LESSON NOTES

Absolute Beginner S1 #1
Greeting People in Czech

CONTENTS

1

DIALOGUE - CZECH

MAIN

1. (ve dne)

2. Tomáš :   Ahoj.

3. Marie :   Ahoj.

4. Tomáš :   Jak se máš?

5. Marie :   Děkuju, dobře.

ENGLISH

1. (during the day)

2. Tomáš :   Hello.

3. Marie :   Hello.

4. Tomáš :   How are you?

5. Marie :   Fine, thanks.

VOCABULARY

Czech	English	Class
dobře	well	adjective
mít se	to be doing	reflexive verb
jak	how	pronoun, adverb
děkovat	to thank	verb, reflexive verb

SAMPLE SENTENCES

Dobře si to pamatuju.	Vy se máte dobře.
"I remember it well."	"You are doing well."
Jak většinou trávíte své víkendy?	Kolik let jste chodil do školy?
How do you usually spend your weekends?	How many years did you go to school?
jak se řekne…	Jak se to používá?
how do you say…	How do you use this?

Jak se to píše?	Jak se čte tohle?
"How do you write this?"	"How do you read this?"
Děkovat je slušnost.	Děkuji, Jano!
"It is polite to say thanks."	"Thank you, Jana!"

VOCABULARY PHRASE USAGE

mít se "to be doing"

mít = "to have," _se_ = "oneself," _mít se_ = "to be doing"

On its own, the verb _mít_ means "to have." When the reflexive pronoun _se_ (meaning "oneself") is added, the meaning of the verb changes into "to be doing."

This is used mainly in question form when asking how somebody is doing. For example:

1. _Jak se máš_?
   "How are you doing?"

When used in an answer, you may see...

1. _Já se mám dobře_.
   "I'm doing well."

2. _Ty se máš dobře_.
   "You're doing well."

3. _Vy se máte dobře_.
   "You're doing well." formal

4. _On/ona/ono se má dobře_.
   "He/she/ it is doing well."

5. _My se máme dobře_.
   "We're doing well."

6. _Vy se máte dobře_.
   "You're doing well."

7. _Oni se mají dobře._
   "They're doing well."

For example:

1. _Jak se máš od Vánoc_?
   "How have you been since Christmas?"

děkuju "thank you"

The infinitive form of *děkuju* is *děkovat* ("to thank"). This phrase is used when expressing gratitude for something. *Děkuju* is the spoken form, and the written form is *děkuji. Děkuju, dobře* means "Thank you, I'm fine."

For example..

1. *Děkuju za dárek.*
   "Thank you for the present."

dobře **"I'm fine"**

Dobře means "well" or "fine." There are a few other forms as well. You may see...

dobrý ("good") for masculine nouns,

dobrá ("good") for feminine nouns, and

dobré (good) for neutral nouns in written form. *Dobrý* for neutral nouns in spoken form.

For example:

1. *Není mi dobře.*
   "I don't feel well."

GRAMMAR

The Focus of this Lesson is Czech Greetings
Ahoj.
"Hello."
Ahoj. Jak se máš?
"Hello. How are you doing?"

This is one of the most common greetings among Czech people during the day time. It's informal and can be used with people we are familiar with (friends, family, and acquaintances).

The question ***Jak se máš?*** means "How are you doing?"

Jak means *how*. The meaning of *se máš* is better understood in its infinitive form *mít se* ("to be doing"), for example, *mít se dobře* ("to be doing well").

Jak se máš? is used when addressing only one person. The *š* letter indicates the singular form (as well as noting the question as informal). *Jak se máte* with the *te* at the end indicates the plural form used either with more than one person, i.e. *Ahoj kluci, jak se máte* ("Hello boys, how are you?"), or used as a polite form towards people we cannot be casual with, i.e *Jak se máte, paní Malá?* ("How are you doing, Mrs. Malá?").

Se on its own means "oneself." It is a part of the so-called reflexive verbs (*zvratná slovesa*). There are many verbs that are always reflexive, which means they always have *se* attached to them. Other verbs tend to be reflexive only in certain tenses. *Se* corresponds to a whole range of words in English, including "myself," "yourself," "ourselves," "yourselves," and "themselves."

For example:

posadit se ("to sit oneself down")

obléct se ("to dress oneself")

omýt se ("to wash oneself")

The answer to the question above, *Jak se máš?* or *Jak se máte?*, is usually *Děkuju, dobře* ("Thank you, I'm fine"). A more casual answer is *díky, dobře* ("thanks, I'm fine"). One can also say just *jo, dobře* ("I'm fine"), *jde to* ("Not too bad"), or *výborně* ("Great").

There are also other informal greetings that Czech people use on a daily basis, although their tone is very casual and they can <u>only</u> be used among friends or family.

These words are *čau* and *nazdar*.

It is perfectly fine to say *čau mami* ("Hi, mom"), or *nazdar Pavle* ("Hi, Pavel").

All the informal greetings above , *ahoj*, *čau*, and *nazdar*, can be used for both greetings and goodbyes.

For example:

1. *Tak čau, já jdu*.
   "See you then, I'm going."

2. *Tak ahoj, měj se*.
   "Bye then, take care."

3. *'Nazdar hoši, jak se máte?*
   "Hi boys, how are you doing?"

Examples from the dialogue:

1. *Jak se máš?*
   "How are you?"

2. *Děkuju, dobře*.
   "Fine, thanks."

Sample Sentences

1. *Tak ahoj, měj se!*
   "Bye then, take care!"

2. *Tak čau, já jdu.*
   "See you then, I'm going. "

3. *Nazdar, jak se daří?*
   "Hey, how have you been?"

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Gestures and Etiquette when Greeting Czech People

Meeting for the first time requires shaking right hands in both formal and informal situations. Sometimes in informal situations shaking hands can be skipped and you can use only a greeting. For example, when you meet a whole group of new people, shaking hands with each of them is not necessary.

If the situation allows, formal language can also be skipped and conversation can start informally. For example, if a friend is introducing a friend, or the speakers are of the same age and meeting in an informal setting, you could start conversing casually right away.

The formal language, using a person's surname and addressing them as *vy* ("you," polite) is called *vykat*. Informal language, calling a person by their first name and using *ty* ("you") is called *tykat*.

Useful expression:

1. *Ahoj, můžeš mi tykat.*
   "Hi, you can call me by my first name."