SO

SOMALI LESSON

Basic Conversation 1 · Chapter 10 · Asking Directions

🧭 Asking for Directions — Jihooyinka

By the end of this chapter you will be able to ask where a place is, understand left, right and straight on, ask whether it is near or far, and ask someone to repeat. Respellings use CAPITALS as a rough guide to stress; c, x and q stay as themselves (see Chapter 1). ***Please read the Not Yet Verified box at the end.***

💬 Six Conversations — Wada hadal

① Where's the Bank? — Bangiga

A:

Raali ahow, xaggee buu ku yaal bangiga?

raa-LEE ah-HOW, xahg-GEH boo koo YAAL BAHN-gi-gah?

Excuse me, where is the bank?

B:

Toos u soco, kaddib midig u leexo.

toos oo SO-co, KAHD-dib MI-dig oo LEE-xo.

Go straight on, then turn right.

A:

Mahadsanid.

mah-hahd-SAH-nid.

Thank you.

② Is It Near? — Ma dhowdahay?

A:

Maktabadda ma dhowdahay halkan?

mahk-tah-BAHD-dah mah dhow-dah-HAY HAHL-kahn?

Is the library near here?

B:

Haa, waa dhow dahay.

HAA, waa dhow dah-HAY.

Yes, it's near.

③ Is It Far? — Ma fog yahay?

A:

Isbitaalka meel fog ma yahay?

is-bi-TAAL-kah meel fog mah yah-HAY?

④ The Station — Boosteejada

A:

Aaway boosteejada?

AA-way boos-TEE-jah-dah?

Is the hospital far?

B:

Haa, waa fog yahay. Tagsi waa inaad qaadataa.

HAA, waa fog yah-HAY. TAHG-si waa in-AAD qaa-dah-TAA.

Yes, it's far. You must take a taxi.

A:

Waa hagaag, mahadsanid.

waa hah-GAAG, mah-hahd-SAH-nid.

All right, thank you.

⑤ Say It Again — Ku celi

A:

Ma ku celin kartaa jihooyinka?

mah koo CEH-lin kar-TAA ji-HOH-yin-kah?

Could you repeat the directions?

B:

Haa. Midig, kaddib toos.

HAA. MI-dig, KAHD-dib toos.

Yes. Right, then straight on.

A:

Fadlan i tus jidka.

fahd-LAHN i toos JID-kah.

Please show me the way.

Where is the station?

B:

Geeska hore ka leexo bidix.

GEES-kah HO-reh kah LEE-xo BI-dix.

Turn left at the corner ahead.

⑥ Straight or Turn? — Toos mise leexo?

A:

Miyaan toos u socdaa mise waan leexdaa?

mi-YAAN toos oo SOC-daa MI-seh waan LEEX-daa?

Do I go straight or turn?

B:

Toos u soco. Dugsigu waa halkaas.

toos oo SO-co. DOOG-si-goo waa hahl-KAAS.

Go straight on. The school is there.

🔑 Key Phrases — Weedho muhiim ah

MEANING	ONE WAY	ANOTHER WAY
Where is ...?	Xaggee buu ku yaal ...? *xahg-GEH boo koo YAAL*	Aaway ...? *AA-way*

MEANING	ONE WAY	ANOTHER WAY
Where can I find ...?	**Xaggee baan ka heli karaa ...?** *xahg-GEH baan kah HEH-li kah-RAA*	**Halkan ... ma laga helaa?** (is there ... here?) *HAHL-kahn mah LAH-gah HEH-laa*
Is it near / far?	**Ma dhow yahay?** *mah dhow yah-HAY*	**Ma fog yahay?** *mah fog yah-HAY*
Show me the way	**Fadlan i tus jidka.** *fahd-LAHN i toos JID-kah*	**Jidka ... ma ii sheegi kartaa?** *JID-kah mah ee SHEE-gi kar-TAA*
You're welcome	**Adaa mudan.** *ah-DAA MOO-dahn*	**Mahad ma leh.** *MAH-hahd mah leh*

Three Verbs — Saddex fal

soco (to walk, go), leexo (to turn) and raac (to follow). To give a direction to one person, use the bare verb: soco! (go!), leexo! (turn!), raac! (follow!).

WHO	SOCO (WALK)	LEEXO (TURN)	RAAC (FOLLOW)
I: *waxaan*	**socdaa** *SOC-daa*	**leexdaa** *LEEX-daa*	**raacaa** *raa-CAA*
you: *waxaad*	**socotaa** *so-co-TAA*	**leexataa** *lee-xah-TAA*	**raacdaa** *raac-DAA*
he: *wuxuu*	**socdaa** *SOC-daa*	**leexdaa** *LEEX-daa*	**raacaa** *raa-CAA*
she: *waxay*	**socotaa** *so-co-TAA*	**leexataa** *lee-xah-TAA*	**raacdaa** *raac-DAA*
we: *waxaan*	**soconaa** *so-co-NAA*	**leexannaa** *lee-xahn-NAA*	**raacnaa** *raac-NAA*
you all: *waxaad*	**socotaan** *so-co-TAAN*	**leexataan** *lee-xah-TAAN*	**raacdaan** *raac-DAAN*

WHO	SOCO (WALK)	LEEXO (TURN)	RAAC (FOLLOW)
they: *waxay*	socdaan *SOC-daan*	leexdaan *LEEX-daan*	raacaan *raa-CAAN*

🗺️ Directions and Places — Jihooyin iyo meelo

SOMALI	ENGLISH	SOMALI	ENGLISH
midig	right	bidix	left
toos	straight	hore	ahead, front
gadaal	back, behind	dhex	middle, inside
kor	above, up	hoos	under, down
waqooyi	north	koonfur	south
bari	east	galbeed	west

> **Two Sources, Two Spellings**
>
> The two pages I read differ: *toosan* and *toos*, *koofur* and *koonfur*, *dhaw* and *dhow*, and they use different words for “turn” (*leexo, jiiro*). Expect variation and recognise both.

> **Landmarks Beat Street Names**
>
> From general knowledge, directions are often given by landmarks (the mosque, the market, a big shop) more than by street names and numbers, so ask *near what?* if you are lost.

> **Somaliland and Djibouti**
>
> I found no source on how directions differ in Somaliland or Djibouti, so no words are marked.

📖 Vocabulary — Ereyada

20 words for places and getting about. Nouns are shown with their "the" ending.

#	SOMALI	SAY IT	ENGLISH	TYPE
1	**bangiga**	*BAHN-gi-gah*	the bank	noun (m)
2	**isbitaalka**	*is-bi-TAAL-kah*	the hospital	noun (m)
3	**maktabadda**	*mahk-tah-BAHD-dah*	the library	noun (f)
4	**boosteejada**	*boos-TEE-jah-dah*	the station	noun (f)
5	**dugsiga**	*DOOG-si-gah*	the school	noun (m)
6	**masjidka**	*MAHS-jid-kah*	the mosque	noun (m)
7	**garoonka**	*gah-ROON-kah*	the airport; field	noun (m)
8	**mataxafka**	*mah-TAH-xahf-kah*	the museum	noun (m)
9	**jidka**	*JID-kah*	the road, way	noun (m)
10	**geeska**	*GEES-kah*	the corner	noun (m)
11	**isgoyska**	*is-GOYS-kah*	the junction	noun (m)
12	**khariidadda**	*khah-REE-dahd-dah*	the map	noun (f)
13	**tagsiga**	*TAHG-si-gah*	the taxi	noun (m)
14	**dhow**	*dhow*	near	adj
15	**fog**	*fog*	far	adj
16	**halkan**	*HAHL-kahn*	here	adv
17	**halkaas**	*hahl-KAAS*	there	adv
18	**kaddib**	*KAHD-dib*	then, after that	joining word
19	**mise**	*MI-seh*	or (in questions)	joining word

#	SOMALI	SAY IT	ENGLISH	TYPE
20	tus	*toos*	to show	verb

✍️ Try It Yourself — Layliyo

Say each answer out loud first, then click to check.

1. Ask where the hospital is.

▼ Show answer

Xaggee buu ku yaal isbitaalka?

2. Tell someone to go straight on, then turn left.

▼ Show answer

Toos u soco, kaddib bidix u leexo.

3. Ask if it is far.

▼ Show answer

Ma fog yahay?

4. Ask someone to repeat the directions.

▼ Show answer

Ma ku celin kartaa jihooyinka?

5. Say “we turn right”.

▼ Show answer

Midig baan u leexannaa.

6. Name the four compass points.

▼ Show answer

waqooyi, koonfur, bari, galbeed

Not Yet Verified

Checked against two pages (Preply and Harvard ELIAS, read 2026-11-25): the direction and compass words, *near* and *far*, the place words, the “where is”, “near here”, “far”, repeat and show-me questions, *Aaway*, *Geeska hore ka leexo*, *Tagsi waa inaad qaadataa* and *Adaa mudan*. Some lines here are adapted from theirs: the pages write the dialog 1 and 2 answers differently, and their spellings differ from each other.

Not checked, from general knowledge: the three-verb table and commands, the shorter “ma dhow / fog yahay” forms, *Mahad ma leh*, *Dugsigu waa halkaas*, the landmarks tip, some noun genders and endings, and every respelling and stress mark. No textbook, dictionary or native speaker was consulted. **Please have a Somali speaker check this chapter before you rely on it.**

Sources for This Chapter

Preply, Directions in Somali; Harvard ELIAS, Maps and directions.

Coming Up in Chapter 11

Booking a hotel: rooms, nights, check-in and check-out.