

Estonian A0-A2

Class 1



Disclaimer

I am NOT a professional teacher. Everything I say or teach comes mainly from my own experience with the language. I am teaching voluntarily and purely out of interest to teach people Estonian.

Overview of today's class

- Introduction to the language (brief history of changes, facts)
- Alphabet (brief pronunciation guide for specific letters)
- Grammar: personal pronouns
- Verb conjugation endings
- Explanation for question word "Kas"
- Vocabulary: Question words
- Greeting and introduction phrases
- Reading texts

About the language

- Spoken by 1 mln people as a native language, 230.000 as foreign language
- Belongs to Finno-Ugric language family along with Finnish and Hungarian
- Divides into 2 main groups: Northern (standard) and Southern Estonian languages (Setu, mulgi, võro)
- Spelling is based on Northern Estonian
- Pronunciation is simple, grammar is not

Brief history of how it came to life

- Pre 1200s Proto-Finnish
- Biggest changes happened from 13th-17th century (influenced by Low German)
- Old Estonian is pretty much unknown, since there aren't enough texts or documents
- Earliest documents of somewhat modern Estonian come from 1800s

Examples of changes in the language

- Silmä- silm
- Külä- küla
- Jalka- jalg-jala
- Isä-isa

- "Tuli üksi suuri tuuli" - "tuli üks suur tuul"

The Alphabet

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh
Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp
Qq Rr Ss Šš Zz Žž Tt Uu Vv
Ww Ōō Ää Öö Üü Xx Yy

Difference in sounds

- E as in "there", "economy"
- I as in "really", "me",
- J as in "yes"
- Š as in "shock"
- Ž as in "deja vu"
- Ä as in "that", "happens"
- Ö, Ü and Õ don't have English equivalents, but there are videos on how to pronounce those
- C, Q, W, X, Y and Z are not really used. They are only used for foreign names.

How to pronounce ö, ü and ã

- [How to pronounce the letter ã](#)
- [Letter ö](#)
- [Letter ü](#)

Personal pronouns

- Mina/Ma- I
- Sina/sa- You (sing., informal)
- Tema/Ta- he/she/it
- Meie/Me- We
- Teie/te- You (plural and formal)
- Nemad/Nad- They

Verb-person agreement aka verb conjugation

Mina	-n	Meie	-me
Sina	-d	Teie	-te
Tema	-b	Nemad	-vad

Examples

- **Sööma-** to eat
Ma süön
Sa sööd
Tema süöb
Meie süöme
Teie süöte
Nad süövad
- **Minema-** to go (irregular)
ma lähen
tema läheb
nad lähevad

Vocabulary 1: Greetings and introductions

- Tere- Hello (standard, formal)
- Kuidas teil/sul läheb?- How are you (doing)?
- Mul läheb... -I'm doing...
 - Hästi- good
 - ...halvasti- bad
 - ... nii ja naa- so-so
- Mis teie/sinu nimi on?- What is your name?
Minu nimi on ...- My name is ...
- Kust sa pärit oled?- Where are you from?
(informal)
Kust te pärit olete?- Where are you from? (form)
- Ma olen pärit..... (+st)- I'm from ...
 - Saksamaalt- (from) Germany
 - Itaaliast-(from) Italy
 - Rootsist- (from) Sweden

And proceed

- Tere hommikust/päevast/õhtust- Good morning/afternoon/evening
- Head ööd- Good night
- Head aega/Nägemist- Goodbye/See you (later)
- Jah- yes
- Ei- no
- Palun- please
- Aitäh/tänan- thank you
- Vabandust- sorry

Question words

- Mis?- What?
- Kes?- Who?
- Millal?- When?
- Miks?- Why?
- Kuidas?- How?
- Kuhu?- Where?
- Kus?- Where?
- Kust?- From where?
- Kas?- no English equivalent

"Kas" explanation

- "Kas" makes the sentence into a question
- Closest equivalent of it would be Finnish verb suffix -ko/-kö
- Tal on koer. He/she has a dog-
Kas tal on koer?- **Does** he/she have a dog?

Sina lähed homme kinno. - You will go to the cinema tomorrow.

Kas sa lähed homme kinno?- Will you go to the cinema tomorrow?

Reading text

Maria: Tere, minu nimi on Maria ja ma olen pärit Ameerikast. Ma olen õpetaja. Ma olen vallaline ja mul pole lapsi. Ma räägin inglise ja saksa keelt. Praegu õpin ma eesti keelt. Ma õpin eesti keelt, sest see on mulle huvitav.

Aasa: Tere, minu nimi on Aasa. Ma elan Soomes. Ma olen tantsija. Mul on elukaaslane ja kaks last, üks poeg ja üks tütar. Ma räägin soome ja inglise keelt. Ma õpin eesti keelt töö jaoks.

Jaya: Tere! Minu nimi on Jaya. Ma olen Indiast pärit, aga praegu elan Rootsis. Ma ei tööta, ma õpin. Ma olen abielus naisega ja meil on üks laps, üks poeg. Ma räägin hindi, inglise ja natuke rootsi keelt. Ma õpin eesti keelt, sest praegu ma elan Eestis.

Reading text 2

- Maria: Mis su nimi on?

Aasa: Aasa. Mis sinu nimi on?

Maria: Minu nimi on Maria. Kust sa pärit oled?

Aasa: Mina olen pärit Soomest. Kust oled sina pärit?

Maria: Ameerikast. Kus sa elad?

Aasa: Mina elan Helsingis. Ja sina?

Maria: Miamis.

Useful links

- [Sõnaveeb](#)
- [Keeleklikk](#)

Homework (optional)

- Learn the vocabulary provided
- Learn to pronounce the õ, ö, ü
- Write a very brief introduction of yourself in Estonian using the phrases on the slides and extra vocabulary provided

Next class topics

- Grammar: Base 3 noun cases+interior cases
- Consonant gradation
- Vocabulary: Numbers
- Reading
- First homework

Questions?