

GEORGIAN

SOME USEFUL PHRASES IN GEORGIAN

გამარჯობა. მე მქვია ჯონ.
[gamardʒoba. me mkʰvi'a dʒon.]
/Gamarjoba. Me mk'via Jon./
Hi. My name is John.

რა გქვიათ?
[ra gkʰvi'atʰ?]
/Ra gk'viath?/
What is your name?

როგორა ხარ? კარგად ვარ.
[rɔgɔra xar. kargad var.]
/Rogora khar. Kargad var./
How are you doing? I'm fine.

საიდან ხართ? მე ვარ ინდიანა.
['saidan xartʰ? me var 'indi'ana.]
/Saidan kharth? Me var Indiana./
Where are you from? I'm from Indiana.

არ მესმის.
[ar mesmis.]
/Ar mesmis./
I don't understand.

ტუალეტი სად არის?
['tualtei sad a'ris?]
/Tualeti sad aris?/
Where is the bathroom?

გმადლობთ.
[gmadlobtʰ.]
/Gmadlobth./
Thank you.

მე შენ მიყვარხარ.
[me ſhen miqvarxar.]
/Me shen miqvarkhar./
I love you.

ნახვამდის.
[naxvamdis.]
/Nakhvamdis./
Good bye.

FIVE REASONS WHY YOU SHOULD LEARN MORE ABOUT GEORGIAN AND THEIR LANGUAGE

1. Georgian is a South Caucasian language spoken by about 4.1 million people and can be found mainly in Georgia, with significant populations also in Russia and Turkey.
2. A member of the Kartvelian language group, Georgian shares many structural similarities to the other three Kartvelian languages: Svan, Mingrelian, and Laz.
3. Georgia is home to the deepest known cave in the world. The Krugera Cave, also known as the Voronya Cave, is 8.3 miles long and 7,208 feet deep.
4. Staple Georgian crops include citrus, grapes, tea, and hazelnuts. And major exports are scrap metal (steel), machinery, tea, hazelnuts, and livestock.
5. Georgia is renowned for its wine-making, and is one of the oldest wine producing regions in the world. In fact, some of the oldest wine jug remains ever discovered were found in Georgian territory. Every year Georgian families celebrate the grape harvest with a traditional festival called Rtveli.

ABOUT US

The Center for Languages of the Central Asian Region (CeLCAR) at Indiana University develops materials for learning and teaching a wide variety of Central Asian languages.

For more information, go to celcar.indiana.edu.



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WHO ARE THE GEORGIAN AND WHERE DO THEY LIVE?



Georgians belong to a Caucasian ethnic group native to Georgia (Sak'art'velo in Georgian), a mountainous country in the Caucasus region of Eurasia situated on the

Black Sea, sharing land borders with Russia to the North, and Turkey, Armenia, and Azerbaijan to the south.

The Georgian population is estimated to be about 7 million with approximately 4.1 million living in Georgia, significant populations in Russia (1 million) and Turkey (1 million), and smaller, but still significant populations throughout Europe (Armenia, Belarus, France, Greece, Italy, Latvia, Turkey, Ukraine), Central Asia (Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan), the Middle East (Iran, Israel), and even some small diaspora groups in North and South America (Canada, the United States, Argentina, Brazil, and Mexico).

WHAT KIND OF LANGUAGE IS GEORGIAN?

Georgian is a Kartvelian language, also referred to as a South Caucasian language. Other Kartvelian languages include Svan, Mingrelian, and Laz. However, Georgian is the most widely spoken

Kartvelian language and the only one with a rich literary history dating back to 430 AD.

Similar to other languages spoken throughout the Caucasus regions, Georgian is an agglutinative



language, where one root word has a series of affixes attached to indicate discrete grammatical functions. Georgian is also well known for its flexible word order and can use SVO (like English) or SOV (like Indo-European languages). Georgians can move the word order around to indicate meanings and add emphasis.

But perhaps the most unique trait of the Georgian language is its extensive use of consonants.

The Georgian language uses 58 consonant sounds from the International Phonetic Alphabet. Furthermore, Georgian uses complex consonant clusters that can include up to six consonants in a row! Additionally, Georgian features harmonic clusters, where two consonant phonemes will inherit the same phonological features, such as voice, aspiration, or ejection.

Finally, while linguists agree that Georgian does use stress, they disagree on whether it occurs at word level, or just the phrasal level. However, linguists do agree that Georgia is a syllable-timed language, where every syllable receives approximately the same amount of duration and prominence, unlike stress-timed languages (like English) that reduce the vowel quality and duration of unstressed syllables.

Note: Some scholars argue that Mingrelian and Laz are dialects of Georgia rather than independent languages.

WHAT ALPHABET DO THE GEORGIAN USE?

The earliest discovered Georgian writing is thought to have been written around 430 AD in Asomtavruli (ႠႢႣႤႥႦႧႨႩႰႱႲႳႴႵႶႷႸႹ), a modified Greek alphabet, which was used until 900 AD when the language shifted towards the Nuskhuri

alphabet. In the 13th century, Georgian adopted the Mkhedruli (მხედრული) alphabet. While some religious documents are still written in Asomtavruli or Nuskhuri, the over-whelming majority of Modern Georgian is written using Mkhedruli.

კველა ადამიანი იბადება თავისუფალი და თანასწორი თავისი ღირსებითა და უფლებებით. მათ მინიჭებული აქვთ გონება და სიხდისი და ერთმანეთის მიმართ უნდა იქცეოდნენ მშობის სულისკვეთებით.

WHAT IS GEORGIAN CULTURE LIKE?

Georgians enjoy a very traditional family oriented society, where men are typically heads of the household and women fill the roles of care takers and keepers of the home. Urban Georgian households normally consist of nuclear families, and maybe a set of grandparents, but rural Georgian households tend to consist of the larger extended family members.

Georgians are an overwhelmingly Christian society, being the third country in the world to adopt Christianity, with 65% of Georgians claiming to be Orthodox, 10% Russian Orthodox, and 8% Armenian Apostolic (8%).

Food is so important in Georgian culture that they have a traditional feast, called a *supra*, filled with traditional Georgian dishes, lots of wine, and even an official toastmaster, *tomada*, who leads the many toasts of the meal. Guests at the supra can enjoy some of the many distinctly Georgian meat and vegetable dishes flavored with herbs and spices, such as *y khachapuri* (cheese baked in pastry), *pkhali* (pureed spinach, garlic, and walnuts), *lobio* (bean dish), and *khinkali* (meat filled dumpling).

