

Zulu



pronunciation

Vowels		Consonants	
Symbol	English sound	Symbol	English sound
aa	father	b	rib-punch
aw	law	b'	strong b with air sucked in
e	bet	ch'	as in 'let-show' but spat out
ee	see	d	as in 'hard-times'
u	put	dl	like a voiced hl
<p>In this chapter, the Zulu pronunciation is given in pink after each phrase.</p> <p>Each syllable is separated by a dot, and the syllable stressed in each word is italicised.</p> <p>For example:</p> <p><i>Uxolo.</i> <i>u-k'aw-law</i></p> <p>Note also that Zulu has no word stress in questions.</p> <p>The term 'voiced' applied to consonant and clicks in this chapter means 'said with the vocal cords vibrating'.</p> <p>Zulu's glottalised consonants, simplified as b', ch', k', p', t' and ts' in our pronunciation guide, are made by tightening and releasing the space between the vocal cords when you pronounce the sound, a bit like combining it with the sound in the middle of the word 'uh-oh'. The sound b' has an extra twist – instead of breathing out to make the sound, you breathe in.</p> <p>For information on Zulu's distinctive click sounds, see the box on page 220.</p>		f	fun
		g	as in 'big-kick'
		h	hat
		hl	as in the Welsh 'llewellyn'
		j	jar
		k	kit
		k'	k, but spat out
		l	lot
		m	man
		n	not
		ng	finger
		ny	canyon
		p	pet
		p'	popping p
		r	run (rolled)
		s	sun
		sh	shot
		t	top
		t'	spitting t
		ts'	as in 'lets', but spat out
v	very		
w	win		
y	yes		
z	zero		

introduction

The name of the Zulu language (*isiZulu ee-see-zu-lu*) comes from the word *izulu ee-zu-lu* – literally 'heaven', or, more poetically, 'the people of heaven'. About 10 million Africans speak Zulu as a first language, with the vast majority (more than 95 per cent) in South Africa. Other speakers are in Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique and Swaziland. Zulu, an Nguni language belonging to the Southern Bantu group, is closely related to other Bantu languages in southern Africa, particularly Xhosa. Zulu-speaking people are descendants of the Nguni people who inhabited coastal regions of southeastern Africa from the 16th century. Some linguists believe that during the 16th and 17th centuries, the Nguni dialects acquired their distinctive 'click' sounds, which still feature in Zulu. Another theory claims that Zulu and Xhosa women borrowed the clicks from neighbouring Khoisan languages to disguise taboo words in their own languages. The Zulu Empire was established in the second quarter of the 19th century, a time in which foreign missionaries were recording and documenting the language and culture of the Zulu people. Several spelling systems were in use by 1860, and a standardised writing system was implemented in 1921.

■ zulu (native language) ■ zulu (generally understood)



language difficulties

Do you speak English?	<i>Uyasikhuluma isiNgisi?</i>	u-yaa-see-ku-lu-maa ee-see-ngee-see
Do you understand?	<i>Uyezwa?</i>	u-ye-zwaa
I understand.	<i>Ngiyezwa.</i>	ngee-ye-zwaa
I don't understand.	<i>Angizwa.</i>	aa-ngee-zwaa
Could you please ...?	<i>Ake ...?</i>	aa-ge ...
repeat that	<i>uphinde</i>	u-pee-nde
speak more	<i>ukhulume kancane</i>	u-ku-lu-me gaa-nk!aa-ne
slowly	<i>kakhulu</i>	gaa-ku-lu
write it down	<i>uyibhale phansi</i>	u-yee-baa-le paa-nts'ee

click sounds

Zulu has a series of click sounds: some clicks are against the front teeth (like a 'tsk' sound), some are against the roof of the mouth at the front (like a 'tock' sound) and some are against the side teeth (like the chirrup you make to get a horse to start walking).

front teeth	roof of the mouth	side teeth	description
k!	k _i	k _i '	voiceless
kh!	kh _i	kh _i '	aspirated (with a puff of air)
g!	g _i	g _i '	voiced
n!	n _i	n _i '	nasalized voiceless
gn!	gn _i	gn _i '	nasalised voiced

time, dates & numbers

What time is it?	<i>Ngubani isikhathi?</i>	ngu-b'aa-nee ee-see-kaa-tee
It's one o'clock.	<i>Nguwani.</i>	ngu-waa-nee
It's (two) o'clock.	<i>Ngu(thu).</i>	ngu-(thu)
It's quarter past (one).	<i>Yingokhotha-phasi (wani).</i>	yee-ngaw-kaw-taa-paa-see (waa-nee)
Half past (one).	<i>Ngophasi-(wani).</i>	ngaw-paa-see-(waa-nee)
Quarter to (eight).	<i>Ngokhotha-thu (eyithi).</i>	ngaw-kaw-taa-tu (e-yee-tee)
At what time ...?	<i>Ngasikhathi bani ...?</i>	ngaa-see-kaa-tee b'aa-nee ...
At ...	<i>Ngo-...</i>	ngaw-...
It's (17 December).	<i>Ngumhla ka-(seventini Disemba).</i>	ngu-m-hlaa gaa-(se-ve-nt'ee-nee dee-se-mbaa)

yesterday	<i>izolo</i>	ee-zaw-law
today	<i>namhlanje</i>	naa-m-hlaa-nje
tomorrow	<i>kusasa</i>	gu-saa-saa
Monday	<i>uMsombuluko</i>	u-m-saw-mbu-lu-gaw
Tuesday	<i>uLwesibili</i>	u-lwe-see-b'ee-lee
Wednesday	<i>uLwesithathu</i>	u-lwe-see-taa-tu
Thursday	<i>uLwesine</i>	u-lwe-see-ne
Friday	<i>uLwesihlanu</i>	u-lwe-see-hlaa-nu
Saturday	<i>uMgqibelo</i>	u-m-gjee-b'e-law
Sunday	<i>iSonto</i>	ee-saw-nt'aw

numbers

In Zulu, numbers borrowed from English are commonly used and will be understood. They're also given in this chapter, rather than the more complex Zulu forms. See below for numbers one to 10.

1	<i>uwani</i>	u-waa-nee	6	<i>usiksi</i>	u-see-see
2	<i>uthu</i>	u-tu	7	<i>usevene</i>	u-se-ve-nee
3	<i>uthri</i>	u-three	8	<i>u-eyithi</i>	u-e-yee
4	<i>ufo</i>	u-faw	9	<i>unayini</i>	u-naa-yee-nee
5	<i>ufayifi</i>	u-faa-yee-fee	10	<i>utheni</i>	u-the-nee

border crossing

I'm here ...	<i>Ngilapha ...</i>	ngee-laa-paa ...
in transit	<i>ngidlula nje</i>	ngee-dlu-laa nje
on business	<i>ngebhizinisi</i>	nge-bee-zee-nee-see
on holiday	<i>ngeholide</i>	nge-haw-lee-de
I'm here for ...	<i>Ngizoba lapha ...</i>	ngee-zaw-b'aa laa-paa ...
(10) days	<i>amalanga (ayishumi)</i>	aa-maa-laa-ngaa (a-yee-shu-mee)
(three) weeks	<i>amasonto (amathathu)</i>	aa-maa-saw-nt'aw (aa-maa-taa-tu)
(two) months	<i>izinyanga (ezimbili)</i>	ee-zee-nyaa-nga (e-zee-mbee-lee)
I'm going to (the Drakensberg).	<i>Ngiya (oKhahlamba).</i>	ngee-yaa (aw-kaa-hlaa-mbaa)
I'm staying at the (Durban Sun).	<i>Ngihlala (e-Durban Sun).</i>	ngee-hlaa-laa (e-de-ben saa-nee)

tickets

A one-way ticket to (Eshowe), please.

Ngicela ithikithi elilodwa ukuya (eShowe). ngee-*k!e*-laa ee-tee-*gee*-tee e-lee-*law*-dwaaw u-gu-yaa (e-*shaw*-we)

A return ticket to (Ulundi), please.

Ngicela ithikithi elilodwa ukuya nokubuya (oLundi). ngee-*k!e*-laa ee-tee-*gee*-tee e-lee-*law*-dwaaw u-gu-yaa naw-gu-*b'u*-yaa (aw-*lu*-ndee)

I'd like to ... my ticket, please.

cancel	<i>Ngicela uku-... ithikithi lami.</i>	ngee- <i>k!e</i> -laa u-gu-... ee-tee- <i>gee</i> -tee <i>laa</i> -mee
change	<i>khansela</i>	kaa- <i>nts'e</i> -laa
collect	<i>shintsha landa</i>	<i>shee</i> -nch'aa <i>laa</i> -ndaa

Is there a toilet?

Kukhona ithoyilethi? gu-kaw-naa ee-taw-yee-le-tee

Is there air conditioning?

Kukhona umoya opholisiwe? gu-kaw-naa u-maw-yaa aw-paw-lee-see-we

How long does the trip take?

Uhambo luthatha isikhathi esingakanani? u-haa-*mbaw* lu-taa-taa ee-see-kaa-tee e-see-ngaa-gaa-naa-nee

Is it a direct route?

Yindlela eqondile? yee-ndle-laa e-kjaw-ndee-le

transport

Where does flight (BA325) arrive/depart?

Lifikela/Lisukekela kuphi ibhanoyi u-(BA325)? lee-fee-ge-laa /lee-su-ge-ge-laa gu-pee ee-ba-naw-yee u-(bee ey three tu faiv)

How long will it be delayed?

Lizomiswa isikhathi esingakanani? lee-zaw-mee-swaa ee-see-kaa-tee e-see-ngaa-gaa-naa-nee

Is this the boat/train to (Cape Town)?

Yiso isikebhe/isitimela esiya (eKipi)? yee-saw ee-see-k'e-be/ee-see-t'ee-me-laa e-see-yaa (e-k'ee-p'ee)

Is this the bus/plane to (Johannesburg)?

Yilo ibhasi/ibhanoyi eliya (eGoli)? yee-law ee-baa-see/ee-baa-naw-yee e-lee-yaa (e-gaw-lee)

I'd like to hire
a ... (with
air conditioning).
4WD
car

Ngicela ukuqasha ... (enomoya opholisiwe). i-fo-bhayi-fo imoto

ngee-*k!e*-laa u-gu-*k!aa*-shaa ... (e-naw-*maw*-yaa aw-paw-lee-see-we) ee-*faw*-baa-yee-*faw* ee-*maw*-t'aw

How much is it for (three) days/weeks?

Malini amalanga/amasonto (amathathu)? maa-lee-nee aa-maa-laa-ngaa/aa-maa-saw-nt'aw (aa-maa-taa-tu)

How much is it to (Umvoti)?

Malini ukuya (eMvoti)? maa-lee-nee u-gu-yaa (em-vaw-tee)

Please take me to (this address).

Ake ungise ku-(lelikheli). aa-ge u-ngee-se gu-(le-lee-ke-lee)



directions

Where's the (nearest) ...?

internet café
market

Ingakuphi ... (eseduzana)?

i-Internet café imakethe

ee-ngaa-gu-pee ... (e-se-du-zaa-naa)

ee-een-ter-net kaa-fe ee-maa-ge-te

Is this the road to (Hluhluwe)?

Yiyo indlela eya (eHluhluwe)? yee-yaw ee-ndle-laa e-yaa (e-hlu-hlu-we)

Can you show me (on the map)?

Ungangibonisa (kumephu)? u-ngaa-ngee-b'aw-nee-saa (gu-me-pu)

What's the address?

Lithini ikheli? lee-tee-nee ee-ke-lee

How far is it?

Kukude kangakanani? gu-gu-de gaa-ngaa-gaa-naa-nee

How do I get there?

Ngifika kanjani lapho? ngee-fee-gaa gaa-njaa-nee laa-paw

Turn left/right.

Jikela kwesokunxele/kwesokunene. jee-ge-laa gwe-saw-gu-n'je-le/gwe-saw-gu-ne-ne

It's ...	Ku-...	gu-...
behind ...	<i>semva kwa-...</i>	<i>se-mbvaaw gwaa-...</i>
in front of ...	<i>phambi kwa-...</i>	<i>paa-mbee gwaa-...</i>
near (to ...)	<i>seduze (na-)...</i>	<i>se-du-ze (naa-)...</i>
next to ...	<i>secaleni kwa-...</i>	<i>se-klaa-le-nee gwaa-...</i>
on the corner	<i>sekhoneni</i>	<i>se-kaw-ne-nee</i>
opposite ...	<i>bhekene na-...</i>	<i>be-ge-nee naa-...</i>
straight ahead	<i>ngaphambili</i>	<i>ngaa-paa-mbee-lee</i>
there	<i>laphaya</i>	<i>laa-paa-yaa</i>

accommodation

Where's a ...?	<i>Ingakuphi ...?</i>	ee-ngaa-gu-pee ...
camping ground	<i>indawo yokukhempa</i>	<i>ee-ndaa-waw yaw-gu-ke-mpaa</i>
guesthouse	<i>indlu yezivakashi</i>	<i>ee-ndlu ye-zee-vaa-gaa-shee</i>
hotel	<i>ihhotela</i>	<i>ee-haw-t'e-laa</i>
youth hostel	<i>ihostela labasha</i>	<i>ee-haw-st'e-laa laa-b'aa-shaa</i>

Can you recommend somewhere cheap/good?

<i>Ikhona indawo eshibhile/ enhle oyaziyo?</i>	<i>ee-kaw-naa ee-ndaa-waw e-shee-bee-le/ e-ntl'e aw-yaa-zee-yaw</i>
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I'd like to book a room, please.

<i>Ngingathanda ukubekisa ikamelo.</i>	<i>ngee-ngaa-taa-ndaa u-gu-b'e-gee-saa ee-k'aa-me-law</i>
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I have a reservation.

<i>Ngibekelwe indawo.</i>	<i>ngee-b'e-ge-lwe ee-ndaa-waw</i>
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Do you have a ... room?	<i>Ninekamelo ...?</i>	nee-ne-k'aa-me-law ...
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single	<i>lomuntu oyedwa</i>	<i>law-mu-nt'u aw-ye-dwaa</i>
double	<i>labantu ababili</i>	<i>laa-b'aa-nt'u aa-b'aa-b'ee-lee</i>
twin	<i>elinemibhede emibili</i>	<i>e-lee-ne-mee-be-de e-mee-b'ee-lee</i>

How much is it per ...?

night	<i>ubusuku obubodwa</i>	<i>u-b'u-su-gu aw-b'u-b'aw-dwaa</i>
person	<i>umuntu oyedwa</i>	<i>u-mu-nt'u aw-ye-dwaa</i>

I'd like to stay for (two) nights.

<i>Ngingathanda ukulala izinsuku (ezimbili).</i>	<i>ngee-ngaa-taa-ndaa u-gu-laa-laa ee-zee-nts'u-gu (e-zee-mbee-lee)</i>
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What time is check-out?

<i>Kufanele kuphunywwe ngasikhathi bani?</i>	<i>gu-faa-ne-le gu-pu-nywe ngaa-see-kaa-tee b'aa-nee</i>
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Am I allowed to camp here?

<i>Kuvunyelwa ukumisa ikamu lapha?</i>	<i>gu-vu-nye-lwa u-gu-mee-saa ee-k'aa-mu laa-paa</i>
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banking & communications

I'd like to ...

arrange a transfer	<i>Ngicela uku-... shintshwa</i>	<i>ngee-k!e-laa u-gu-... shee-nch'waa</i>
cash a cheque	<i>phendula isheke</i>	<i>pe-ndu-laa i-she-ge</i>
change a travellers cheque	<i>phendula isheke lesihambi</i>	<i>phe-ndu-laa ee-she-ge le-see-haa-mbee</i>
change money	<i>shintsha imali</i>	<i>shee-nch'aa ee-maa-lee</i>
withdraw money	<i>khapha imali</i>	<i>kee-paa ee-maa-lee</i>

I want to ...

buy a phonecard	<i>Ngifuna uku-... thenga ikhadi</i>	<i>ngee-fu-naa u-gu-... te-ngaa ee-kaa-dee</i>
call (London)	<i>locingo fowunela ku(Landani)</i>	<i>law-k!ee-ngaw faw-wu-ne-laa gu-(laa-ndaa-nee)</i>
reverse the charges	<i>buyisela izindleko emuva</i>	<i>b'u-yee-se-laa ee-zee-ndle-gaw e-mu-vaa</i>
use a printer	<i>sebenzisa iphrinta</i>	<i>se-b'e-ndzee-saa ee-phree-nt'aa</i>
use the internet	<i>sebenzisa i-intanethi</i>	<i>se-b'e-ndzee-saa ee-ee-nt'aa-ne-tee</i>

How much is it per hour?

<i>Malini nge-awa?</i>	<i>maa-lee-nee nge-aa-waa</i>
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How much does a (three-minute) call cost?

<i>Malini ucingo (lwemizuzu emithathu)?</i>	<i>maa-lee-nee u-k!ee-ngaw (lwe-mee-zu-zu e-mee-taa-tu)</i>
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(One rand) per minute/hour.

<i>(Irandi) ngomzuzu/nge-awa.</i>	<i>(ee-raa-ndee) ngaw-m-zu-zu/nge-aa-waa</i>
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tours

When's the next ...? day trip	<i>Luzokuba nini ...?</i> <i>uhambo lwemini</i> <i>yonke</i>	lu-zaw-gu-baa nee-nee ... u-haa-mbaw lwe-mee-nee yaw-nk'e
tour	<i>uhambo</i>	u-haa-mbaw
Is ... included? accommodation the admission charge	<i>Sekuhlangene imali ...?</i> <i>yokuhlala</i> <i>yokungena</i>	se-gu-hlaa-nge-ne ee-maa-lee ... yaw-gu-hlaa-laa yaw-gu-nge-naa
food transport	<i>yokudla</i> <i>yokuthuthwa</i>	yaw-gu-dlaa yaw-gu-tu-twaa

How long is the tour?

Uhambo luthatha isikhathi esingakanani? u-haa-mbaw lu-taa-taa ee-see-kaa-tee e-see-ngaa-gaa-naa-nee

What time should we be back?

Kufanele sibuye ngasikhathi bani? gu-faa-ne-le see-b'u-ye ngaa-see-kaa-tee b'aa-nee

shopping

I'm looking for ...

Ngifuna ... ngee-fu-naa ...

I need film for this camera.

Ngidinga ifilimu lale khamera. ngee-dee-ngaa ee-fee-lee-mu laa-le kaa-me-raa

Can I listen to this?

Ngingalalela le na? ngee-ngaa-laa-le-laa le naa

Can I have my ... repaired?

Ngingalungiselwa ... na? ngee-ngaa-lu-ngee-se-lwaa ... naa

When will it be ready?

Izobe ilungile nini? ee-zaw-b'e ee-lu-ngee-le nee-nee

How much is it?

Yimalini? yee-maa-lee-nee

Can you write down the price?

Ungangibhalela inani? u-ngaa-ngee-baa-le-la ee-naa-nee

What's your lowest price?

Yini intengo ephansi? yee-nee ee-nt'e-ngaw e-paa-nts'ee

I'll give you (five) rands.

Ngizokunika amarandi (amahlanu). ngee-zaw-gu-nee-gaa aa-maa-raa-ndee (aa-ma-hlaa-nu)

There's a mistake in the bill.

Kunesiphosiso esikwenetwini. gu-ne-see-paw-see-saw e-see-kwe-ne-twee-nee

It's faulty.

Ayisebenzi kahle. a-yee-se-b'e-ndzee gaa-hle

I'd like a receipt, please.

Ngicela irisidi. ngee-kle-laa ee-ree-see-dee

I'd like a refund, please.

Ngicela ukubuyiselwa imali. ngee-kle-laa u-gu-b'u-yee-se-lwaa ee-maa-lee

Do you accept ...?

<i>Nithatha ... na?</i>	nee-taa-taa ... naa
credit cards	<i>amakhadi ekhrediti</i> aa-maa-kaa-dee e-khre-dee-tee
debit cards	<i>amakhadi edebithi</i> aa-maa-kaa-dee e-de-b'ee-tee
travellers cheques	<i>amasheke esihambi</i> aa-maa-she-ge e-see-haa-mbee

Could you ...?

<i>Unga-... na?</i>	u-ngaa-... naa
burn a CD from my memory card	<i>wathatha amafayili ekhadini lami</i> waa-taa-taa aa-maa-faa-yee-lee e-kaa-dee-nee laa-mee le-me-maw-ree
develop this film	<i>uwabhale ku-CD khulisa leli filimu</i> u-waa-baa-le gu-see-dee ku-lee-saa le-lee-fee-lee-mu

making conversation

Hello.

Sawubona. sg

saa-wu-b'aw-naa

Hello.

Sanibonani. pl

saa-nee-b'aw-naa-nee

Good night.

Lala/Lalani kahle. sg/pl

laa-laa/laa-laa-nee gaa-hle

Goodbye (stay well).

Sala/Salani kahle. sg/pl

saa-laa/saa-laa-nee gaa-hle

Goodbye (go well).

Hamba/Hambani kahle. sg/pl

haa-mbaa/haa-mbaa-nee gaa-hle

Mr

(u)Mnumzane

(u)-m-nu-m-zaa-nee

Mrs

(u)Nkosikazi

(u)-nk'aw-see-gaa-zee

Ms/Miss

(u)Nkosazana

(u)-nk'aw-saa-zaa-naa

(the *u* in the Zulu title is omitted when you actually address someone)

How are you? Fine. And you? What's your name? My name's ... I'm pleased to meet you.	<i>Unjani?/Ninjani? sg/pl</i> <i>Sikhona. Nawe/Nani? sg/pl</i> <i>Ngubani igama</i> <i>lakho?</i> <i>Igama lami ngu-...</i> <i>Ngijyjabula</i> <i>ukukwazi/ukunazi. sg/pl</i>	u-njaa-nee/nee-njaa-nee see-kaw-naa naa-we/naa-nee ngu-b'aa-nee ee-gaa-maa laa-kaw ee-gaa-maa <i>laa-mee</i> ngu-... ngee-yaa-jaa-b'u-laa u-gu- <i>gwaa-zee</i> /u-gu- <i>naa-zee</i>
This is my ... brother father friend husband mother sister wife	<i>Lo ... wami.</i> <i>ngumfowethu</i> <i>ngubaba</i> <i>ngumngane</i> <i>ngumyeni</i> <i>ngumama</i> <i>udadewethu</i> <i>ngunkosikazi</i>	law ... <i>waa-mee</i> ngu-m-faw- <i>we-tu</i> ngu-b'aa-b'aa ngu-m- <i>ngaa-ne</i> ngu-m-ye-nee ngu- <i>maa-maa</i> u-daa-de- <i>we-tu</i> ngu-nk'aw-see- <i>gaa-zee</i>
Here's my ... What's your ...? address email address	<i>Nayi ...</i> <i>Lithini ... lakho?</i> <i>ikheli</i> <i>ikheli le-email</i>	<i>naa-ye ...</i> lee-tee-nee ... <i>laa-kaw</i> ee-ke-lee ee-ke-lee le-e-me-ye-lee
Where are you from? I'm from (Australia).	<i>Uvelaphi?</i> <i>Ngivela (e-Ostreliya).</i>	u-ve-laa-pee ngee-ve-laa (e-aw-stre- <i>lee-yaa</i>)
I'm married. I'm not married. Can I take a photo (of you)?	<i>Ngishadile.</i> <i>Angishadanga.</i> <i>Ngicela uku(ku)-</i> <i>thatha isithombe.</i>	ngee-shaa- <i>dee-le</i> aa-ngee-shaa- <i>daa-ngaa</i> ngee- <i>k!e-laa</i> u-gu-(gu)- <i>taa-taa ee-see-taw-mbe</i>

eating out

Can you recommend a ...? bar dish place to eat	<i>Ungasitshela</i> <i>... na?</i> <i>ngendawo yokuphuza</i> <i>oyithandayo</i> <i>ngesidlo</i> <i>osithandayo</i> <i>ngendawo yokudla</i> <i>oyithandayo</i>	u-ngaa-see-ch'e-laa ... naa nge-ndaa-waw yaw-gu-pu- <i>zaa</i> aw-ye- <i>taa-ndaa-yaw</i> nge-see-dlaw aw-see- <i>taa-ndaa-yaw</i> nge-ndaa-waw yaw-gu- <i>dlaa</i> aw-ye- <i>taa-ndaa-yaw</i>
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I'd like ..., please. the bill the menu a table (for two) that dish	<i>Ngicela ...</i> <i>irisidi lokukhokha</i> <i>imenyu</i> <i>itafula (yabantu</i> <i>ababili)</i> <i>leso sidlo</i>	ngee- <i>k!e-laa ...</i> ee-ree-see-dee law-gu- <i>kaw-kaa</i> ee- <i>me-nyu</i> ee-t'aa- <i>fu-laa</i> (yaa-b'aa-nt'u aa-b'aa-b'ee-lee) <i>le-saw see-dlaw</i>
Do you have vegetarian food?	<i>Ninokudla</i> <i>kwabangadli nyama?</i>	nee-naw-gu- <i>dlaa</i> gwaa-b'aa-ngaa-dlee nyaa- <i>maa</i>
Could you prepare a meal without ...?	<i>Ungakupheka</i> <i>ukudla ngaphandle</i> <i>kokusebenzisa ... na?</i>	u-ngaa-gu-pe- <i>gaa</i> u-gu- <i>dlaa ngaa-paa-ndle</i> gaw-gu-se-b'e-ndzee-saa ... <i>naa</i>
eggs meat stock	<i>amaqanda</i> <i>isobho lenyama</i>	aa- <i>maa-kjaa-ndaa</i> ee-saw-baw le-nyaa- <i>maa</i>
(cup of) coffee/tea ... with milk without sugar	<i>ikhofi/itye ...</i> <i>elinobisi</i> <i>elingenashukela</i>	ee- <i>kaw-fee/ee-t'ee-ye ...</i> e-lee-naw- <i>b'ee-see</i> e-lee-nge-naa-shu- <i>ge-laa</i>
(boiled) water	<i>amanzi</i> <i>(abilisiweyo)</i>	aa- <i>maa-ndzee</i> (aa-b'ee-lee-see- <i>we-yaw</i>)

emergencies

Call ...! an ambulance a doctor the police	<i>Biza ...!</i> <i>i-ambulense</i> <i>udokotela</i> <i>amaphoyisa</i>	b'ee- <i>zaa ...</i> ee-aa- <i>mbu-le-nts'e</i> u-daw-gaw-t'e-laa aa- <i>maa-paw-ye-saa</i>
Could you help me, please? <i>Ake ungisize/ningisize. sg/pl</i>		aa-ge u-ngee-see-ze/nee-ngee-see-ze
I'm lost. <i>Ngilahlekile.</i>		ngee-laa-hle- <i>gee-le</i>
Where are the toilets? <i>Ziphi izindlu zangasese?</i>		zee-pee ee-zee-ndlu zaa- <i>ngaa-se-se</i>
I want to report an offence. <i>Ngifuna ukubika icala.</i>		ngee- <i>fu-naa</i> u-gu-b'ee-gaa ee- <i>k!aa-laa</i>
I have insurance. <i>Nginomshwayilense.</i>		ngee-naw-m-shwaa-ye- <i>le-nts'e</i>

I've been assaulted.	<i>Ngilinyaziwe.</i>	ngee-lee-nyaa-zee-we
I've been raped.	<i>Ngidlwenguliwe.</i>	ngee-dlwe-ngu-lee-we
I've been robbed.	<i>Ngigetshengiwe.</i>	ngee-ge-ch'e-ngee-we

I've lost my ...

Ngilahlekelwe yi-... ngee-laa-hle-ge-lwe yee-...

My bags were stolen.

Amapotimende ami ebiwe. aa-maa-p'aw-tee-me-nde aa-mee e-b'ee-we

My passport was stolen.

Iphasiphothi lami lebiwe. ee-paa-see-paw-tee laa-mee le-b'ee-we

My wallet was stolen.

Isikhwama sami semali sebiwe. ee-see-kwaa-maa saa-mee se-maa-lee se-b'ee-we

I want to contact my consulate/embassy.

Ngifuna ukuthintana ngee-fu-naa u-gu-tee-nt'aa-naa
ne-consulate/ne-embassy. ne-kaw-nsu-laa-tee/ne-e-mbaa-see

medical needs

Where's the nearest ...?	<i>Ikuphi indawo ... eseduzane?</i>	ee-gu-pee ee-ndaa-waw ... e-se-du-zaa-ne
dentist	<i>kadokotela wamazinyo</i>	gaa-daw-gaw-te-laa waa-maa-zee-nyaw
doctor	<i>kadokotela</i>	gaa-daw-gaw-te-laa

Where's the nearest hospital?

Sikuphi isibhedlela esiseduzane? see-gu-pee ee-see-be-dle-laa e-see-se-du-zaa-ne

Where's the nearest pharmacist?

Likuphi ikhemisi eliseduzane? lee-gu-pee ee-ke-mee-see e-lee-se-du-zaa-ne

I need a doctor (who speaks English).

Ngidinga udokotela (okwazi ukukhuluma isiNgisi). ngee-dee-ngaa u-daw-gaw-te-laa (aw-gwaa-zee u-gu-ku-lu-maa ee-see-ngee-see)

Could I see a female doctor?

Ngingabona udokotela wesifazane na? ngee-ngaa-b'aw-naa u-daw-gaw-te-laa we-see-faa-zaa-ne naa

It hurts here.

Kubuhlungu lapha. gu-b'u-hlu-ngu laa-paa

I'm allergic to (penicillin).

Angizwani na-(nephenisilini). aa-ngee-zwaa-nee naa-(ne-pe-nee-see-lee-nee)

english-zulu dictionary

In this dictionary, words are marked as **n** (noun), **a** (adjective), **v** (verb), **sg** (singular) and **pl** (plural) where necessary. Note that in Zulu the pronouns are prefixes attached to the beginning of a verb, as indicated with hyphens in this dictionary. Zulu adjectives usually come after the noun and the form of the adjective changes according to the class of the noun. Just use the form of the adjective given in this dictionary and remember to have it after the noun – it won't be completely correct grammatically, but you should be understood.

A

accommodation *indawo yokulala*
 ee-ndaa-waw yaw-gu-laa-laa
after *emva kwa-* e-mbvaaw gwaa-
airport *isikhumulo samabhanoyi*
 ee-see-ku-mu-law saa-maa-baa-naw-yee
alcohol *utshwala u-ch'waa-laa*
all *-onke -aw-nk'e*
and (joins nouns) *na-* naa-
and (joins sentences) *futhi fu-tee*
ankle *iqakala* ee-kjaa-gaa-laa
arm *ingalo* ee-ngaa-law
aspirin *i-aspirin* ee-es-pee-ree-nee
asthma *umbefu* u-m-b'e-fu
ATM *i-ATM* ee-e-yee-tee-em

B

baby *usana* u-saa-naa
back (body) *umhlane* u-m-hlaa-ne
backpack *unxazisuka* u-n'jaa-zee-su-gaa
bad *-bi -b'ee*
baggage claim *ithikithi yempahla*
 ee-tee-gee-tee ye-mp'aa-hlaa
bank *ibhange* ee-baa-nge
bathroom *ibhavulumu* ee-baa-vu-lu-mu
battery *ibhetri* ee-be-tree
beautiful *-hle -hle*
bed *umbhede* u-m-be-te
beer *ubhiya* u-bee-ya
bees *izinyosi* ee-zee-nyaw-see
before *phambi kwa-* paa-mbee gwaa-
bicycle *ibhayisikili* ee-baa-yee-see-gee-lee
big *-khulu -ku-lu*
blanket *ingubo* ee-ngu-b'aw
blood group *uhlobo lwegazi* u-hlaw-b'aw lwe-gaa-zee
bottle *ibhodlela* ee-baw-dle-laa
bottle opener *isivulo sebhodlela*
 ee-see-vu-law se-baw-dle-laa
boy *umfana* u-m-faa-naa
brakes (car) *amabhuleki* aa-maa-bu-le-gee

breakfast *ibhulakufesi* ee-bu-laa-gu-fe-see
bronchitis *ukucinana kwesifuba*
 u-gu-klee-naa-gwe-see-fu-b'aa

C

café *ikhofi* ee-ke-fee
cancel *-khansele -kaa-nts'e-laa*
can opener *isivulo sethini* ee-see-vu-law se-tee-nee
cash **n** *ukheshe* u-ke-she
cell phone *isele* ee-se-le
centre **n** *iphakathi* ee-paa-gaa-tee
cheap *-shibhile -shee-bee-le*
check (bill) *irisidi lokukhokha*
 ee-ree-see-dee law-gu-kaw-kaa
check-in **n** *ukubhalisa* u-gu-baa-lee-saa
chest *isifuba* ee-see-fu-b'aa
child *umntwana* u-m-nt'waa-naa
city *idolobha* ee-daw-law-baa
clean **a** *-hlanzekile -hlaa-ndze-gee-le*
closed *-valiwe -vaa-lee-we*
codeine *i-codeine* ee-kaw-dee-nee
cold **a** *-bandayo -b'aa-ndaa-yaw*
collect call *ucingo olukhokhelwa ngolutholayo*
 u-klee-ngaw aw-lu-kaw-ke-lwaa ngaw-lu-taw-laa-yaw
condom *ikhondomu* ee-kaw-ndaw-mu
constipation *ukuqunjelwa* u-gu-kju-nje-lwaa
contact lenses *ama-contact lens* aa-maa-kawn-tekt *lens*
cough **n** *umkhuhlane* u-m-ku-hlaa-ne
currency exchange *ukushintshwa kwezimali*
 u-gu-shee-nch'waa gwe-zee-maa-lee

D

dairy products *imikhqiqizo yobisi*
 ee-mee-kee-kjee-zaw yaw-b'ee-see
dangerous *-nengozi -ne-ngaw-zee*
date (time) *usuku* u-su-gu
day *ilanga* ee-laa-ngaa
diaper *inabukeni* ee-naa-b'u-k'e-nee
diarrhoea *uhudo* u-hu-daw
dinner *idina* ee-dee-naa

dirty -ngcolile -nglaw-lee-le
 disabled -nobulima -naw-b' u-lee-maa
 double bed umbhede wedabuli u-m-be-de we-daa-b'u-lee
 drink n isiphuzo ee-see-pu-zaw
 drivers licence ilayisense lokuqhuba
 ee-laa-ye-see-nts'e yaw-gu-kqhu-b'aa
 drugs (illicit) izidakamizwa ee-zee-daa-gaa-mee-zwaa

E

ear indlebe ee-ndle-b'e
 east impumalanga ee-mp' u-maa-laa-ngaa
 economy class iklasi elishibhile
 ee-klaa-see e-lee-shee-bee-le
 elevator (lift) ikheshi ee-ke-shee
 email n i-e-mail ee-ee-me-ye-lee
 English (language) isiNgesi ee-see-ngee-see
 exchange rate izinga loshintsho lwezimali
 ee-zee-ngaa law-shee-nch'aw lwe-zee-maa-lee
 exit n umnyango wokuphuma
 u-m-nyaa-ngaw waw-gu-pu-maa
 expensive -dulile -du-lee-le
 eye iso ee-saw

F

fast ngokusheshisa ngaw-gu-she-shee-saa
 fever imfiva ee-mp'ee-vaa
 finger umunwe u-mu-nwe
 first-aid kit ibhokisi losizo lokuqala
 ee-baw-gee-see law-see-zaw law-gu-kjaa-laa
 first class ufesi u-fe-see
 fish n inhlanzi ee-nt'aa-ndzee
 food ukudla u-gu-dlaa
 foot unyawo u-nyaa-waw
 fork imfologo ee-mp'aw-law-gaw
 free (of charge) mahhala maa-haa-laa
 fruit isithelo ee-see-te-law
 funny -hlekisayo -hle-gee-saa-yaw

G

game park indawo yezilwane zasendle
 ee-ndaa-waw ye-zee-lwaa-ne zaa-se-ndle
 gift isipho ee-see-paw
 girl (older) intombi ee-nt'aw-mbee
 girl (young) intombazana ee-nt'aw-mbaa-zaa-naa
 glass (drinking) ingilazi ee-ngee-laa-zee
 glasses izibuko ee-zee-b'u-gaw
 good -hle -hle
 gram igramu ee-graa-mu
 guide n umphelezeli u-m-pe-le-ze-lee

H

hand isandla ee-saa-ndlaa
 happy -jabule -jaa-b'u-lee
 have -na -naa-
 he u- u-
 head ikhanda ee-kaa-ndaa
 headache ikhanda ee-kaa-ndaa
 heart inhliziyi ee-ntlee-zee-yaw
 heart condition isifo senhliziyo
 ee-see-faw se-nt'ee-zee-yaw
 heat n ukushisa u-gu-shee-saa
 here lapha laa-paa
 high -phakamileyo -paa-gaa-mee-le-yaw
 highway umgwaqomkhulu u-m-gwaa-kjawa-m-ku-lu
 homosexual n inkonkoni ee-nk'aw-nk'aw-nee
 hot -shisa -shee-saa
 hungry -lambile -laa-mbee-lee

I

I ngi- ngee-
 identification (card) i-ID ee-aa-ye-see-dee
 (be) ill -gula -gu-laa
 important -balulekile -b'aa-lu-le-gee-lee
 internet i-intanethi ee-ee-nt'aa-nee-tee
 interpreter ihumusha ee-hu-mu-shaa

J

job umsebenzi u-m-se-b'e-ndzee

K

key isikhiye ee-see-kee-ye
 kilogram ikhilogramu ee-kee-law-graa-mu
 kitchen ikhishi ee-kee-shee
 knife umese u-me-se

L

laundry (place) ilondolo ee-law-ndaw-law
 lawyer ummeli u-m-me-lee
 leg umlenze u-m-le-ndzee
 lesbian n inkonkoni yesifazane
 ee-nk'aw-nk'aw-nee ye-see-faa-zaa-nee
 less a -ncane -nklaa-nee
 letter (mail) incwadi ee-nk'lwaa-dee
 like v -thanda -taa-ndaa
 love v -thanda -taa-ndaa
 lunch ilantsi ee-laa-nch'ee

M

man indoda ee-ndaw-daa
 matches umentshi u-me-nch'ee-see
 meat inyama ee-nyaa-maa
 medicine umuthi u-mu-tee
 message umlayezo u-m-laa-ye-zaw
 mobile phone iselee ee-se-le
 month inyanga ee-nyaa-ngaa
 morning intsasa ee-nts'aa-saa
 (in the) morning ekuseni e-gu-se-nee
 motorcycle isithuthuthu ee-see-tu-tu-tu
 mouth umlomo u-m-law-maw
 movie ibhayisikobho ee-baa-ye-see-k'aw-baw
 MSG i-MSG ee-em-es-jee
 museum imnyuziyamu ee-m-nyu-zee-yaa-mu
 music umculo u-m-kju-law

N

name igama ee-gaa-maa
 napkin (serviette) iseviyethe ee-se-vee-ye-te
 nappy inabukeni ee-naa-b'u-ge-nee
 national park iphaki elivikelwe lezwe lonke
 ee-paa-gee e-lee-vee-ge-lwe le-zwe law-nk'e
 nausea isicasucasu ee-see-klaa-su-klaa-su
 neck intamo ee-nt'aa-maw
 new -sha -shaa
 news izindaba ee-zee-ndaa-b'aa
 newspaper iphephandaba ee-pe-paa-ndaa-b'aa
 night ubusuku u-b'u-su-gu
 nightclub iklabhu yasebusuku
 ee-klaa-bu yaa-se-b'u-su-gu
 noisy -nomsindo -naw-m-see-ndaw
 nonsmoking lapho kungebhanywe khona
 laa-paw gu-nge-be-nywe kaw-naa
 north inyakatho ee-nyaa-gaa-taw
 nose impumulo ee-mp' u-mu-law
 now manje maa-nje
 number (numeral) inombolo ee-naw-mbaw-law
 number (quantity) inani ee-naa-nee
 nuts amantongomane aa-maa-nt'aw-ngaw-maa-nee

O

oil (engine) uwoyela u-waw-ye-laa
 OK kulungile gu-lu-ngee-lee
 old (objects) -dala -daa-laa
 old (people) -khufile -ku-lee-lee
 open a -vuliwe -vu-lee-we
 outside ngaphandle ngaa-paa-ndle

P

package iphasela ee-paa-se-laa
 pain ubuhlungu u-b'u-hlu-ngu
 paper iphepha ee-pe-paa
 park (car) v -paka -paa-gaa
 passport iphasiphothi ee-paa-see-paw-tee
 pay -khokha -kaw-kaa
 pen ipeni ee-pe-nee
 petrol uphethilolo u-pe-tee-law-law
 pharmacy ikhemisi ee-ke-mee-see
 plate isitsha ee-see-ch'aa
 postcard iposikhadi ee-p'aw-see-kaa-dee
 post office iposi ee-paw-see
 pregnant -khulelwe -ku-le-lwe

R

rain n imvula ee-mbvu-laa
 razor ireza ee-re-zaa
 registered mail iposi elirejistiwe
 ee-p'aw-see e-lee-re-jee-st'ee-we
 rent v -qashisa -kjaa-shee-saa
 repair v -lungisa -lu-ngee-saa
 reservation (place) indawo ebhukiwe
 ee-ndaa-waw e-bu-gee-we
 reservation (table) itafula elibhukiwe
 ee-t'aa-fu-laa e-lee-bu-gee-we
 restaurant ikhefi ee-ke-fee
 return (come back) -buya -b'u-yaa
 return (give back) -buyisa -b'u-ye-see-saa
 road indlela ee-ndle-laa
 room ikamelo ee-k'aa-me-law

S

sad -dabukile -daa-b'u-gee-lee
 safe a -ngenangazi -nge-naa-ngaw-zee
 sanitary napkins amaphede aa-maa-pe-te
 seafood ukudla okuvela olwandle
 u-gu-dlaa aw-gu-ve-laa aw-lwaa-ndle
 seat isihlalo ee-see-hlaa-law
 send (someone) -thuma -tu-maa
 send (something) -thumela -tu-me-laa
 sex ukulalana u-gu-laa-laa-naa
 shampoo ishampu ee-shaa-mp'u
 share (a dorm, etc) ukulala sibaningi ekamelweni
 u-gu-laa-laa see-b'aa-nee-ngee-e-k'a-me-lwe-nee
 shaving cream umuthi wokushefa
 u-mu-tee waw-gu-she-faa
 she u- u-
 sheet (bed) ishidi ee-shee-dee

shirt *iyembe* ee-ye-mbe
 shoes *izicathulo* ee-zee-klaa-tu-law
 shop n *ivenkile* ee-ve-nk'ee-le
 shower n *ishawa* ee-shaa-waa
 skin *isikhumba* ee-see-ku-mbaa
 skirt *isiketi* ee-see-k'e-tee
 sleep v *-lala -laa-laa*
 small *-ncane -nklaa-ne*
 smoke (cigarettes) v *-bhema -be-maa*
 smoking a *lapho kungabhenywa khona*
laa-paw gu-ngaa-be-nywaa kaw-naa
 soap *insipho* ee-nts'ee-paw
 some *-nye -nye*
 soon *masinyane* maa-see-nyaa-ne
 sore throat *umphimbo obuhlungu*
u-m-pee-mbaw aw-b'u-hlu-ngu
 south *iningizimu* ee-nee-ngee-zee-mu
 speak *-khuluma -ku-lu-maa*
 spoon *ukhezo* u-ke-zaw
 stamp *isitembu* ee-see-t'e-mbu
 station (train) *isiteshi* ee-see-t'e-shee
 stomach *isisu* ee-see-su
 stop v *-ma -maa*
 stop (bus) n *isitobhi (sebhasi)*
ee-see-t'aw-bee (se-baa-see)
 street *umgwaqo* u-m-gwaa-kjaw
 student *umfundi* u-m-fu-ndee
 sunscreen *i-sunscreem* ee-saan-skree-nee
 swim v *-bhukuda -bu-gu-daa*

T

tampons *amathemponi* aa-maa-te-mp'aw-nee
 teeth *amazinyo* aa-maa-zee-nyaw
 telephone n *ucingo* u-klee-ngaw
 television *umabonakude* u-maa-b'aw-naa-gu-de
 temperature (weather) *izinga lokushisa*
ee-zee-ngaa law-gu-shee-saa
 tent *itende* ee-t'e-nde
 that (one near you) *leyo* le-yaw
 that (one in the distance) *leya* le-yaa
 they (animals & objects) *zi-* zee-
 they (people) *ba-* b'aa-
 thirsty *-omile -aw-mee-le*
 this (one) *le* le
 throat *umphimbo* u-m-pee-mbaw
 ticket *ithikithi* ee-tee-gee-tee
 time *isikhathi* ee-see-kaa-tee
 tired *-khathele -kaa-te-le*
 today *namhlanje* naa-m-hlaa-nje

toilet *indlu yangasese* ee-ndlu yaa-ngaa-se-se
 tonight *namhlanje ebusuku* naa-m-hlaa-nje e-b'u-su-gu
 toothbrush *isixubho* ee-see-k'u-baw
 toothpaste *umuthi wokugeza amazinyo*
u-mu-tee waw-gu-ge-zaa aa-maa-zee-nyaw
 torch (flashlight) *ithoshi* ee-taw-shee
 towel *ithawula* ee-taa-wu-laa
 translate *-humusha -hu-mu-sha*
 travellers cheque *isheke lezihambi*
ee-she-ge le-zee-haa-mbee
 trousers *ibhulukwe* ee-bu-lu-gwe
 tyre *ithaya* ee-taa-yaa
 vacant *-ngenamuntu* -nge-naa-mu-nt'u
 vegetable n *umfino* u-m-fee-naw
 vegetarian a *okungenanyama* aw-gu-nge-na-nyaa-maa
 visa *iviza* ee-vee-zaa

W

waiter *uweta* u-we-t'aa
 walk v *-hamba ngezinyawo*
-haa-mbaa nge-zee-nyaa-waw
 wallet *isikhwama* ee-see-kwaa-maa
 warm a *-fudumele -fu-du-me-le*
 wash (something) *-geza -ge-zaa*
 watch n *iwash* ee-waa-shee
 water *amanzi* aa-maa-ndzee
 weekend *impelasonto* ee-mp'e-laa-saw-nt'aw
 west *intshonalanga* ee-nch'aw-naa-laa-ngaa
 wheelchair *isitulo esinamasondo*
ee-see-t'u-law e-see-naa-maa-saw-ndaw
 when *nini* nee-nee
 where *kuphi* gu-pee
 who sg *ubani* u-b'aa-nee
 who pl *obani* aw-b'aa-nee
 why *yini* yee-nee
 window *ifasitela* ee-faa-see-t'e-laa
 wine *iwayini* ee-waa-yee-nee
 with *na-* naa-
 without (someone) *engekho* e-nge-kaw
 without (something – eg milk, sugar)
-ngena- nge-naa-
 woman *inkosikazi* ee-nk'aw-see-gaa-zee
 write *-bhala -baa-laa*

Y

you sg *u-* u-
 you pl *ni-* nee-

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