

# Expressing needs

In English, when we want to convey a need to someone, we can make a direct request such as: 'I need a clean towel, please.' or we can begin by stating there is some sort of problem: 'Excuse me, my towel is dirty.' - thus implying a need.

Also, when expressing needs, the tone of voice we use is very important if we do not want to sound too harsh or impolite.

At the beginning of Learning Object 2: 'There is no pillow' you heard two ways of expressing needs, both of which resulted in the hotel staff rectifying the problem. The first was when the speaker described the state of the towel, that is, that it was dirty. The second was when the speaker said there was something missing, that is, that there was no soap in the room.

The examples were:

*Handuk saya kotor.*                      My towel is dirty.  
*Tidak ada sabun.*                      There is no soap.

Notice the patterns:

Noun	Possessive adjective	Adjective
<i>Handuk</i>	<i>saya</i>	<i>kotor.</i>

  

Word for negating verbs and adjectives	Verb 'to exist'	Noun
<i>Tidak</i>	<i>ada</i>	<i>sabun.</i>

You can see that the verb 'to be' is used in both the English examples above. You can also see that there is no verb in the first Indonesian example and that the verb 'to exist' is used in the second Indonesian example. (By now, you know that there is no real equivalent of the English verb 'to be' in Indonesian.)

So, in sentences like those in the first example above, **no verb is required**. You can simply say: *Handuk saya kotor* which literally means 'My towel dirty'.

However, in sentences like those in the second example above, the verb *ada* (to exist) is required. This is because we are not describing the soap with an adjective. Rather, we are saying that there is no soap (no soap exists) in the room: *Tidak ada sabun*. In these kinds of sentences, **the verb *ada* is required**.

## Expressing needs

Another way of expressing needs is to use the verb **membutuhkan** (to need).

For example:

*Saya membutuhkan handuk.*                      I need a towel.  
*Saya tidak membutuhkan handuk.*        I don't need a towel.

Notice the patterns:

Subject	Verb	Object
<i>Saya</i>	<i>membutuhkan</i>	<i>handuk</i>

Subject	Word for negating verbs and adjectives	Verb	Object
<i>Saya</i>	<i>tidak</i>	<i>membutuhkan</i>	<i>handuk</i>



### NOTE:

A synonym for **membutuhkan** is **memerlukan**.

## Exercises



1. Your family has just rented a serviced apartment and you are going through the check list to make sure everything is in the apartment and is in good condition. When you finish, you find a number of things missing, dirty or broken (indicated by the **x** in the table below). Write simple statements in Indonesian to the management informing them of the problems.

Examples:

- *Tidak ada sabun.*
  - *Jam dinding saya rusak.*
- or
- *Jam dindingnya\* rusak.*

\* Remember, the suffix *-nya* (the *-*) is used to refer to something already mentioned or within an identifiable group of objects.

(If you need help, refer to the vocabulary list on Page 4.)

Item	Present	Clean	Working/Not Broken
Handuk	<b>x</b>	✓	
Sabun	✓	✓	
Bantal	<b>x</b>		
Selimut	✓	<b>x</b>	
Tisu WC	✓	✓	
Televisi	✓	✓	<b>x</b>
Gelas	✓	<b>x</b>	✓
Jam dinding	<b>x</b>		

- a) \_\_\_\_\_
- b) \_\_\_\_\_
- c) \_\_\_\_\_
- d) \_\_\_\_\_
- e) \_\_\_\_\_
- f) \_\_\_\_\_

## Expressing needs



2. You and your family are staying at a hotel. Read the description of your room below. Then answer the questions that follow.

*Kamarnya enak. Ada handuk bersih di kamar mandi.*

*Ada sabun di bak mandi dan shower. Di kulkas ada cokelat dan dua botol air dingin. Di kamar tidur ada bantal. Tetapi tidak ada selimut. Di WC ada tisu WC.*

Example:

*Apakah Anda membutuhkan tisu WC?*

*Tidak saya tidak membutuhkan tisu WC.*

- a) Apakah Anda membutuhkan sabun?

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- b) Anda membutuhkan cokelat?

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- c) Apakah Anda membutuhkan selimut?

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- d) Apa Anda membutuhkan air dingin?

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- e) Apakah Anda memerlukan handuk?

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Vocabulary:

<i>enak</i>	comfortable/nice
<i>bersih</i>	clean
<i>bak mandi</i>	bath tub
<i>kulkas</i>	refrigerator
<i>kamar tidur</i>	bedroom
<i>WC (pronounced 'way say')</i>	toilet
<i>televisi</i>	television
<i>gelas</i>	drinking glasses
<i>jam dinding</i>	wall clock
<i>rusak</i>	broken



## Thinking cross-culturally:

### In Australia

3. a) As previously mentioned, tone of voice is very important when expressing needs so as not to sound too harsh or impolite. If, for example, you said to your parents or your teacher in a demanding manner, 'My exercise book is full!', how do you think they might react?

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- b) If you were staying at a hotel, a respectful-sounding statement like 'Excuse me, my towel is dirty.' is an appropriate way of providing an initial explanation as to why you are asking for something. It also communicates to the hotel staff that something is not quite up to standard.

What sort of response would you expect from hotel staff in Australia if you made a statement in this manner?

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c) What would you think if hotel staff responded with 'So? What do you want'?

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### In Indonesia

d) Indonesians value social harmony and tend to refrain from open displays of anger or frustration. Often they will keep smiling even when frustrated or angry. In this way they try to minimise the possibility of publicly embarrassing anyone.

If an Indonesian has a problem with the service at a hotel in Indonesia, how do you think they would conduct themselves in order to achieve a favourable outcome?

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