม่ได้) (past tense) in front of the verb, you form a negative sentence.

I didn't go to work today (today= wan nee)

Wan nee phom mai dai pai tam ngaan

วันนี้ผมไม่ได้ไปทำงาน

She didn't go to school yesterday (mua waan nee)

Ther mai dai pai rohng-rian mua waan nee (yesterday =mua waan nee)

เธอไม่ได้ไปโรงเรียนเมื่อวานนี้

Adjectives

In Thai, adjectives always come after the noun that they describe

She is (bhen) a beautiful (soo-ey) person.

Ther bhen khon soo-ey)

เธอเป็นคนสวย

He is a good (dee) person (khon)

Khao bhen khon dee

เขาเป็นคนดี

Adverbs

Always appear at the end of the sentences

I drive (khub rot) quickly (yaang reeb-rohn)

Chan khub rot yaang reeb-rohn

ฉันขับรถอย่างรวดเร็ว

She dances (tehn-rum) beautifully (yaang soo-ey ngarm)

Ther tehn-rum yaang soo-ey ngarm

เธอเต้นรำอย่างสวยงาม

Adverbs which come before the verb

Ever	ker-y	เคย
Never	Mai ker-y	ไม่เคย
Perhaps	aaj ja	อาจจะ
Probably	kong ja	คงจะ
Rarely	mai ky ja	ไม่ค่อยจะ
Usually	muk ja	มักจะ
Yet	yung	ยัง

Adverbs which end a sentence

Also	doo-ey	ด้วย
Always	sa-muhr	เสมอ
Often	boy-boy	บ่อยๆ
Only	thao nun	เท่านั้น

Personal Pronouns

I (chan) have just (pherng ja) finish (set) work (ngaan).
Chan pherng ja set ngaan ฉันเพิ่งจะเสร็จงาน

I (chan) 've finished (set laew) work (tham-ngaam).
Chan tham-ngaam set laew ฉันทำงานเสร็จแล้ว

I (chan) haven't (mai) finished (set) work (tham-ngaam) yet (yung).
Chan yung tham ngaam mai set ler-y ฉันยังทำงานไม่เสร็จเลย

These words are always at the end of the sentence, unlike in English

What?	A-rai?	อะไร
When?	Mua-rai?	เมื่อไร
Where?	Tee-nhai?	ที่ไหน
Why?	Tum-mai	ทำไม
How?	Yang-rai	อย่างไร

You work what (a-rai)? – What do you do?
Khun tham ngaam a-rai? คุณทำงานอะไร?

You go home (glub baan) when? - When will you go home?
Khun glub baan mua-rhai? คุณกลับบ้านเมื่อไหร่?

Your house (baan khun) is (yoo) where? - Where is your house?
Baan khun youu tee nhai? บ้านคุณอยู่ที่ไหน?

You do that (yaang nun) why (tum mai)? -Why do you do that?
Khun tham yaang nun tum mai? คุณทำอย่างนั้นทำไม?

You do (it) how? – How do you do it?
Khun tum dai yaang rhai? คุณทำได้อย่างไร?

Useful Everyday words and phrases

Yes	chai krub (M)/ chai ka (F)	ใช่ครับ/ใช่ค่ะ
No	mai chai krub (M)/maichai ka (F)	ไม่ใช่ครับ/ไม่ใช่ค่ะ
Yes, thank you	krub/ka. Khorb khun	ครับ/ค่ะ ขอขอบคุณ
No, thank you	mai krub/ka. Khorb khun	ไม่ครับ/ค่ะ ขอขอบคุณ
Hello	Sawaddee krub/ka	สวัสดีครับ/ค่ะ
Good bye	laa gorn krub/ka	ลาก่อนครับ/ค่ะ
Good morning/ good afternoon/ good evening	sawaddee krub/ka	สวัสดีครับ/ค่ะ

Could you please.....? choo-ey.....noy dai mai?
ช่วย....หน่อยได้ไหม?

Can I have.....? khor.....noy dai mai?
ขอ.....หน่อยได้ไหม?

Can you speak more slowly?
Phood chaa chaa noy dai mai?

พูดช้าๆหน่อยได้ไหม?

My name is..... Phom/chan cheu..... ผม/ฉัน
ชื่อ.....

How are you? Sabai dee mai krub/ka?
สบายดีไหมครับ/คะ?

Food

Thai food is healthy due to extensive use of spices and fresh herbs. Balanced diet is normally achieved through an assortment of dishes in a typical Thai meal or even in a single-dish meal.

Starter

Deep fried curried fish cake
Tawt man plaa

ทอดมันปลา

Deep fired curried prawn cakes
Tawt man goong

ทอดมันกุ้ง

Deep fried spring rolls
Paw pia tawt

ปอเปี๊ยะทอด

Rice crackers served with minced prawn sauce
Khao tang naa tang

ข้าวตังหน้าตัง

Pork satey
Moo satey

หมูสะเต๊ะ

Curry and soup
Hot and sour prawn or chicken soup
Tom yum goong or gai

ต้มยำกุ้งหรือไก่

Chicken galangal in coconut milk soup
Tom khaa gai

ต้มข่าไก่

Green chicken curry
Gaeng khiaw waan gai

แกงเขียวหวานไก่

Stir fried beef or chicken or pork in phanaeng curry
Phanaeng neue, gai, moo

พะแนงเนื้อ, ไก่ หรือ หมู

Mutsaman chicken curry
Gaeng mutsaman gai

แกงมัสมั่นไก่

Squid spicy salad	Yum plaa muek	ยำปลาหมึก
Steam fish curry	Haw mok plaa	ห่อหมกปลา
Thai barbecued chicken	Gai yaang	ไก่ย่าง
Omelet	Kai jiew	ไข่เจียว

Fish dishes

Steamed sea bass with lime Plaa graphong neung manao	ปลากะพงนึ่งมะนาว
Steamed fish Plaa pae-sa	ปลาแป๊ะซะ
Grilled fish covered with salt Plaa phaw gleu	ปลาเผาเกลือ
Deep fried fish served with deep fried garlic Plaa tawt gratiam prik thai	ปลาทอดกระเทียมพริกไทย

Quick dishes

Stir fried chicken/pork/prawn with basil served with rice Grapao gai, moo or goong	กระเพราไก่, หมู หรือ กุ้ง ราดข้าว
Steamed rice served with chicken and soup Khao man gai	ข้าวมันไก่
Noodle soup Gauy tiew	ก๋วยเตี๋ยว
Thai style fried noodle with chicken, prawn Phat thai gai or goong	ผัดไทยไก่หรือกุ้ง

Thai festivals

Loy Grathong or Loy Krathong (November 12, 2008)

Loy Grathong is one of the most beautiful and famous festival in Thailand. It takes place on the full moon in November. In the evening, Thai people will go down to their nearest canal (klong) or the river to float Grathong.

A Grathong contains flowers, a candle and three incense sticks which are lighted before being placed on the water. Thai people believe this will bring them good luck.

Song Graan or Songkran Festival (April 13-15, 2008)

Song Graan is a Thai traditional New Year which starts on April 13 every year and last for 3 days. It is a Thai word which means “move” or “change” as it is the day when the sun changes its position in the zodiac. It is well known as the “Water Festival” as people believe that water will wash away bad luck.

Buddhist Lent “Wan Khao Phansaa” (July 18, 2008)

The Buddhist lent is a time devoted to study and meditation. Buddhist monks remain within the temple grounds and do not venture out for a period of three months starting from the first day of the waning moon of the eighth lunar month (in July) to the fifteenth day of the waxing moon of the eleventh lunar month (in October). In former times, this was done to prevent monks from trampling upon rice paddies when they ventured out to receive offering from the villagers.

The event or festival on the day of the Buddhist Lent is very impressive and consists of carved beeswax candles of various shape and sizes being paraded in every town across the country. This is particularly popular in Ubon Ratchathani Province.

Surin Elephant Festival (November 14-16, 2008)

Surin Elephant Festival is always scheduled on the third weekend of November each year. The festival represents the greatness of the province and attracts visitors from all over the world. Surin’s population nearly doubles as it becomes home to hundreds of elephants. The festival consists of live shows, parades and fairs, all celebrating Thailand’s great national symbol, the elephant.

Thailand Public Holidays 2009

Day	Month/Date	Event	Bank	Government
Thursday	January 1	New Year’s Day	Off	Off
Saturday	January 12	Children Day	-	-
Wednesday	January 16	Teacher Day	-	School off
Monday	February 9	Makha Bucha Day	Off	Off
Monday	April 6	Chakri Memorial Day	Off	Off
Monday	April 13	Song Graan day	Off	Off
Tuesday	April 14	Song Graan Day	Off	Off
Wednesday	April 15	Song Graan Day	Off	Off
Wednesday	April 16	Song Graan Day	Off	Off
Friday	May 1	National Labour Day	Off	-
Tuesday	May 5	Coronation Day	Off	Off
Friday	May 8	Wisakhabucha day	Off	Off
Monday	May 11	Royal Ploughing Ceremony Day	-	Off
Wednesday	July 1	Half year of The Bank	Off	-
Tuesday	July 7	Asarnha Bucha Day	-	Off
Wednesday	July 8	Buddhist lent Day	-	Off
Wednesday	August 12	H.M The Queen’s Birthday	Off	Off
Friday	October 23	Chulalongkorn Memorial Day	Off	Off

Saturday	December 5 Also 7	H.M. The King's Birthday	Off	Off
Thursday	December 10	Constitution Day	Off	Off
Thursday	December 31	New Year's Eve	Off	Off