



Languages and Greetings in South Africa

(Celebrating Humanity International – Please feel free to share)

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Greeting	Lang/ Religion or area	Response	Meaning	Time	Sing./ Plural	Gender
Sawubona	Zulu/ isiZulu	Sawubona	Greeting to 1 person	All	S	
Sanibonani	Zulu/ isiZulu	Sanibonani	Greeting to more than 1 person	All	P	
Goeie môre	Afrikaans	Goeie môre	Good morning	AM	N/A	
Gia sou/ Yassou	Greek/	Gia sou/ Yassou	Greetings when meeting & leaving	All	N/A	
Buon giorno	Italian/ Italiano	Buon giorno	Good day	AM	N/A	
Hola	Township Slang	Hola	Hello - to a friend	All	N/A	
Hola	Spanish/ Espanol/ Tsotsi taal	Hola	Hello	All	N/A	
Thobela	N Sotho/ Sepedi	Thobela	Greetings to 1 or more/ any time of day.	All	N/A	
Heita daar	Township slang	Heita daar	Hello - to a friend	All	N/A	
Haribol	Hindi	Haribol	Greeting to a Hare Krishna Devotee	All	N/A	

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Konichiwa	Japanese	Ohayo Gozaimasu (Good morning)	Literally - This day or Hello	All	N/A	
Konbanwa	Japanese	Daijobu (Okay)	Good evening	All	N/A	
Sai Ram	Hindi	Sai Ram	Greeting to a Sai Baba devotee	All	N/A	
Makhosi	Zulu	Makhosi	Greeting to the ancestors - through the iSangoma (Spiritual Healer)	All	N/A	
Ndaa	Venda/ Tshivenda	Ndaa (M) Aa (F)	Hello - used only by a Venda male.	All	N/A	M
Shalom	Hebrew	Shalom	Peace	All	N/A	
Namaste	Hindi	Namaste	"The God within me greets the God within you", or "My soul greets your soul."	All	N/A	
As salaamu alaikum	Arabic	Walaikum as salaamu	May peace be with you.	All	N/A	
Guten abend	German/ Deutsch	Guten abend	Good evening.	Evening	N/A	
Bonjour	French/ Francais	Bonjour	Good morning/ day	AM	N/A	
Avuxeni	Tsonga/ Xitsonga, Shangaan, isiShangane	Avuxeni	Good morning.	AM	N/A	
Bonsoir	French/ Francais	Bonsoir	Good afternoon/ evening.	Evening	N/A	
Molo	Xhosa/ isiXhosa	Molweni	Greetings to more than 1 person.			
Molweni	Xhosa/ isiXhosa	Molweni	Greetings to more than 1 person.	All	P	
Namaskarum	Telegu, amongst other Indian languages	Namaskarum	"The God within me greets the God within you", or "My soul greets your soul."	All	N/A	
Bhotani	Xhosa/ isiXhosa	Bhota (S) Bhotani (P)	Greetings to more than 1 person.	All	P	

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Vannakam	Tamil	Vannakam	Greetings	All	N/A	
Dumelang	S. Sotho/ Sesotho, Tswana/ Setswana, N Sotho/ Sepedi	Dumela (S) Dumelang (P)	Greeting to 1 person. Greeting to more than 1 person.	All	P	
Yebo	Zulu/ isiZulu	Yebo	Slang greeting - originates in Khoi San	All	N/A	
Kgotso Kgotsong P	Southern Sotho/ Sesotho	Kgotso	Peace	All	P	
Lotjhani	Ndebele/ IsiNdebele	Lotjha (S) Lotjhani (P)	Greeting to 1 person. Greeting to more than 1 person.	All	P	
Kusile	Swazi/ IsiSwati	Sawubona (S) Sanibonani (P) Kusile	Morning greeting.	AM	S/ P	
Lishonile	Swazi/ IsiSwati	Sawubona (S) Sanibonani (P) Lishonile	Evening greeting.	Evening	S/ P	
(Ndi) matsheloni	Venda/ Tshivenda	Matsheloni	Good morning	AM	S	
(Ndi) masiari	Venda/ Tshivenda	Masiari	Good afternoon	Afternoon		
(Ndi) madekwana	Venda/ Tshivenda	Madekwana	Good evening	Evening		
Ria vusa	Venda/ Tshivenda	Ria vusa	Good day	All		
Habari gani?	Swahili/ Kiswahili	Muzuri sana.	How are you?	All	S	
Mwuli bwanji?	Chewa/ Chichewa (Malawi) Nyanja/ Chinyanja (Zambia)	Ndi li bwino.	How are you?	All	S	

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