

Health

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CONTENTS

Before You Go	356
Insurance	356
Medical Checklist	356
Internet Resources	357
Further Reading	357
In Transit	357
Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT)	357
Jet Lag & Motion Sickness	357
In Hispaniola	358
Availability & Cost of Health Care	358
Traveler's Diarrhea	358
Infectious Diseases	358
Environmental Hazards	361
Traveling with Children	362
Women's Health	362

From a medical standpoint, the DR and Haiti are generally safe as long as you're reasonably careful about what you eat and drink. The most common travel-related diseases, such as dysentery and hepatitis, are acquired by consumption of contaminated food and water. Mosquito-borne illnesses are not a significant concern, although there is a small but significant malaria risk in certain parts of both countries. By following common sense and keeping your vaccinations topped up, the worst complaint you might come down with on your trip is a bad stomach.

BEFORE YOU GO

Since most vaccines don't provide immunity until at least two weeks after they're given, visit a physician four to eight weeks before departure. Ask your doctor for an International Certificate of Vaccination (otherwise known as 'the yellow booklet'), which will list all the vaccinations you've received. It's a good idea to carry it wherever you travel.

INSURANCE

Many health insurance plans provide coverage while you are traveling abroad, but it is important to check with your provider before

leaving home. Some travel-insurance policies include short-term medical and life insurance, even emergency evacuation, in addition to the standard trip-cancellation and lost-luggage coverage. Ask your travel agent or current insurance provider about travel insurance plans, or check the internet for providers in your area. As always, spend some time reading the fine print to be sure you are clear what the plan does (and does not) cover. Scuba divers should consider obtaining dive insurance from DAN (Diver Alert Network; www.diversalernetnetwork.org); many standard insurance plans do not cover diving accidents, and even when they do, cannot compare to the specialized coverage and experience DAN offers.

MEDICAL CHECKLIST

Following is a list of other items you should consider packing in your medical kit when you are traveling.

- antibiotics (if traveling off the beaten track)
- antibacterial hand gel
- antidiarrheal drugs (eg loperamide)
- paracetamol (eg Tylenol) or aspirin
- anti-inflammatory drugs (eg ibuprofen)
- antihistamines (for hay fever and allergic reactions)
- antibacterial ointment (eg Bactroban; for cuts and abrasions)
- steroid cream or cortisone (for allergic rashes)
- bandages, gauze, gauze rolls
- adhesive or paper tape
- scissors, safety pins, tweezers
- thermometer
- pocket knife

TRAVEL HEALTH WEBSITES

The following government travel-health websites are useful resources to consult prior to departure:

- Australia** (www.smarttraveller.gov.au)
- Canada** (www.hc-sc.gc.ca/english/index.html)
- UK** (www.doh.gov.uk/traveladvice/)
- United States** (www.cdc.gov/travel/)

RECOMMENDED VACCINATIONS

No vaccines are required for DR or Haiti but a number are recommended.

Vaccine	Recommended for	Dosage	Side effects
Chickenpox	Travelers who've never had chickenpox	Two doses 1 month apart	Fever; mild case of chickenpox
Hepatitis A	All travelers	One dose before trip; booster 6-12 months later	Soreness at injection site; headaches; body aches
Hepatitis B	Long-term travelers in close contact with the local population	Three doses over 6-month period	Soreness at injection site; low-grade fever
Rabies	Travelers who may have contact with animals and may not have access to medical care	Three doses over 3 to 4-week period	Soreness at injection site; headaches; body aches; expensive
Tetanus-diphtheria	All travelers who haven't had a booster within 10 years	One dose lasts 10 years	Soreness at injection site
Typhoid	All travelers	Four capsules by mouth, one taken every other day	Abdominal pain; nausea; rash

- DEET-containing insect repellent for use on the skin
- permethrin-containing insect spray for clothing, tents and bed nets
- sun block
- oral rehydration salts
- iodine tablets (for water purification)
- syringes and sterile needles (if traveling to remote areas)

INTERNET RESOURCES

There is a wealth of travel-health advice on the internet. For further information, the Lonely Planet website (www.lonelyplanet.com) is a good place to start. The World Health Organization (www.who.int/ith/) is an excellent resource for travel health information, along with MD Travel Health (www.mdtravelhealth.com), which provides complete travel-health recommendations for every country.

FURTHER READING

Lonely Planet's *Healthy Travel* is packed with useful information including pretrip planning, emergency first aid, immunization and disease information, and what to do if you get sick on the road. Other recommended references include *Travellers' Health* by Dr Richard Dawood (Oxford University Press) and *The Travellers' Good Health Guide* by Ted Lankester (Sheldon Press), an especially useful health guide for volunteers and long-term expatriates working in the field and away from the cities.

IN TRANSIT

DEEP VEIN THROMBOSIS (DVT)

Deep vein thrombosis (DVT) occurs when blood clots form in the legs during plane flights, chiefly because of prolonged immobility. The longer the flight, the greater the risk. Though most clots are reabsorbed uneventfully, some may break off and travel through the blood vessels to the lungs, where they may cause life-threatening complications.

The chief symptom of DVT is swelling or pain in the lower leg, usually but not always on just one side. When a blood clot travels to the lungs, it may cause chest pain and difficulty breathing. Travelers with any of these symptoms should immediately seek medical attention.

To prevent the development of DVT on long flights you should walk about the cabin, regularly contract your leg muscles while sitting and drink plenty of fluids. Recent research also indicates that flight socks, which gently compress the leg from the knee down, encourage blood to flow properly in the legs and reduce the risk of DVT by up to 90%.

JET LAG & MOTION SICKNESS

Jet lag is common when crossing more than five time zones, resulting in insomnia, fatigue, malaise or nausea. To avoid jet lag try drinking plenty of fluids (nonalcoholic) and eating light meals. Upon arrival, get exposure to natural sunlight and readjust your schedule (for meals, sleep etc) as soon as possible.

Antihistamines such as dimenhydrinate (Dramamine) and meclizine (Antivert, Bonine) are usually the first choice for treating motion sickness. Their main side effect is drowsiness. A herbal alternative is ginger, which works like a charm for some people.

IN HISPANIOLA

AVAILABILITY & COST OF HEALTH CARE

In the DR, medical care is variable in Santo Domingo and limited elsewhere, although good cover can be found in many of the more heavily touristed towns. The picture is even more pronounced in Haiti. Although Port-au-Prince has a number of good hospitals, medical facilities even in provincial capitals can be lacking. If you're visiting a clinic don't be surprised to be treated by a Cuban doctor, as many are sent to Haiti as part of a medical aid program. Recommended hospitals are listed under Information in the major-city sections of regional chapters in this book; your embassy may also be a useful contact.

In both countries, many doctors and hospitals expect payment in cash, regardless of whether you have travel-health insurance. If you develop a life-threatening medical problem, you'll probably want to be evacuated to a country with state-of-the-art medical care. Since this may cost tens of thousands of dollars, it's essential that your travel insurance will cover you for this.

Pharmacies are denoted by green crosses (or red in the DR). Most are well supplied, though it is always preferable to bring along an adequate supply of any medications you may need.

TRAVELER'S DIARRHEA

The strains of travel – unfamiliar food, heat, long days and erratic sleeping patterns – can all make your body more susceptible to upset stomachs.

In terms of prevention, eat only fresh fruits or vegetables if they are cooked or if you have washed or peeled them yourself. Water should be treated before drinking (see p362). Meals freshly cooked in front of you (like much street food) or served in a busy restaurant are more likely to be safe. It's also essential to pay close attention to personal hygiene while on the road, particu-

larly after toilet breaks. Antibacterial hand gel, which cleans without needing water, is a real traveler's friend.

If you develop diarrhea, drink plenty of fluids, preferably an oral rehydration solution – readily available in pharmacies. Avoid fatty food and dairy products. A few loose stools don't require treatment but, if you start having more than four or five watery stools a day, you should start taking an antibiotic (usually a quinolone drug) and an anti-diarrheal agent (such as loperamide). If diarrhea is bloody, persists for more than 72 hours, is accompanied by fever, shaking, chills or severe abdominal pain you should seek medical attention.

Amoebic Dysentery

Amoebic dysentery is actually rare in travelers but is often misdiagnosed. Symptoms are similar to bacterial diarrhea, ie fever, bloody diarrhea and generally feeling unwell. You should always seek reliable medical care if you have blood in your diarrhea. Treatment involves two drugs: tinidazole or metronidazole to kill the parasite in your gut, and a second drug to kill the cysts. If left untreated, complications such as liver or gut abscesses can occur.

Giardia

Giardia is a parasite that is relatively common in travelers. Symptoms include nausea, bloating, excess gas, fatigue and intermittent diarrhea. 'Eggy' burps are often attributed solely to giardia, but recent research has shown they're not specific to giardia. The parasite will eventually go away if left untreated, but this can take months. The treatment of choice is tinidazole; metronidazole is a second option.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Hepatitis A

Hepatitis A is the second most common travel-related infection (after traveler's diarrhea). It occurs throughout both the DR and Haiti. Hepatitis A is a viral infection of the liver that is usually acquired by ingestion of contaminated water, food or ice, though it may also be acquired by direct contact with infected persons. Symptoms may include fever, malaise, jaundice, nausea, vomiting and abdominal pain. Most cases will resolve without complications, though hepatitis A occasionally causes severe liver damage. There is no treatment.

The vaccine for hepatitis A is extremely safe and highly effective. If you get a booster six to 12 months later, it lasts for at least 10 years. Because the safety of the hepatitis A vaccine has not been established for pregnant women or children under age two, they should instead be given a gammaglobulin injection.

Hepatitis B

Like hepatitis A, hepatitis B is a liver infection that occurs worldwide but is more common in developing nations. Unlike hepatitis A, the disease is usually acquired by sexual contact or by exposure to infected blood, mainly through blood transfusions or contaminated needles. The vaccine is recommended only for long-term travelers (on the road more than six months) who expect to live in rural areas or have close physical contact with the local population. Additionally, the vaccine is recommended for anyone who anticipates sexual contact with the local inhabitants or a possible need for medical, dental or other treatments while abroad, especially if a need for transfusions or injections is expected.

The hepatitis B vaccine is safe and highly effective. However, a total of three injections are necessary to establish full immunity. Several countries added hepatitis B vaccine to the list of routine childhood immunizations in the 1980s, so many young adults are already protected.

Dengue Fever

Dengue fever is a viral infection found in the DR and, to a lesser degree, Haiti. Dengue is transmitted by *Aedes* mosquitoes, which bite preferentially during the daytime and are usually found close to human habitations, often indoors. They breed primarily in artificial water containers, such as jars, barrels, cans, cisterns, metal drums, plastic containers and discarded tires. As a result, dengue is more common in densely populated urban environments.

Dengue usually causes flu-like symptoms, including fever, muscle aches, joint pains, headaches, nausea and vomiting, often with a rash following. The body aches may be quite uncomfortable, but most cases will resolve uneventfully in a few days. Severe cases usually occur in children under age 15 who are experiencing their second dengue infection.

There is no treatment for dengue fever except to take analgesics such as acetaminophen/

paracetamol (Tylenol) and drink plenty of fluids. Severe cases may require hospitalization for intravenous fluids and supportive care. There is no vaccine. The cornerstone of prevention is avoiding being bitten – for more on insect bites, see below.

HIV/AIDS

HIV is spread via infected blood and blood products and through sexual intercourse with an infected partner. While sexual encounters abroad can be fun they can also be risky, so practicing safe sex (with a condom or nonpenetrative) is essential. There is a small risk of infection through medical procedures, such as blood transfusion and improperly sterilized medical instruments.

The DR and Haiti together account for around three-quarters of all HIV/AIDS cases in the Caribbean, although a 2007 UN report states that infection levels have recently stabilized in both countries. The regional origins and transmission of HIV/AIDS is a highly politicized topic in Haiti (see boxed text, p276).

Malaria

Malaria occurs in several parts of Hispaniola. Spread by a parasite transmitted by the bite of an infected *Plasmodium falciparum* mosquito (usually between dusk and dawn), the main symptoms are high spiking fevers, which may be accompanied by chills, sweats, headache, body aches, weakness, vomiting or diarrhea. Severe cases may involve the central nervous system and lead to seizures, confusion, coma and death. In the DR, malaria occurs chiefly in the western provinces and La Altagracia (including Punta Cana). In Haiti, malaria is primarily found in the central mountains around Hinche and Gros Morne but has been reported throughout the country, including Jacmel and along the Côte des Arcadiens.

Two strategies should be combined to prevent malaria – prophylactic antimalarial medication and mosquito avoidance.

All travelers should consider malaria prophylaxis. The first-choice malaria pill is chloroquine, taken once weekly in a dosage of 500mg, starting one to two weeks before arrival and continuing through the trip and for four weeks after departure. Chloroquine is safe, inexpensive and highly effective, and no drug resistance has been reported in either country. Side effects are typically mild and may include nausea, abdominal discomfort,

headache, dizziness, blurred vision or itching. Severe reactions are uncommon, but remember that malaria can be fatal and the risk of contracting the disease far outweighs the risk of any antimalarial-tablet side effects.

However, no pills are 100% effective, so travelers are advised to prevent mosquito bites by taking these steps:

- Use a DEET-containing insect repellent on exposed skin. Adults should use preparations containing 25% to 35% DEET, reduced to 10% DEET for children under 12. DEET should never be used on children under two. Natural repellents like citronella or eucalyptus can be effective, but must be applied more frequently than those containing DEET.
- Mosquitoes bite between dusk and dawn: sleep under a permethrin-impregnated mosquito net.
- Wear long sleeves and trousers in light colors. Permethrin can also be used on clothes, but it should never be applied to skin.
- Use mosquito coils.
- Spray your room with insect repellent.

If you may not have access to medical care while traveling, you should bring along additional pills for emergency self-treatment. If you were taking malaria pills when you were infected, you should switch to a different medication for treatment, as it is likely you were infected with a resistant strain. Since you will likely be taking chloroquine as a preventative pill, one treatment option is to take four tablets of Malarone once daily for three days. You should begin self-treatment if you can't reach a doctor and you develop symptoms that suggest malaria, such as high spiking fevers. However, professional medical attention is much preferred, and it is unlikely you will be out of reach of a hospital considering the relatively small size of Hispaniola. If you do start self-medication, you should try to see a doctor at the earliest possible opportunity.

Remember to continue taking malaria pills for four weeks after you leave an infected area. If you develop a fever after returning home, see a physician, as malaria symptoms may not occur for months.

Rabies

Rabies is a viral infection of the brain and spinal cord that is almost always fatal. The

rabies virus is carried in the saliva of infected animals and is typically transmitted through an animal bite, though contamination of any break in the skin with infected saliva may result in rabies. Rabies occurs in both the DR and Haiti, with most cases in related to bites from street dogs or wild animals, particularly the small Indian mongoose.

The rabies vaccine is safe, but a full series requires three injections and prices range from being free to staggeringly expensive. Public hospitals in the DR give the vaccine (and post-infection treatment) for no charge, including to tourists; however, if the nearest public facility doesn't have the vaccine on hand, a private facility can charge up to US\$350 per injection. Only hospitals in the major cities in Haiti are likely to carry the vaccine. Those at high risk for rabies, such as animal handlers and spelunkers (cave explorers), should certainly get the vaccine. In addition, those at lower risk for animal bites should consider asking for the vaccine if they might be traveling to remote areas and might not have access to appropriate medical care if needed. The treatment for a possibly rabid bite consists of a vaccine with rabies immune globulin. It's effective, but must be given promptly. Most travelers don't need rabies vaccine.

All animal bites and scratches must be promptly and thoroughly cleansed with large amounts of soap and water, and local health authorities contacted to determine whether or not further treatment is necessary (see Animal Bites, opposite).

Typhoid Fever

Typhoid fever is caused by ingestion of food or water contaminated by a species of *Salmonella* known as *Salmonella typhi*. Fever occurs in virtually all cases. Other symptoms may include headache, malaise, muscle aches, dizziness, loss of appetite, nausea and abdominal pain. Either diarrhea or constipation may occur. Possible complications include intestinal perforation, intestinal bleeding, confusion, delirium or (rarely) coma.

Unless you expect to take all your meals in major hotels and restaurants, typhoid vaccine is a good idea. It's usually given orally, but is also available as an injection. Neither vaccine is approved for use in children under age two. If you get typhoid fever, the drug of choice is usually a quinolone antibiotic such as ciprofloxacin (Cipro) or levofloxacin (Levaquin),

which many travelers carry for treatment of traveler's diarrhea.

Other Infections

Leptospirosis may be acquired by exposure to water contaminated by the urine of infected animals. Outbreaks often occur at times of flooding, when sewage overflow may contaminate water sources. The initial symptoms, which resemble a mild flu, usually subside uneventfully in a few days, with or without treatment, but a minority of cases are complicated by jaundice or meningitis. There is no vaccine. You can minimize your risk by staying out of bodies of fresh water that may be contaminated by animal urine. If you're visiting an area where an outbreak is in progress, you can take 200mg of doxycycline once weekly as a preventative measure. If you actually develop leptospirosis, the treatment is 100mg of doxycycline twice daily.

Brucellosis is an infection of domestic and wild animals that may be transmitted to humans through direct animal contact or by consumption of unpasteurized dairy products from infected animals. In both Hispaniola countries, most human cases are related to infected cattle. Symptoms may include fever, malaise, depression, loss of appetite, headache, muscle aches and back pain. Complications may include arthritis, hepatitis, meningitis and endocarditis (heart-valve infection).

Leishmaniasis has been reported in the eastern part of the DR. The infection is transmitted by sandflies, which are about one-third the size of mosquitoes. Most cases are limited to the skin, though symptoms are often diffuse. Leishmaniasis may be particularly severe in those with HIV. There is no vaccine. To protect yourself from sandflies, follow the same precautions as for mosquitoes (see Malaria, p359), except that netting must be finer mesh (at least 18 holes to the linear inch).

Schistosomiasis, which is a parasitic infection acquired by skin exposure to contaminated fresh water, occurs in the DR mainly in the eastern lowlands and as far west as Jarabacoa. The parasite can be contracted while swimming, wading, bathing or washing in bodies of fresh water, including lakes, ponds, streams and rivers. That said, the overwhelming majority of travelers do not get infected from the many water activities around Jarabacoa.

Conjunctivitis is common in Haiti, where it is called *pish-pish*. Symptoms are swelling and

redness in the white of the eyes, with a yellowish discharge and soreness. Pharmacies are used to dealing with this and can sell medicated eyedrops (regularly bathing the eye in tea also helps). In tandem, washing the eye area with soap, and removing discharge with tissues or cotton wool (discarding after use) is essential, along with always washing hands after touching your eyes.

ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS

Animal Bites

Do not attempt to pet, handle or feed any animal, with the exception of domestic animals known to be free of any infectious disease. Most animal injuries are directly related to a person's attempt to touch or feed the animal.

Any bite or scratch by a mammal, including bats, should be promptly and thoroughly cleansed with large amounts of soap and water, followed by the application of an antiseptic such as iodine or alcohol. Go to the nearest hospital or clinic for possible post-exposure rabies treatment, whether or not you've been immunized against rabies. It may also be advisable to start an antibiotic, since wounds caused by animal bites and scratches frequently become infected. One of the newer quinolones, such as levofloxacin (Levaquin), which many travelers carry in case of diarrhea, would be an appropriate choice.

Snakes are a minor hazard on Hispaniola. In the event of a venomous snake bite, place the victim at rest, keep the bitten area immobilized and move the victim immediately to the nearest medical facility. Avoid tourniquets, which are no longer recommended. Spiny sea urchins and coelenterates (coral and jellyfish) are a hazard in some areas.

Sun

Along with diarrhea, sunburn is the most common traveler's health concern. To protect yourself from excessive sun exposure, you should stay out of the midday sun, wear sunglasses and a wide-brimmed sun hat, and apply sunscreen with SPF 15 or higher, with both UVA and UVB protection. Sunscreen should be generously applied to all exposed parts of the body approximately 30 minutes before sun exposure and should be reapplied after swimming or vigorous activity. Travelers should also drink plenty of fluids and avoid strenuous exercise when the temperature is high.

Water

Tap water in the DR and Haiti is not reliably safe to drink. Bottled water is preferable and widely available; in Haiti water is often sold in sealed plastic bags. Untreated river and lake water should also be avoided.

If you need to drink tap water or river or lake water, vigorous boiling for one minute is the most effective means of purification. Another option is to use iodine-based water-purification pills. Follow purification instructions carefully – pregnant women, those with a history of thyroid disease and those allergic to iodine should avoid water treated this way.

A number of water filters are on the market, and help avoid the environmental cost of mountains of discarded plastic water bottles. Those with smaller pores (reverse osmosis filters) provide the broadest protection, but they are relatively large and are readily plugged by debris. Those with somewhat larger pores (microstrainer filters) are ineffective against viruses, although they remove other organisms such as bacteria and amoebae.

TRAVELING WITH CHILDREN

All travelers with children should know how to treat minor ailments and when to seek medical treatment. Make sure the children are up to date with routine vaccinations, and discuss possible travel vaccines well before departure, as some vaccines are not suitable for children aged under a year.

Upset stomachs are always a risk for children when traveling, so take particular care with diet. If your child is vomiting or experiencing diarrhea, lost fluid and salts must be replaced. It may be helpful to take rehydration powders for reconstituting with sterile water. Ask your pediatrician about this. In hot weather, keep a close watch for sunburn or dehydration.

Lonely Planet's *Travel with Children* and *The ABC of Healthy Travel*, by E Walker et al, are both valuable resources if your little ones are traveling with you.

WOMEN'S HEALTH

Emotional stress, exhaustion and traveling through different time zones can all contribute to an upset in the menstrual pattern. If using oral contraceptives, remember that some antibiotics, diarrhea and vomiting can stop the pill from working and lead to the risk of pregnancy, so remember to take condoms with you just in case.

Pads, panty liners, tampons and other women's sanitary products are generally available in both countries. Large pharmacies and supermarkets tend to have the best selection, including a number of internationally recognized brands. The same applies for contraceptives (both birth control pills and condoms).

Traveling during pregnancy is usually possible but there are important things to consider. Have a medical checkup before embarking on your trip. The most risky times for travel are during the first 12 weeks of pregnancy, when miscarriage is most likely, and after 30 weeks, when complications such as high blood pressure and premature delivery can occur. Most airlines will not accept a traveler after 28 to 32 weeks of pregnancy, and long-haul flights in the later stages can be very uncomfortable. Taking written records of the pregnancy, including details of your blood group, is likely to be helpful if you need medical attention while away. Ensure your insurance policy covers pregnancy delivery and postnatal care, but remember that insurance policies are only as good as the facilities available.

Malaria is a high-risk disease in pregnancy. None of the more effective antimalarial drugs is completely safe in pregnancy, which should be borne in mind if traveling to Haiti.

Traveler's diarrhea can quickly lead to dehydration and result in inadequate blood flow to the placenta. Many of the drugs used to treat various diarrhea bugs are not recommended in pregnancy. Azithromycin is considered safe.

Language

CONTENTS

Who Speaks What Where?	363
Spanish	364
Pronunciation	364
Gender & Plurals	364
Accommodations	365
Conversation & Essentials	365
Emergencies	366
Directions	366
Health	366
Language Difficulties	367
Numbers	367
Shopping & Services	367
Time & Dates	368
Transportation	368
Travel with Children	369
Haitian Creole	369
Pronunciation	369
Conversation & Essentials	369

WHO SPEAKS WHAT WHERE?

Dominican Republic

The official language of the Dominican Republic is Spanish, and it's spoken by every Dominican. Some English and German are also spoken by individuals in the tourist business.

Dominican Spanish is much like Central America's other varieties of Spanish. One notable tendency is that Dominicans swallow the ends of words, especially those ending in 's' – *tres* will sound like 'tre' and *buenos días* like 'bueno día.' For some other regionalisms, see boxed text, opposite.

If you don't already speak some Spanish and intend to do some independent travel outside Santo Domingo or Puerto Plata, you'd be well advised to learn at least some basics in the lingo. For a more detailed guide, get a copy of Lonely Planet's compact *Latin American Spanish Phrasebook*.

Haiti

While for many years French has been considered the official language of Haiti, only 15% of the population can speak it, mainly

TALKING LIKE A REPUBLICAN

Here are some Dominicanisms you should wrap your head (and tongue) around.

apagón	power failure
apodo	nickname
bandera	rice and beans
dominicana	(lit: Dominican flag)
bohío	thatch hut
bulto	luggage
carros de concho	routed, shared taxi
chichi	baby
colmado	small grocery store
fucú	thing that brings bad luck
guapo	bad-tempered
guarapo	sugarcane juice
gumo	(a) drunk
hablador	person who talks a lot
papaúpa	important person
pariguayo	foolish
pín-pún	exactly equal
una rumba	a lot
Siempre a su orden.	You're welcome.
tiguere	rascal
timacle	brave

the educated elite, who these days also have very good English. The majority of the population speaks only Creole, and beyond the major centers it's the only sure means of communication. Language in Haitian society deepens the already massive divisions between social classes, as the government and the judicial system operate in French. The Creole-speaking and mostly illiterate masses are in this way excluded from civil society, leaving the control in the hands of the upper and middle classes. Most schools teach in French, which further disadvantages those who only speak Creole. Since the 1980s there has been a movement among reformists toward the increased use of Creole in civil society. Politicians have begun to make more speeches in Creole, musicians sing in it, more radio stations broadcast in it and there is now a weekly Creole-language paper, *Libète* (Liberty).

There is some debate as to the roots of the Creole language. The vocabulary is predominantly French, with some English and Spanish thrown in, but the structure is considered closer to that of West African languages. The most popularly held belief is that it's the synthesis of 18th-century French with many African languages, Spanish and English.

It is worth learning a few Creole phrases to use in smaller restaurants and for greetings. If you wish to learn Creole, the best book is *Ann Pale Kreyòl*, published by the **University of Indiana Creole Institute** (<http://www.indiana.edu/~creole/>), who also offer a bilingual Haitian Creole–English dictionary. Its website is an excellent source of information on Haitian Creole. Another good source of language books and self-guided language courses is **Educa Vision Inc** (www.educavision.com), based in Florida, USA.

With the ever increasing number of aid and church workers traveling throughout the country, and Haitians repatriated from the US, the number of English-speaking Haitians is on the rise. While you won't find them everywhere, they will seek you out and, in the larger cities, a combination of English and pidgin French will get you from A to B and enable you to order a beer when you get there.

SPANISH

PRONUNCIATION

Pronunciation of Spanish isn't difficult. Many Spanish sounds are similar to their English counterparts, and the relationship between pronunciation and spelling is clear and consistent. Unless otherwise indicated, the English examples used below take standard American pronunciation.

Vowels & Diphthongs

a	as in 'father'
e	as in 'met'
i	as in 'police'
o	as in British English 'hot'
u	as in 'rude'
ai	as in 'aisle'
au	as the 'ow' in 'how'
ei	as in 'vein'
ia	as the 'ya' in 'yard'
ie	as the 'ye' in 'yes'

oi	as in 'coin'
ua	as the 'wa' in 'wash'
ue	as the 'we' in 'well'

Consonants

Spanish consonants are generally the same as in English, with the exception of those listed below.

The consonants **ch**, **ll**, **ñ** and **rr** are generally considered distinct letters, but in dictionaries **ch** and **ll** are now often listed alphabetically under **c** and **l** respectively. The letter **ñ** still has a separate entry after **n** in alphabetical listings.

b	similar to English 'b,' but softer; referred to as 'b larga'
c	as in 'celery' before e and i ; elsewhere as in 'cot'
ch	as in 'choose'
d	as in 'dog'; between vowels and after l or n , it's closer to the 'th' in 'this'
g	as the 'ch' in the Scottish <i>loch</i> before e and i ('kh' in our pronunciation guides); elsewhere, as in 'go' invariably silent
h	as the 'ch' in the Scottish <i>loch</i> ('kh' in our pronunciation guides) or, often, the 'h' in 'how'
j	as the 'y' in 'yellow'
ll	as the 'ni' in 'onion'
r	as in 'run,' but strongly rolled
rr	very strongly rolled
v	as for b ; referred to as 'b corta'
x	as English 'h' when it follows e or i , otherwise like 'taxi'; in some place-names it can also be pronounced as the 'sh' in 'ship'
z	as the 's' in 'sun'

Word Stress

In general, words ending in a vowel, an **n** or an **s** are stressed on the second-last syllable, while those with other endings stress the last syllable. Thus *vaca* (cow) and *caballos* (horses) are both stressed on the next-to-last syllable, while *ciudad* (city) and *infeliz* (unhappy) are stressed on the last syllable.

Written accents generally mark stress on words that don't follow these rules, eg *sótano* (basement), *América* and *porción* (portion).

GENDER & PLURALS

In Spanish, nouns are either masculine or feminine, and there are rules to help determine gender (there are, of course, some

exceptions). Feminine nouns generally end with **-a** or with the groups **-ción**, **-sión** or **-dad**. Other endings typically signify a masculine noun. Endings for adjectives also change to agree with the gender of the noun they modify (masculine/feminine singular **-o/-a**). Where both masculine and feminine forms are included in this language guide, they are separated by a slash, with the masculine form first, eg *perdido/a* (lost).

If a noun or adjective ends in a vowel, the plural is formed by adding **s** to the end. If it ends in a consonant, the plural is formed by adding **es** to the end.

ACCOMMODATIONS

I'm looking for ...

<i>Estoy buscando ...</i>	<i>e-stoy boos-kan-do ...</i>
Where is ...?	
<i>¿Dónde hay ...?</i>	<i>don-de ai ...</i>
a hotel	
<i>un hotel</i>	<i>oon o-tel</i>
a boarding house	
<i>una pensión</i>	<i>oo-na pen-syon</i>
a youth hostel	
<i>un albergue juvenil</i>	<i>oon al-ber-ge khoo-ve-neel</i>

Are there any rooms available?

<i>¿Hay habitaciones libres?</i>	<i>ay a-bee-ta-syon-es lee-bres</i>
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I'd like a ... room.

<i>Quisiera una habitación ...</i>	<i>kee-sye-ra oo-na a-bee-ta-syon ...</i>
single	
<i>individual</i>	<i>een-dee-bee-dwal</i>
double	
<i>doble</i>	<i>do-ble</i>
twin	
<i>con dos camas</i>	<i>kon dos ka-mas</i>

How much is it per ...?

<i>¿Cuánto cuesta por ...?</i>	<i>kwan-to kwes-ta por ...</i>
night	
<i>noche</i>	<i>no-che</i>
person	
<i>persona</i>	<i>per-so-na</i>
week	
<i>semana</i>	<i>se-ma-na</i>

Does it include breakfast?

<i>¿Incluye el desayuno?</i>	<i>een-kloo-ye el de-sa-yoo-no</i>
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May I see the room?

<i>¿Puedo ver la habitación?</i>	<i>pwe-do ver la a-bee-ta-syon</i>
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I don't like it.

<i>No me gusta.</i>	<i>no me goos-ta</i>
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MAKING A RESERVATION

For phone or written requests:

To ...	<i>A ...</i>
From ...	<i>De ...</i>
Date	<i>Fecha</i>

I'd like to book ... *Quisiera reservar ...*
(see the list under 'Accommodations' for bed and room options)

in the name of ... *en nombre de ...*
for the nights of ... *para las noches del ...*
credit card ... *... tarjeta de crédito*
number *número (de)*
expiry date *fecha de vencimiento (de)*

Please confirm ... *Puede confirmar ...*
availability *la disponibilidad*
price *el precio*

It's fine. I'll take it.

OK. La alquilo. *o-kay la al-kee-lo*

I'm leaving now.

Me voy ahora. *me voy a-o-ra*

private/shared bathroom	<i>baño privado/compartido</i>	<i>ba-nyo pree-va-do/kom-par-tee-do</i>
full board	<i>pensión completa</i>	<i>pen-syon kom-ple-ta</i>
too expensive	<i>demasiado caro</i>	<i>de-ma-sya-do ka-ro</i>
cheaper	<i>más económico</i>	<i>mas e-ko-no-mee-ko</i>
discount	<i>descuento</i>	<i>des-kwen-to</i>

CONVERSATION & ESSENTIALS

Hello.	<i>Hola.</i>	<i>o-la</i>
Good morning.	<i>Buenos días.</i>	<i>bwe-nos dee-as</i>
Good afternoon.	<i>Buenas tardes.</i>	<i>bwe-nas tar-des</i>
Good evening/night.	<i>Buenas noches.</i>	<i>bwe-nas no-ches</i>
Bye/See you soon.	<i>Hasta luego.</i>	<i>as-ta lwe-go</i>
Yes.	<i>Sí.</i>	<i>see</i>
No.	<i>No.</i>	<i>no</i>
Please.	<i>Por favor.</i>	<i>por fa-vor</i>
Thank you.	<i>Gracias.</i>	<i>gra-syas</i>
Many thanks.	<i>Muchas gracias.</i>	<i>moo-chas gra-syas</i>
You're welcome.	<i>De nada.</i>	<i>de na-da</i>
Pardon me.	<i>Perdón.</i>	<i>per-don</i>
Excuse me.	<i>Permiso.</i>	<i>per-mee-so</i>
(used when asking permission)		
Forgive me.	<i>Disculpe.</i>	<i>dees-kool-pe</i>
(used when apologizing)		

EMERGENCIAS

Help!	<i>¡Socorro!</i>	so-ko-ro
Fire!	<i>¡Incendio!</i>	een-sen-dyo
I've been robbed.	<i>Me robaron.</i>	me ro-ba-ron
Go away!	<i>¡Déjeme!</i>	de-khe-me
Get lost!	<i>¡Váyase!</i>	va-ya-se

It's an emergency.

Es una emergencia. es oo-na e-mer-khen-sya

Could you help me, please?

¿Me puede ayudar, por favor? me pwe-de a-yoo-dar por fa-vor

I'm lost.

Estoy perdido/a. (m/f) es-toy per-dee-do/a

Where are the toilets?

¿Dónde están los baños? don-de es-tan los ba-nyos

Call ...!

¡Llame a ...! ya-me a

an ambulance

una ambulancia oo-na am-boo-lan-sya

a doctor

un médico oon me-dee-ko

the police

la policía la po-lee-see-a

How are you?

¿Cómo está usted? (pol) ko-mo es-ta oos-ted
¿Cómo estás? (inf) ko-mo es-tas

What's your name?

¿Cómo se llama? (pol) ko-mo se ya-ma
¿Cómo te llamas? (inf) ko-mo te ya-mas

My name is ...

Me llamo ... me ya-mo ...

It's a pleasure to meet you.

Mucho gusto. moo-cho goos-to

The pleasure is mine.

El gusto es mío. el goos-to es mee-o

Where are you from?

¿De dónde es? (pol) de don-de es
¿De dónde eres? (inf) de don-de e-res

I'm from ...

Soy de ... soy de ...

Where are you staying?

¿Dónde está alojado/a? (pol) don-de es-ta a-lo-kha-do/a
¿Dónde estás alojado/a? (inf) don-de es-tas a-lo-kha-do/a

May I take a photo (of you)?

¿Puedo sacar una foto (de usted)? pwe-do sa-kar oo-na fo-to (de oos-ted)

DIRECTIONS**How do I get to ...?**

¿Cómo puedo llegar a ...? ko-mo pwe-do ye-gar a ...

Is it far?

¿Está lejos? es-ta le-khos

Go straight ahead.

Siga derecho. see-ga de-re-cho

Turn left.

Voltée a la izquierda. vol-te-e a la ees-kyer-da

Turn right.

Voltée a la derecha. vol-te-e a la de-re-cha

Can you show me (on the map)?

¿Me lo podría indicar (en el mapa)? me lo po-dree-a een-dee-kar (en el ma-pa)

SIGNS

Entrada	Entrance
Salida	Exit
Información	Information
Abierto	Open
Cerrado	Closed
Prohibido	Prohibited
Comisaria	Police Station
Servicios/Baños	Toilets
Hombres/Varones	Men
Mujeres/Damas	Women

north	norte	nor-te
south	sur	soor
east	este	es-te
west	oeste	o-es-te
here	aquí	a-kee
there	allí	a-yee
avenue	avenida	a-ve-nee-da
block	esquina	es-kee-na
street	calle	ka-ye

HEALTH**I'm sick.**

Estoy enfermo/a. es-toy en-fer-mo/a

Where's the hospital?

¿Dónde está el hospital? don-de es-ta el os-pee-tal

I'm pregnant.

Estoy embarazada. es-toy em-ba-ra-sa-da

I've been vaccinated.

Estoy vacunado/a. es-toy va-koo-na-do/a

I'm allergic to ... *Soy alérgico/a a ...* soy a-ler-khee-ko/a a ...

antibiotics *los antibióticos* los an-tee-byo-tee-kos

nuts *las nueces* las nwe-ses
penicillin *la penicilina* la pe-nee-see-lee-na

I'm ... *Soy ...* soy ...
asthmatic *asmático/a* as-ma-tee-ko/a
diabetic *diabético/a* dee-ya-be-tee-ko/a
epileptic *epiléptico/a* e-pee-lep-tee-ko/a

I have ...	<i>Tengo ...</i>	ten-go ...
a cough	<i>tos</i>	tos
diarrhea	<i>diarrea</i>	dya-re-a
a headache	<i>un dolor de cabeza</i>	oon do-lor de ka-be-sa
nausea	<i>náusea</i>	now-se-a

LANGUAGE DIFFICULTIES**Does anyone here speak (English)?**

¿Hay alguien que hable (inglés)?
ai al-gyen ke a-ble (een-gles)

Do you speak (English)?

¿Habla (inglés)?
a-bla (een-gles)

I speak a little Spanish.

Hablo un poco de español.
a-blo oon po-ko de es-pa-nyol

I (don't) understand.

(No) Entiendo.
(no) en-tyen-do

Could you please ...?

¿Puede ..., por favor? pwe-de ... por fa-vor

repeat that

repetirlo re-pe-teer-lo

speak more slowly

hablar más despacio a-blar mas des-pa-syo

write it down

escribirlo es-kree-beer-lo

How do you say ...?

¿Cómo se dice ...? ko-mo se dee-se ...

What does ... mean?

¿Qué quiere decir ...? ke kye-re de-seer ...

NUMBERS

0	<i>cero</i>	ce-ro
1	<i>uno/a</i>	oo-no/a
2	<i>dos</i>	dos
3	<i>tres</i>	tres
4	<i>cuatro</i>	kwa-tro
5	<i>cinco</i>	seen-ko
6	<i>seis</i>	seys
7	<i>siete</i>	sye-te
8	<i>ocho</i>	o-cho
9	<i>nueve</i>	nwe-ve
10	<i>diez</i>	dyes
11	<i>once</i>	on-se
12	<i>doce</i>	do-se
13	<i>trece</i>	tre-se
14	<i>catorce</i>	ka-tor-se
15	<i>quince</i>	keen-se
16	<i>dieciséis</i>	dye-see-seys
17	<i>diecisiete</i>	dye-see-sye-te
18	<i>dieciocho</i>	dye-see-o-cho

19	<i>diecinueve</i>	dye-see-nwe-ve
20	<i>veinte</i>	vayn-te
21	<i>veintiuno</i>	vayn-tee-oo-no
30	<i>treinta</i>	trayn-ta
31	<i>treinta y uno</i>	trayn-tai oo-no
40	<i>cuarenta</i>	kwa-ren-ta
50	<i>cincuenta</i>	seen-kwen-ta
60	<i>sesenta</i>	se-sen-ta
70	<i>setenta</i>	se-ten-ta
80	<i>ochenta</i>	o-chen-ta
90	<i>noventa</i>	no-ven-ta
100	<i>cien</i>	syen
200	<i>doscientos</i>	do-syen-tos
1000	<i>mil</i>	meel

SHOPPING & SERVICES**I'd like to buy ...**

Quisiera comprar ... kee-sye-ra kom-prar ...

I'm just looking.

Sólo estoy mirando. so-lo es-toy mee-ran-do

May I look at it?

¿Puedo mirarlo? pwe-do mee-rar-lo

How much is it?

¿Cuánto cuesta? kwan-to kwes-ta

That's too expensive for me.

Es demasiado caro para mí. es de-ma-sya-do ka-ro pa-ra mee

Could you lower the price?

¿Podría bajar un poco el precio? po-dree-a ba-khar oon po-ko el pre-syo

I don't like it.

No me gusta. no me goos-ta

I'll take it.

Lo llevo. lo ye-vo

Do you accept ...? *¿Aceptan ...?* a-sep-tan ...

credit cards *tarjetas de crédito* tar-khe-tas de kre-dee-to
traveler's checks *cheques de viajero* che-kes de vya-khe-ro

less *menos* me-nos
more *más* mas
large *grande* gran-de
small *pequeño* pe-ke-nyo

I'm looking for the ...

Estoy buscando ...
ATM *es-toy boos-kan-do ...*
el cajero automático el ka-khe-ro ow-to-ma-tee-ko
bank *el banco* el ban-ko
bookstore *la librería* la lee-bre-ree-a
embassy *la embajada* la em-ba-kha-da

exchange office	<i>la casa de cambio</i>	<i>la ka-sa de kam-byo</i>
general store	<i>la tienda</i>	<i>la tyen-da</i>
laundry	<i>la lavandería</i>	<i>la la-van-de-ree-a</i>
market	<i>el mercado</i>	<i>el mer-ka-do</i>
pharmacy	<i>la farmacia</i>	<i>la far-ma-sya</i>
post office	<i>los correos</i>	<i>los ko-re-os</i>
supermarket	<i>el supermercado</i>	<i>el soo-per-mer-ka-do</i>
telephone centre	<i>el centro telefónico</i>	<i>el sen-tro te-le-fo-nee-ko</i>
tourist office	<i>la oficina de turismo</i>	<i>la o-fee-see-na de too-rees-mo</i>

What time does it open/close?

¿A qué hora abre/cierra?
a ke o-ra a-bre/sye-ra

I want to change some money/traveler's checks.

Quiero cambiar dinero/cheques de viajero.
kye-ro kam-byar dee-ne-ro/che-kes de vya-khe-ro

What's the exchange rate?

¿Cuál es la tasa de cambio?
kwal es la ta-za de kam-byo

I want to call ...

Quiero llamar a ...
kye-ro ya-mar a ...

airmail stamps	<i>correo aéreo estampillas</i>	<i>ko-re-o a-e-re-o es-tam-pee-yas</i>
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TIME & DATES

When?	<i>¿Cuándo?</i>	<i>kwan-do</i>
What time is it?	<i>¿Qué hora es?</i>	<i>ke o-ra es</i>
It's (one) o'clock.	<i>Es la (una).</i>	<i>es la (oo-na)</i>
It's (seven) o'clock.	<i>Son las (siete).</i>	<i>son las (sye-te)</i>

midnight	<i>medianoche</i>	<i>me-dya-no-che</i>
noon	<i>mediodía</i>	<i>me-dyo-dee-a</i>
half past two	<i>dos y media</i>	<i>dos ee me-dya</i>
now	<i>ahora</i>	<i>a-o-ra</i>
today	<i>hoy</i>	<i>oy</i>
tonight	<i>esta noche</i>	<i>es-ta no-che</i>
tomorrow	<i>mañana</i>	<i>ma-nya-na</i>

Monday	<i>lunes</i>	<i>loo-nes</i>
Tuesday	<i>martes</i>	<i>mar-tes</i>
Wednesday	<i>miércoles</i>	<i>myer-ko-les</i>
Thursday	<i>jueves</i>	<i>khwe-ves</i>
Friday	<i>viernes</i>	<i>vyer-nes</i>
Saturday	<i>sábado</i>	<i>sa-ba-do</i>
Sunday	<i>domingo</i>	<i>do-meen-go</i>

January	<i>enero</i>	<i>e-ne-ro</i>
February	<i>febrero</i>	<i>fe-bre-ro</i>

March	<i>marzo</i>	<i>mar-so</i>
April	<i>abril</i>	<i>a-breel</i>
May	<i>mayo</i>	<i>ma-yo</i>
June	<i>junio</i>	<i>khoo-nyo</i>
July	<i>julio</i>	<i>khoo-lyo</i>
August	<i>agosto</i>	<i>a-gos-to</i>
September	<i>septiembre</i>	<i>sep-tyem-bre</i>
October	<i>octubre</i>	<i>ok-too-bre</i>
November	<i>noviembre</i>	<i>no-vyem-bre</i>
December	<i>diciembre</i>	<i>dee-syem-bre</i>

TRANSPORTATION
Public Transportation

What time does ... leave/arrive?	<i>¿A qué hora ... sale/llega?</i>	<i>a ke o-ra ... sa-le/ye-ga</i>
the bus	<i>el autobús</i>	<i>el ow-to-boos</i>
the plane	<i>el avión</i>	<i>el a-vyon</i>
the ship	<i>el barco</i>	<i>el bar-ko</i>

airport bus station	<i>el aeropuerto la estación de autobuses</i>	<i>el a-e-ro-pwer-to la es-ta-syon de ow-to-boo-ses</i>
bus stop	<i>la parada de autobuses</i>	<i>la pa-ra-da de ow-to-boo-ses</i>
luggage-check room	<i>la guardería de equipaje</i>	<i>la gwar-de-ree-a de e-kee-pa-khe</i>
ticket office	<i>la boletería</i>	<i>la bo-le-te-ree-a</i>

I'd like a ticket to ...
Quiero un boleto a ... kye-ro oon bo-le-to a ...

What's the fare to ...?
¿Cuánto cuesta hasta ...? kwan-to kwes-ta a-sta ...

student's (fare) one-way return	<i>de estudiante ida y vuelta</i>	<i>de es-too-dyan-te ee-da ee-da ee vwel-ta</i>
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Private Transportation

pickup (truck) truck	<i>camioneta camión</i>	<i>ka-myo-ne-ta ka-myon</i>
hitchhike	<i>hacer dedo</i>	<i>a-ser de-do</i>

I'd like to hire ...
Quisiera alquilar ... kee-sye-ra al-kee-lar ...

a bicycle	<i>una bicicleta</i>	<i>oo-na bee-see- kle-ta</i>
a car	<i>un auto/un coche</i>	<i>oon ow-to/oon ko-che</i>
a 4WD	<i>un todo terreno</i>	<i>oon to-do te-re-no</i>
a motorbike	<i>una moto</i>	<i>oo-na mo-to</i>

Where's a gas/petrol station?
¿Dónde hay una bomba? don-de ai oo-na bam-ba

ROAD SIGNS

Acceso	<i>Entrance</i>
Ceda el Paso	<i>Give Way</i>
Dirección Única	<i>One-Way</i>
Mantenga Su Derecha	<i>Keep to the Right</i>
No Adelantar/ No Rebasa	<i>No Passing</i>
Peligro	<i>Danger</i>
Prohibido Aparcar/ No Estacionar	<i>No Parking</i>
Prohibido el Paso Pare	<i>No Entry Stop</i>
Salida de Autopista	<i>Exit Freeway</i>

I've run out of gas/petrol.

Me quedé sin gasolina. me ke-de seen ga-so-lee-na

Please fill it up.

Lleno, por favor. ye-no por fa-vor

I'd like (20) liters.

Quiero (veinte) litros. kye-ro (vayn-te) lee-tros

diesel gas/petrol	<i>diesel gasolina</i>	<i>dee-sel ga-so-lee-na</i>
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Is this the road to ...?

¿Se va a ... por esta carretera? se va a ... por es-ta ka-re-te-ra

(How long) Can I park here?

¿(Por cuánto tiempo) Puedo aparcar aquí? (por kwan-to tyem-po) pwe-do a-par-kar a-kee

Where do I pay?

¿Dónde se paga? don-de se pa-ga

I need a mechanic.

Necesito un mecánico. ne-se-see-to oon me-ka-nee-ko

The car has broken down in ...

El carro se ha averiado en ... el ka-ro se a a-ve-rya-do en ...

The motorbike won't start.

No arranca la moto. no a-ran-ka la mo-to

I have a flat tyre.

Tengo una goma pinchada. ten-go oo-na go-ma peen-cha-da

I've had an accident.

Tuve un accidente. too-ve oon ak-see-den-te

TRAVEL WITH CHILDREN

I need ...
Necesito ... ne-se-see-to ...

Do you have ...?
¿Hay ...? ai ...

a car baby seat
un asiento de seguridad para bebés
oon a-syen-to de se-go-ree-da pa-ra be-bes

a child-minding service

un servicio de cuidado de niños
oon ser-vee-syo de kwee-da-do de nee-nyos

(disposable) diapers/nappies

pañales (de usar y tirar)
pa-nya-les (de oo-sar ee tee-rar)

infant formula (milk)

leche en polvo para bebés
le-che en pol-vo pa-ra be-bes

a highchair

una trona
oo-na tro-na

a potty

una pelela
oo-na pe-le-la

a stroller

un cochecito
oon ko-che-see-to

HAITIAN CREOLE**PRONUNCIATION**

Creole pronunciation is fairly intuitive. There are no silent consonants – a hard ‘c’ is only ever represented by a **k**, and **g** is always hard, as in ‘go.’ There is no silent **e** and all instances of **e** are pronounced as acutes (é) unless they have a grave accent (è). For example, *pale* (to speak) is pronounced like *palé* (‘pa-lay’) The word for ‘me’ is *m* and is pronounced ‘um.’

CONVERSATION & ESSENTIALS**Be Polite!**

When you're introduced to someone, you give your name and say *anchante*. Polite greetings when out and about are very important. When you are addressing people you don't know, you should always say *bonjour* (good morning) or *bonswa* (good afternoon/evening) – see below for the various polite forms of address.

To get someone's attention you say ‘psst.’ This isn't rude, but clicking your fingers to someone is; ‘psst’ is the best way to stop a taxi or a taptap.

Good day ... *Bonjou* (used before noon)

Good afternoon/evening ... *Bonswa* (used after 11am)

Good night ... *Bonnwit* (used when taking your leave at evening's end)

Sir *Msyé*
Madam *Madam*
Gentlemen *Mesyé*

Ladies	<i>Medam</i>	I'm looking for ...	<i>M'ap chache ...</i>
Ladies and Gentlemen	<i>Mesye e Dam</i>	Where does the bus leave from?	<i>Kote taptap pati?</i>
See you later.	<i>Na wè pita.</i>	What's the time?	<i>Kilè li ye?</i>
Yes.	<i>Wi.</i>	I'd like to change money.	<i>Mwen ta vle chanje lajan.</i>
No.	<i>Non.</i>	Is that local dollars or US dollars?	<i>Eske se dola ayisyen ou dola ameriken?</i>
Please.	<i>Silvouple/Souple.</i> (In the capital you'd use <i>silvouple</i> ; <i>souple</i> is used more for the provinces.)	How much is it?	<i>Konbyen?</i>
Thank you.	<i>Mèsi anpil.</i>	How many?	<i>Konbyen?</i>
Sorry/Excuse me.	<i>Pàdon.</i>	Let's go.	<i>Ann ale.</i>
How are you?	<i>Ki jan ou ye?</i>	I'd like to go (visit, speak with) ...	<i>M ta vle ale (vizite, pale ak) ...</i>
Not bad.	<i>M pal pi mal.</i>	I'm lost.	<i>M pèdi.</i>
I'm going OK.	<i>M-ap kenbe.</i>	Where is ...?	<i>Kote ... ye?</i>
What's your name?	<i>Ki jan ou rele?</i>	Can you help me, please?	<i>Eske ou kap ede mwen silvouple/souple?</i>
My name is ...	<i>M rele ...</i>	Help!	<i>A mwen!</i>
I	<i>m/mwen</i>	to stop	<i>rete</i>
you	<i>ou/w</i>	to wait	<i>tann</i>
he/she/it	<i>li</i>	Where is/are ... ?	<i>Kote ... ?</i>
you (plural)/we	<i>nou</i>	the toilets	<i>twalèt yo</i>
they	<i>yo</i>	the hospital	<i>lopital la</i>
I'm ...	<i>Mwen se ...</i>	I have ...	<i>M gen ...</i>
American	<i>ameriken/amerikenn (m/f)</i>	chills	<i>lafiyè</i>
British	<i>anglèz</i>	cramps/diarrhea	<i>vant fè mal</i>
I'm from ...	<i>Mwen sòti ...</i>	fever	<i>fyèv</i>
Australia	<i>ostrali</i>	headache	<i>tèt fè mal</i>
France	<i>lafrans</i>	I keep vomiting.	<i>M'ap vomi.</i>
May I take your photograph?	<i>Eske m ka fè foto ou?</i>		
Do you speak English?	<i>Eske ou ka pale angle?</i>		
I don't understand.	<i>M pa konprann.</i>		

Fè mal is a general word for 'ache', eg *tet fè mal* (headache), *pye fè mal* (sore foot).



Also available from Lonely Planet:
Latin American Spanish Phrasebook

Glossary

This glossary is a list of Creole (C), English (E), French (F), Spanish (S) and Taino (T) words you may come across in the Dominican Republic and Haiti. See p70 and p286 for a list of culinary terms.

artisanat (C) – craft workshop

asson (C) – sacred rattle used in Vodou ceremonies

ayuntamiento (S) – local unit of government

bahía (S) – bay

baie (F) – bay

bateye (S) – community of Haitian sugarcane workers

bidonville (C) – urban slum area

boula (C) – drum used in Vodou ceremonies; provides an even rhythm, holding all the other drums together

camionette (C) – form of public transportation; large trucks piled with people and sacks of goods

caréy (S) – local turtle

carita (S) – mask for Carnival

cimetière (F) – cemetery

cobrador (S) – conductor who takes money for fares on *gua-guas*

colmado (S) – combination corner store, grocery store and bar

comedor (S) – eatery

compas (C) – traditional Haitian music; fusion of dance band and merengue beats

dechoukaj (C) – literally ‘uprooting’; refers to the systematic destruction of remnants of Jean-Claude Duvalier’s dictatorship after the leader’s flight

department (C) – administrative province of Haiti

draguero (S) – drag racing

estacion (C) – bus station

fôret (F) – forest

galerie (F) – art gallery

gédé (C) – pronounced gay-day; family of *lwa* that includes Baron Samedi and Maman Brigitte

gingerbread (E) – Haitian architectural style of the late 19th and early 20th centuries

gua-gua (S) – local bus

houngan (C) – Vodou priest

hounsi (C) – initiate in Vodou ceremony

île (F) – island

isla (S) – island

kombit (C) – communal work team

kònet (C) – trumpet made from hammered zinc, ending in a flared horn

Krik? Krak! (C) – oral game of riddles played in the Haitian countryside

lakou (C) – communal rural housing

Lavalas (C) – pro-Aristide political movement

liberté (F) – liberty, freedom

lwa (C) – Vodou spirits

mambo (C) – Vodou priestess

mamman (C) – largest drum used in Vodou ceremonies, which the leading drummer beats fiercely with a single stick and one hand

marchand (C) – female market vendor

marché (F) – market

MINUSTAH (E) – UN Stabilization Mission to Haiti

musée (F) – museum

Noirisme (C) – literary-artistic movement reclaiming Haiti’s African heritage

peristyle (C) – Vodou temple or ceremonial altar

plage (F) – beach

playa (S) – beach

racines (C) – literally ‘roots’; type of Haitian music reflecting increased political-cultural consciousness

rara (C) – performance ritual during Lent when temple ceremonies are taken to the streets by marching bands of musicians, singers and dancers

restavek (C) – bonded child worker

rue (F) – street

segon (C) – drum used in Vodou ceremonies; provides hypnotic counter rhythms

taptap (C) – local bus; minibus

Tontons Macoutes (C) – notorious guards created under François Duvalier, named for a child-stealing traditional bogeyman character; also known as *Volontaires de la Sécurité Nationale*

vaskin (C) – bamboo trumpet

vevé (C) – sacred Vodou symbol

Vodouisant (C) – follower of Vodou

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