

Many ways of saying 'you'

Someone once conducted research and recorded fifty-two different ways of saying 'you' in Indonesian! Fortunately, you don't need to be able to use all fifty-two terms at this point in time. However, as some of these words are used frequently by Indonesians, it is important that you become familiar with the more common ones and understand how they are used.

Study the words and their meanings in the list below.

<i>Kakak</i>	older brother or sister; often shortened to <i>Kak</i> when used as a term of address
<i>Adik</i>	younger brother or sister; often shortened to <i>Dik</i> when used as a term of address
<i>Ibu</i>	Mother; often shortened to <i>Bu</i> when used as a term of address
<i>Bapak</i>	Father; often shortened to <i>Pak</i> when used as a term of address
<i>Kakek</i>	Grandfather
<i>Nenek</i>	Grandmother
<i>Paman</i>	Uncle
<i>Bibi</i>	Aunty
<i>Om</i>	Uncle; more common in spoken Indonesian than <i>Paman</i>
<i>Tante</i>	Aunty; more common in spoken Indonesian than <i>Bibi</i>
<i>Saudara</i>	a general term for any family member except parents



NOTE:

All the words in this list can also be used to say 'you' when addressing someone who is not a family member. This is important to know.

Using the terms with family members is easy. Understanding and knowing when to use them with others can be more challenging.

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Om and Tante:

Indonesians address the male siblings of their parents as *Om* (uncle) and the female siblings of their parents as *Tante* (aunt). However, they might also use *Om* or *Tante* with an older person to whom they feel close, perhaps a family friend. They might use *Om* or *Tante* followed by the person's first name, for example, *Om Toni!* *Tante Yuli* even though the person is not their real uncle or aunt.

Indonesians also use *Om/Tante* with people they are less familiar with, even with people whose name they do not yet know. This can only be done in informal situations where there is still a need to be polite but where the use of *Pak/Ibu* would be considered too formal.

Kakak and Adik:

As with *Om* and *Tante*, *Kakak* and *Adik* can be followed by a person's name. Often, these terms are then shortened to *Kak* and *Dik*. For example, an Indonesian may address another person slightly older than themselves as *Kak Nina*. A younger person named *Yanto* may be addressed as *Dik Yanto*.

Nenek and Kakek:

When used to address someone as 'you', these terms are less likely to be followed by the person's name.

Saudara:

- (i) *Saudara* is used to mean 'you' when talking to someone with whom you are not familiar and whose name you may not yet know. It is a useful term to use when getting to know someone until more familiar terms such as the person's name or *kamu* can be used.
- (ii) *Saudara* is also used as a general term to refer to one's relatives. It is never used to address an immediate family member as 'you'.

For example:

Orang itu saudara saya.

That person is my relative.

For the moment, it is still safest for you to continue using *Anda*, *Ibu*, *Bapak*, and *kamu* to mean 'you'. However, you need to develop an understanding of why you might hear Indonesians using other words meaning 'you' and why you will eventually need to use them too.

Exercises



1. Apart from their own parents, with whom do you think Indonesians would use the following terms?

Bapak (Pak) / Ibu (Bu)



2. With whom do you think you might hear Indonesians use the following five terms of address? Include family members and people outside the family.

a) *Om*

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b) *Tante*

c) *Kakek*

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d) *Nenek*

e) *Saudara*

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3. Read these two dialogues and underline the terms of address that mean 'you'.

Then explain what you think the relationship is between the speakers and why they use these particular terms of address. (Note that in both dialogues the speakers are not immediate family members.)

- a) A: *Om Toni suka musik apa?*
B: *Saya suka musik jazz. Adik suka musik apa?*
A: *Saya suka musik hip-hop, Om.*
B: *Oh, apakah Dik Budi tidak suka musik jazz?*

- b) A: *Halo Kak, apa kabar? Kak Yuli suka bermain tenis?*
B: *Halo Candra. Tidak, saya tidak suka tenis. Bagaimana Dik Candra?*
A: *Suka. Saya suka tenis. Apakah Kak Yuli suka filem horor?*
