

## LESSON TRANSCRIPT

# Absolute Beginner S1 #1

## Learning to Say Hello in Swahili

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#1

# INTRODUCTION

Brandon: Hello everyone, and welcome to SwahiliPod101.com. This is Absolute Beginner, season 1, lesson 1 - Learning to Say Hello in Swahili. My name is Brandon.

Medina: And I am Medina. Together we are going to guide you through the Swahili language.

Brandon: In this lesson, you will learn how to say hello in Swahili. This lesson focuses on general greetings that are not time specific. Medina, what can we expect in the conversation?

Medina: The conversations that you will hear might take place when you meet a friend, a colleague or even a stranger who you want to start talking to.

Brandon: The two people in the dialogue are not very close, although they know each other. This means that they will be using formal language. Let's listen to the conversation.

## LESSON CONVERSATION

Juma: Habari yako?

Musa: Mzuri sana.

Juma: Uko mzima?

Musa: Niko mzima kabisa, Asante.

Brandon: Let's hear the conversation one time slowly.

Juma: Habari yako?

Musa: Mzuri sana.

Juma: Uko mzima?

Musa: Niko mzima kabisa, Asante.

Brandon: Now let's hear it with the English translation.

Juma: Habari yako?

Brandon: Hello?

Musa: Mzuri sana.

Brandon: Hello.

Juma: Uko mzima?

Brandon: How are you doing?

Musa: Niko mzima kabisa, Asante.

Brandon: I am really well thanks.

## POST CONVERSATION BANTER

Medina: It's time to learn about Kenyan culture! Kenyans are fond of giving general greetings to people they know, and even to strangers who look friendly.

Brandon: Yes, Kenyans greet people on the streets, and in elevators and churches, among other public places.

Medina: In fact Brandon, greetings are also a part of introduction before one states his or her purpose somewhere. You are considered to have good manners if you start with greetings before you buy something from a shop keeper.

Brandon: I see, If you are not so sure about how to address the person, you can simply say...

Medina : Habari

Brandon: And you will be fine.

Medina: It is a polite and friendly gesture to shake hands, though it is not a must. Close relatives, friends and colleagues may hug, but that depends on the level of friendship.

Brandon: Wow, it sounds like a very friendly culture. Okay, now let's move on to the vocabulary for this lesson.

## VOCAB LIST

Vocabulary and Phrases

Brandon: Let's take a look at the vocabulary for this lesson.

The first word we shall see is:

Medina: Habari [natural native speed]

Brandon: Hello / How are you?

Medina: Habari [slowly - broken down by syllable]

Medina: Habari [natural native speed]

Next:

Medina: sana [natural native speed]

Brandon: so much, very much

Medina: sana [slowly - broken down by syllable]

Medina: sana [natural native speed]

Next:

Medina: Mzuri [natural native speed]

Brandon: I'm good/I'm fine.

Medina: Mzuri [slowly - broken down by syllable]

Medina: Mzuri [natural native speed]

Next:

Medina: Uko [natural native speed]

Brandon: auxiliary verb meaning "are you"

Medina: Uko [slowly - broken down by syllable]

Medina: Uko [natural native speed]

Next:

Medina: mzima [natural native speed]

Brandon: fine

Medina: mzima [slowly - broken down by syllable]

Medina: mzima [natural native speed]

Next:

Medina: niko [natural native speed]

Brandon: I am

Medina: niko [slowly - broken down by syllable]

Medina: niko [natural native speed]

Next:

Medina: kabisa [natural native speed]

Brandon: totally

Medina: kabisa [slowly - broken down by syllable]

Medina: kabisa [natural native speed]

And Last:

Medina: asante [natural native speed]

Brandon: thanks

Medina: asante [slowly - broken down by syllable]

Medina: asante [natural native speed]

## KEY VOCAB AND PHRASES

Brandon: Let's take a closer look at the usage of some of the words and phrases from this lesson.

Medina: In addition to their meaning, we will explain the vocabulary form and usage.

Brandon: Ok, what's the first word?

Medina: Habari.

Brandon: This is a very common Swahili word when it comes to general greetings.

Medina: Yes, you are likely to hear it everywhere in the street!

Brandon: You can use this with your friends, colleagues and family, or with people you are meeting for the very first time.

Medina: There are other words you can use to greet people too, for example, Jambo. But for now, just remember habari.

Brandon: Ok, what's the next phrase?

Medina: Mzuri sana. You can use it to reply to "habari". This means I'm very fine. The word "sana" is used to add emphasis, so you could choose to just say: mzuri.

Brandon: The phrase can also be used to inform someone about something or somewhere.

Medina: Right. For example, it can be a reply to a concern "Habari ya Nairobi?" meaning "Any news about Nairobi?" or "How is Nairobi?". The reply would be "Mzuri sana" meaning that "Nairobi is doing well".:

Brandon: Okay, what's next?

Medina: Uko mzima?

Brandon: You use this phrase as a continuation of a greeting.

Medina: It's made up of 'Uko' + 'mzima'. "Uko" is used to mean "you are" and 'mzima' is Swahili for "fine". So it means something like "Are you fine?"

Brandon: It is mostly used with people who know each other formally.

Medina: It follows "habari yako" just like we had in the dialogue.

Brandon: So Medina, how do you reply to this phrase?

Medina: To reply to this phrase, you can say "niko mzima kabisa". It means "I am totally fine".

Brandon: You have probably noticed that Kenyans like to emphasize a lot. Don't be afraid to use words of emphasis to join in the trend! Okay, now let's move onto the grammar section.

## LESSON FOCUS

Brandon: In this lesson, you'll learn about general greetings in Swahili. What's the most commonly used greeting, Medina?

Medina: It's: Habari yako?

Brandon: And can you use this like you would use 'Hello' or "How are you?" in English?

Medina: The first word 'Habari' means 'News', and the second word 'yako' means 'your', so it literally means 'What's your news?' so yea it is like asking "how are you?".

Brandon: Can you give us an example?

Medina: Habari yako ndugu?

Brandon: It literally means "Your news, brother?" or something like "How are you brother?"

Medina: That's right. The word "ndugu" means 'a brother'. The verb is in its polite form and therefore the phrase is formal.

Brandon: Can we have another example?

Medina: Habari zenu? This phrase has no difference in meaning except that the pronoun is in the second person plural.

Brandon: Okay. And how do you answer this question?

Medina: The usual way to answer this question is "mzuri sana". "Mzuri" means 'fine' and "sana" means 'very.' So it literally means 'very fine'.

Brandon: I see. What about when you want to ask someone's condition. Can we use the same phrase?

Medina: In that case, you can say.. Uko mzima?

Brandon: What does that mean?

Medina: It means something like 'How is your condition?' When you have a car accident, and someone wants to check if you're okay, they will ask you.. Uko mzima?

Brandon: And how do you answer this question?

Medina: One common reply is "niko mzima kabisa". It means "I'm completely fine" and this is a typical answer. But there might be other answers such as "siko vibaya sana meaning" - "I am not too bad."

Brandon: Ok, let's recap what we have learned. When you want to ask your friend how he or she is doing, you say...

Medina: "Habari yako?" which means "Hello" or "How are you?"

Brandon: And to answer this...

Medina: You say can "mzuri sana" as a reply. This means "I am very fine".

Brandon: Can I use this with both my friend and my boss?

Brandon: Yes you can, it is just a general greeting phrase.

## OUTRO

Brandon: Well, that's all for this lesson. To reinforce what you've learned in this lesson, please check the lesson notes. And if you have any questions or comments, please leave us a post at [SwahiliPod101.com](http://SwahiliPod101.com).

Medina: We're here to help!

Brandon: In the meantime, thanks for listening, and we'll see you next time. Bye!

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