

How to SAY

I love
you

IN
(almost)
EVERY

language

BY
CELESTE
SHELLY

Arabic

(MODERN STANDARD)

ALGERIA, BAHRAIN,
CHAD, COMOROS,
DJIBOUTI, EGYPT,
ERITREA, IRAQ,
ISRAEL, JORDAN,
KUWAIT, LEBANON,
LIBYA, MALTA,
MAURITANIA,
MOROCCO, OMAN,
PALESTINE, QATAR,
SAUDI ARABIA,
SOMALIA, SUDAN,
SYRIA, TANZANIA
(ZANZIBAR),
TUNISIA, UNITED
ARAB EMIRATES,
YEMEN

NOTE

Arabic dialects vary from country to country, so there may be other ways of saying 'I love you' depending on where your loved one comes from. See also Arabic (Egyptian), Arabic (Lebanese), Arabic (Moroccan).

When speaking to a man

*Ana
uhibukka*

Ana uhibukka
[AH-nah uu-HEH-buu-kah]

When speaking to a woman


*Ana
uhibukki*

Ana uhibukki
[AH-nah uu-HEH-buu-kee]

Cherokee

Gvgeyui

UNITED STATES
OF AMERICA
(OKLAHOMA,
NORTH CAROLINA,
ARKANSAS)



Gvgeyui
[gə-gay-YOO-ee]

Chinese

(CANTONESE)

Ngóh
hóu jūng
yi néih

Ngóh hóu jūng yi néih
[ng-AW hoh jəng yee nay]

CHINA
(GUANGDONG,
GUANGXI),
HONG KONG,
MACAU

PRONUNCIATION TIP

Cantonese is a tonal language, which means that each syllable can be pronounced as a level, falling or rising note, and can be high-, mid- or low-pitch. In this case, the tones of each syllable can be found below – but take care not to overdo it!

- ♥ Ngóh: A lower note, rising slightly
- ♥ Hóu: A medium note, rising slightly
- ♥ Jūng: A higher note, falling slightly
- ♥ Yi: A medium note, level
- ♥ Néih: A lower note, rising slightly

NOTE

This phrase means ‘I like you very much’. The literal translation of ‘I love you’ is generally considered a little too formal.

Chinese

(MANDARIN)

Wǒ ài nǐ

Wǒ ài nǐ
[waw eye nee]

CHINA, TAIWAN,
SINGAPORE

PRONUNCIATION TIP

Mandarin is a tonal language, which means that each syllable can be pronounced as a level, falling or rising note, and can be high-, mid- or low-pitch. In this case, the tones of each syllable can be found below – but take care not to overdo it!

- ♥ Wǒ: A lower note that falls slightly before rising
- ♥ Ài: A higher note that falls sharply
- ♥ Nǐ: A lower note that falls slightly before rising

Czech

Miluji tě

Miluji tě
[MIH-loo-ee teh]

CZECH REPUBLIC

PRONUNCIATION TIP

When making the 't' sound, instead of placing your tongue directly behind your teeth, move it a little further back so it rests against your hard palate for a more accurate result.

Danish

*Jeg elsker
dig*

Jeg elsker dig
[yeh IHL-skah deye]

DENMARK



German

Ich liebe dich

GERMANY,
BELGIUM, AUSTRIA,
SWITZERLAND,
LUXEMBOURG,
LIECHTENSTEIN

Ich liebe dich
[ihkh LEE-bə dihkh]

Greek

S'agapó

GREECE, CYPRUS

S'agapó
[SAH-gah-po]

Haitian Creole

Mwen
renmen
ou

HAITI

Mwen renmen ou
[mweh REH-meh-ow]

PRONUNCIATION TIP

The 'r' sound in Haitian Creole is the same as the 'r' sound found in French. It is produced at the back of the throat, almost like a gargling noise.

Hawaiian

*Aloha
au iā 'oe*

UNITED STATES OF
AMERICA (HAWAII)

Aloha au iā 'oe
[ah-LAW-hah ow EE-ah O-eh]

Hebrew

When a woman is speaking to a man

*Aní ohévet
otkhá*

Aní ohévet otkhá
[ah-NEE o-HEH-veht ot-KHAH]

When a man is speaking to a woman

ISRAEL

*Aní ohév
otákh*

Aní ohév otákh
[ah-NEE o-HEHV o-TAKH]

Hindi

When the speaker is a man

*Main tumse
pyār
kartā hūn*

Main tumse pyār kartā hūn
[may TUUM-seh pyar KAR-tah huu]

INDIA, PAKISTAN

Irish

*Tá grá
agam
duit*

Tá grá agam duit
[tah grah AH-gəm dihch]

REPUBLIC
OF IRELAND,
NORTHERN
IRELAND



Italian

Ti amo

ITALY,
SWITZERLAND,
SAN MARINO,
VATICAN CITY

Ti amo
[tee AH-mo]

Jamaican

Mi luv
yuh

Mi luv yuh
[mee lov yoo]

JAMAICA, PANAMA,
COSTA RICA



Japanese

*Ai
shiteru*

Ai shiteru
[eye-shteh-roo]

JAPAN

Korean

Saranghae

NORTH KOREA,
SOUTH KOREA

Saranghae
[sah-rahng-eh]

Na'vi

Nga yawne lu oer

Nga yawne lu oer
[ng-ah YOW-neh loo oh-ER]

PANDORA

PRONUNCIATION TIP

Pronounce the final 'r' sound as a quick rolled 'r' (a little like tapping your tongue to the roof of your mouth once) for a more accurate result.

Mongolian

*Bi
chamd
khairtai*

Bi chamd khairtai
[bee chahmd KHAIR-teh]

MONGOLIA

Portuguese

Eu te amo

Eu te amo

European Portuguese

[eh-uu tih AH-mo]

Brazilian Portuguese

[eh-uu chih AH-mo]

BRAZIL,
MOZAMBIQUE,
ANGOLA,
PORTUGAL,
GUINEA-BISSAU,
EAST TIMOR,
EQUATORIAL
GUINEA, MACAU,
CAPE VERDE,
SÃO TOMÉ AND
PRÍNCIPE

Punjabi

When the speaker is a man

*Maim
tuhānū
pi'āra
karadā
hām*

Maim tuhānū pi'āra karadā hām
[meh tuu-HAH-nuu pyar-ah KAR-dah hah]

PAKISTAN, INDIA

When the speaker is a woman

PRONUNCIATION TIP

Roll your 'r' for a more accurate result.

*Maim
tuhānū
pi'āra
karadī
hām*

Maim tuhānū pi'āra karadī hām
[meh tuu-HAH-nuu pyar-ah KAR-dee hah]

Russian

*Ja tebjá
ljubljú*

RUSSIA,
KAZAKHSTAN,
BELARUS,
KYRGYZSTAN

Ja tebjá ljubljú
[yah tsih-BYAH lyuu-BLYOO]

Sign language

Sign languages are languages that use bodily movements and gestures, such as those of the hands and face, to convey meaning. Although sign languages are used primarily by deaf people, hearing people may also use sign language, and not every deaf person knows sign language.

There are approximately 70 million deaf people in the world whose first language is sign language, and many more deaf and hearing people who have learned sign language as an additional language.

Contrary to popular opinion, sign language is not universal, and there are anywhere between 130 and 300 sign languages in the world – an exact number is not known, as new sign languages continue to emerge in deaf communities across the globe. In fact, there are countries that speak the same language, such as the United States and Australia, where users of sign language (in this case American Sign Language and Auslan) would not be able to understand each other!

Because of this, it's hard to give a single translation for 'I love you' that could be understood around the world by all sign language users. However, the ILY sign, originally from American Sign Language, has moved into the mainstream and is generally understood to mean 'I love you'. It combines the signs for the letters 'I', 'L' and 'Y' from American Sign Language.



+



+



I

L

Y



ILY

Spanish

Te amo

MEXICO,
COLOMBIA, SPAIN,
ARGENTINA,
PERU, VENEZUELA,
CHILE, ECUADOR,
GUATEMALA,
CUBA, BOLIVIA,
DOMINICAN
REPUBLIC,
HONDURAS,
PARAGUAY,
EL SALVADOR,
NICARAGUA, COSTA
RICA, PUERTO RICO,
PANAMA, URUGUAY,
EQUATORIAL
GUINEA, ANDORRA,
BELIZE, GIBRALTAR,
UNITED STATES OF
AMERICA

Te amo
[teh AH-mo]

Swahili

Ninakupenda

TANZANIA, KENYA,
UGANDA

PRONUNCIATION TIP

Draw out the 'eh' sound
a little longer for a more
accurate result.

Ninakupenda
[nee-nah-kuu-PEHN-dah]



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