

Asking for Directions in Turkish: Phrases + Audio Dialogue

Intermediate

Free listening lesson with transcript, translation, grammar notes & vocabulary

Getting lost is part of traveling, and asking a stranger for help is one of the most useful things you can do in Turkish. This lesson covers both sides of that conversation: how to ask for directions, and how to understand the directions a Turkish speaker gives you back — street names, turns, landmarks, and distances included.

This PDF has the full transcript, translation, and vocabulary. To hear the native-speaker audio for this dialogue, visit fluentinturkish.com/listening/asking-for-directions-in-turkish.

Essential Turkish Phrases for Asking Directions

The audio dialogue below is actually about a different problem — choosing *how* to get somewhere (taxi, metro, or bus) — not about navigating on foot. These phrases fill that gap: the words you need to ask for and follow street-level directions.

Turkish	English
Affedersiniz, bir şey sorabilir miyim?	Excuse me, can I ask you something?
Taksim'e nasıl gidebilirim?	How can I get to Taksim?
Burası nerede?	Where am I?
Dümdüz gidin.	Go straight ahead.
Sağa dönün.	Turn right.
Sola dönün.	Turn left.
Karşıya geçin.	Cross to the other side.
Köşede.	On the corner.
Yanında.	Next to it.
Karşısında.	Across from it.
Ne kadar uzakta?	How far is it?
Yürüyerek gidebilir miyim?	Can I walk there?

Turkish	English
Hangi otobüse binmeliyim?	Which bus should I take?
Nerede inmeliyim?	Where should I get off?

Audio Dialogue

Now listen to a real conversation: a tourist near Taksim asking a local how to get there, and weighing metro against taxi.

Turkish Transcript

Turist: Burası yanlış sokak... Hmm, pardon, bir şey sorabilir miyim?

Yerli: Tabii, buyurun.

Turist: Ben Taksim'e gitmek istiyorum. Nasıl gidebilirim?

Yerli: Ah evet. Taksiyle mi? Metroyla mı? Otobüsle mi?

Turist: Bilmiyorum. Fark etmez.

Yerli: Peki... 100 metre ileride metro var. Metroyla çok hızlı gidebilirsiniz.

Turist: Ah, nerede bilet alabilirim?

Yerli: Metro istasyonunda makinelerden nakitle alabilirsiniz.

Turist: Bilet ne kadar?

Yerli: Bir şey değil... 2-3 lira.

Turist: Peki. Taksiyle daha hızlı, değil mi?

Yerli: Evet. Taksiyle daha hızlı ve daha rahat tabii. Ama trafik olabilir. Dikkat edin.

Turist: Taksiyle ne kadar?

Yerli: Zannediyorum 20-25 lira arası.

Turist: Tamam, teşekkür ederim. Taksiyle gitmek istiyorum. ATM nerede, biliyor musunuz?

Yerli: Maalesef bilmiyorum.

Turist: Peki, teşekkürler. İyi günler.

Yerli: İyi günler.

English Translation

Tourist: Sorry, this is the wrong street... excuse me, can I ask you something?

Local: Sure, go ahead.

Tourist: I want to go to Taksim. How can I get there?

Local: Ah, I see. By taxi? By metro? By bus?

Tourist: I don't know. It doesn't matter.

Local: Well... there's a metro station 100 metres ahead. You can get there very quickly by metro.

Tourist: Oh, where can I buy a ticket?

Local: You can buy one with cash from the machines at the metro station.

Tourist: How much is the ticket?

Local: It's very little — around two or three lira.

Tourist: Okay. It's faster by taxi, isn't it?

Local: Yes. Of course it's faster and more comfortable by taxi. But there might be traffic. Watch out for that.

Tourist: How much would it be by taxi?

Local: I'd guess somewhere between twenty and twenty-five lira.

Tourist: Okay, thank you. I'll go by taxi then. Do you know where the ATM is?

Local: Unfortunately, I don't know.

Tourist: Alright, thanks. Have a good day.

Local: You too.

Note: this dialogue was recorded a while ago, and ticket and taxi fares in Istanbul have gone up since then — treat the numbers in the transcript as part of the story, not current pricing.

In practice, most Istanbul metro and bus fares today are paid with an **Istanbulkart** (a rechargeable transit card) rather than single-use cash tickets bought fresh each time — you can buy and top up a card with cash or bank card at machines in most stations.

How to Ask for Directions in Turkish

Start with a polite opener, then say where you want to go:

Affedersiniz. / Bakar mısınız?

Excuse me.

[Place] nerede?

Where is [place]?

[Place]'e nasıl giderim / gidebilirim?

How do I get to [place]?

[Place]'i arıyorum.

I'm looking for [place].

All three patterns work with almost any destination — you just attach the right suffix to the place name (more on that in the Grammar Notes below).

Understanding Turkish Directions

Turkish directions are usually a short sequence of instructions, not a single phrase. A typical answer sounds like this:

Dümdüz gidin, ikinci sokakta sağa dönün. Eczane karşınızda olacak.

Go straight ahead, turn right at the second street. The pharmacy will be across from you.

A few pieces worth listening for:

İlk / ikinci / üçüncü sokak

the first / second / third street

Yürüyerek beş dakika

five minutes on foot

Az ileride / biraz geride

a little further ahead / a little back that way

If you miss a step, it's completely normal to ask them to repeat it: **Tekrar edebilir misiniz?** (*Could you repeat that?*)

Grammar Notes

-Abil: Ability, Permission, and Polite Requests

Sorabilir miyim?

Can I ask?

Bir şey sorabilir miyim?

Can I ask you something?

The suffix **-Abil** attaches to a verb stem to mean “can” or “may” — depending on context, it can express ability, permission, or possibility.

Otobüsle gidebilir miyim?

Can I go by bus? (permission)

Yağmur yağabilir.

It might rain. (possibility)

-IA for Transportation

Add **-IA** (with vowel harmony: -la or -le) to a vehicle to say “by”:

Taksiyle

by taxi

Metroyla

by metro

Otobüsle

by bus

The Dative Suffix: Taksim’e

Taksim’e nasıl gidebilirim?

How can I get to Taksim?

The dative suffix **-A** (-a/-e, written with an apostrophe after a proper noun like Taksim) marks the place you're going **to**. It attaches to whatever destination you name: **eve** (to home), **otele** (to the hotel), **oraya** (to there).

Değil mi? (Tag Questions)

Taksiyle daha hızlı, değil mi?

It's faster by taxi, isn't it?

Unlike English, **değil mi?** never changes, no matter the subject or tense:

Araba büyük, değil mi?

The car is big, isn't it?

Arabalar büyük, değil mi?

The cars are big, aren't they?

Location Words: İleride, Geride, Yanında, Karşısında

İleride

ahead, further on

Geride

behind, back that way

Yanında

next to it

Karşısında

across from it, opposite it

100 metre ileride metro var.

There's a metro station 100 metres ahead.

Vocabulary

Yanlış

Wrong

Sokak

Street

Fark etmez

It doesn't matter

Hızlı

Fast

Bilet

Ticket

Nakit

Cash

Almak

To take, to buy

Dikkat etmek

To pay attention

Arası

Between

Maalesef

Unfortunately

Bilmiyorum

I don't know

Biliyorum

I know

İstasyon

Station

Metro istasyonu

Metro station

Practice

You're standing on a street corner in Istanbul, a little lost. Try saying these in Turkish before checking the essential-phrases table above:

1. Excuse me, can I ask you something?
2. How can I get to Taksim Square?
3. Is it within walking distance?
4. Which bus should I take?

Now try the reverse: someone tells you “**Dümdüz gidin, sağa dönün. Eczane solunda olacak.**”
Where should you look for the pharmacy?

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