

LESSON NOTES

# Absolute Beginner S1 #1

## Saying Hello No Matter the Time of Day in Polish

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#1

# DIALOGUE - POLISH

## MAIN

1. Gosia : Cześć!
2. Alex : Cześć!
3. Gosia : Jak się masz?
4. Alex : Dobrze. A ty?
5. Gosia : Świetnie!

## ENGLISH

1. Gosia : Hi!
2. Alex : Hello!
3. Gosia : How are you?
4. Alex : I'm fine. And you?
5. Gosia : I'm great!

## VOCABULARY

Polish	English	Class
a	"and"	conjunction
dobrze	well, okay	adverb
jak	how	pronoun
ty	you	pronoun
mieć	to have	verb
świetnie	great	adverb
cześć	Hello, Hi.	expression

## SAMPLE SENTENCES

Mam czas. A ty?	Dobrze.
I have time. And you?	I'm fine.
Tak, dobrze mówię.	Nie czuję się dziś dobrze.
Yes, I speak it well.	I'm not feeling well today.

Dobrze się czujesz?	Jak zwykle spędzasz weekendy?
Are you feeling well?	How do you usually spend your weekends?
jak się mówi...	Jak się tego używa?
how do you say...	How do you use this?
Jak smakuje?	Jak często ćwiczysz?
How is the taste?	How often do you work out?
Jak interesy?	Jak masz na imię?
How is business?	What's your name?
Jak się to pisze?	Jak długo uczysz się polskiego?
How do you write this?	How long have you been studying Polish?
Ty tutaj siedzisz?	Mam tylko 5 złotych przy sobie.
Are you sitting here?	I have only 5 zloty on me.
Mam ogromny ogród.	Mam komputer.
I have a huge garden.	I have a computer.
Dziewczyna ma skarbonkę.	Świetnie dziś wyglądasz.
The girl has a piggy bank.	You look great today.
Świetnie!	Świetnie się dziś bawię.
I'm great!	I'm having great fun today.
Świetnie dziś wyglądasz.	Cześć, Ewa.
You look great today.	Hi, Eva.
Cześć, Adam.	
Hello, Adam.	

## VOCABULARY PHRASE USAGE

### **świetnie** - "great"

In the dialogue Gosia answered Alex's question about her well-being with **świetnie**, which stands for the English "great." *Świetnie* is an adverb, but what if we need an adjective? Let's go through all three forms according to the gender:

- *światny* - masculine
- *światna* - feminine
- *światne* - neuter

Don't worry, we will talk about genders later, for now just remember the forms.

The adverb *świetnie* used by Gosia in the dialogue has a positive meaning, but Polish people use it also in negative way. When we want to be ironic, when we're unhappy about something, we've just seen or heard bad news, very often we say *Świetnie!* of course with intonation matching the situation.

### ***Jak się masz?* - "how are you?"**

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The phrase very commonly used in English, "how are you?" is not so popular in Polish language. However, it can be a very simple and good ice-breaker when you meet some Poles for the first time. Then, say - ***Jak się masz?***

Please note that the verb used in Polish is completely different from the English. In Polish we use the verb "to have" which is Polish is *mieć*, here conjugated to the second person singular - *masz*. So the literal translation would be "How are you having yourself?" but of course we will stick to "How are you?"

## GRAMMAR

### **The Focus of this Lesson is How to Greet People in Both Formal and Informal Situations**

***Cześć!***  
**"Hi!"**

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*Cześć*, probably the most common way of greeting people in Poland, can be used towards friends, people around your age, and also among relatives.

Some more even more casual greetings, that are reserved for your friends only are *hej* and *siema*.

As you may have noticed *hej* is very similar to the English "hey" and that's actually where it derives from. The other one, *siema*, is a very interesting greeting, pretty new, but extremely popular among young generations. Whenever you want to say "How are you?" in Polish, you say *Jak się masz?* If we cut off the preposition *jak*, which stands for the English "how," we get *się masz*. So to make it even shorter *siema* was created. There are a few more versions of *siema*, for example *siemka*, *siemano*, *siemanko*. Please remember that these are Polish slang terms and are reserved for your close friends only.

### **Formal Situations**

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There are a few choices when it comes to greeting people in a formal setting. Let's start with the most common expression, which is *dzień dobry*. *Dzień dobry* stands for the English "good morning," but literal translation will be "good day" The noun *dzień* means "day" and the adjective *dobry* means "good." *Dzień dobry* can be used throughout the day, whereas in the evening it's good to say *dobry wieczór*. This expression uses the adjective *dobry*, but in this case the noun is *wieczór*, which means "evening," so all together "good evening," *dobry wieczór*.

If you happen to forget how to say "good evening" you shouldn't worry too much and just say *dzień dobry*, since it's perfectly fine to use it from morning until night.

## Greetings

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### Informal greetings:

1. *Cześć!*  
*Czesc*  
"Hi," "Hello!"
2. *Hej!*  
"Hey!"
3. *Siema!*  
"Hey!," "Hello" (slang)

### Formal greetings:

1. *Dzień dobry*  
*Dzien dobry*  
"Good morning"
2. *Dobry wieczór*  
*Dobry wieczor*  
"Good evening"

## Sample Sentences

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1. *Cześć, Robert.*  
*Czesc, Robert.*  
"Hello, Robert."
2. *Dobry wieczór panu.*  
*Dobry wieczor panu.*

"Good evening, sir"

## Language Tip

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When greeting people you can add their name to the greeting word, just like you've seen in the sample sentences above. Just put a name after *cześć* or *hej*.

Also in case of formal greetings you can do a similar thing but here instead of using the person's name we will use "Sir," which is *pan* or "ma'am" *pani* in Polish. A very important part of Polish grammar is cases, but in these series we will not talk about them in detail. Instead, we will reserve this for further study. For this lesson, please note that whenever you want to say "Good morning, sir" or "Good evening, sir" you have to use the form *panu*, not the dictionary form *pan*:

*Dzień dobry panu* (whenever we greet a man during the day)

*Dobry wieczór panu* (whenever we greet a man in the evening)

*Dzień dobry pani* (whenever greeting a lady during the day)

*Dobry wieczór pani* (whenever greeting a lady in the evening)

## Language Expansion: Farewells

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Saying farewells in Polish is as easy as greetings. Here we have more options to choose from.

### Informal farewells:

1. *papa*  
"bye bye"
2. *pa*  
"bye"
3. *na razie*  
"see you"
4. *nara*  
"see ya"
5. *do zobaczenia* (both formal and informal)  
"see you later"
6. *do zobaczyska*  
"see you later"
7. *do jutra*  
"see you tomorrow"

## Formal farewells:

1. *do widzenia*  
"goodbye"
2. *do zobaczenia* (both formal and informal)  
"see you later"
3. *dobranoc*  
"goodnight"

## CULTURAL INSIGHT

### Meeting Etiquette in Poland

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Gestures in Poland, especially when it comes to greetings, are very important. You can't do well with just saying "hi" to the person you meet. The most common gesture in Poland is a handshake. Whenever you meet someone for the first time, say "hi" and give them a handshake (regardless of whether you, or they, are male or female). Make sure that your grip is firm, if you hold the other person's hand too softly, we get a bad impression of that person. We even say that such a handshake feels like holding a "dead fish" (*zdechła ryba*).

So remember, when you meet someone for the first time, regardless of their sex or age, to give them a firm handshake. Also among men, who already know each other (such as friends) a handshake is a common greeting (very often they don't say a word, and just give a handshake). When it comes to girlfriends, they usually kiss each other on the cheek, hug slightly or do both.