

# English Vocabulary: “Thank you”, “Please”, “You’re welcome”

Consider the following conversations:

A: I'll pay for lunch!  
B: Oh! You're so kind! Thank you.  
A: You're welcome.

A: Can I have a glass of water, please?  
B: Yes, of course.  
A: Thanks!  
B: Welcome.

Have you ever thought about the origins of the phrases “thank you”, “please” and “you’re welcome”? Let’s take a look:

## 1) Thank you

The word “thank” is a regular verb which means “agradecer” in Portuguese. Examples:

- He **thanked** me for the glass of water.
- You don't need to **thank** me – it was a pleasure.
- John always **thanks** his father for his pocket money.

The original form of “**Thank you**” was “**I thank you**” which means “Eu agradeço você”.

The original form of “**Thank God!**” (“Graças a Deus!”) was “**I thank God**” which means “Eu agradeço Deus”.

The word “**thanks**” can be a noun (only in the plural form) (PT: *agradecimentos / graças*):

- **Thanks** to you, I speak fluent English!
- **Thanks** for helping me.
- **Thanks** be to God (religious)

Here are many ways to say “*Obrigado(a)*”:

- Thanks
- Thanks a lot
- Thank you
- Thank you very much
- Thank you so much
- Thanks a million
- I really appreciate it
- You shouldn't have
- I'm so grateful
- I don't know what to say
- That's very kind
- You're very kind
- You're the best
- I owe you one (informal)
- You rock (informal)

It's interesting to note that a long time ago, a formal way of saying “Thank you” was “Much obliged” (PT: *Muito obrigado*), which was originally “I'm much obliged to you”.

## 2) Please

The word “please” is a regular verb which means “agradar” in Portuguese. “To please somebody” means to give them **pleasure** (a **pleasant** experience) . Examples:

- He was **pleased** when he smelled fresh coffee.
- I like to **please** my grand-kids whenever I can.
- Sun in the winter always **pleases** me.

The original forms of “**Please**” were “**If it pleases you**”, “**If you please**” or “**Please you**” which all mean “Se te agrada”, or “Se você quiser”.

Here are some popular expressions using “please”:

- pleased as punch                      He was **pleased as punch** when he received the award.
- hard to please                         My wife is really **hard to please**. She is very fussy!
- pretty please                          Can you lend me \$50? Pretty, pretty, **pretty please**?
- as you please                         A: I need to use the car tonight. B: **As you please**.
- eager to please                        My Japanese students are always **eager to please**!
- please God                             **Please God**, let it rain tomorrow!

Here is an example of the verb “please” in music:

The Beatles - “Please Please me”: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rZx72eiUKog>

## 3) You’re welcome

The word “welcome” comes from an Old English word “wilcuma”, meaning “a desired guest”. The phrase “You’re welcome” is commonly used in Modern English as a response to “Thank you”. Here are some other responses to “Thank you”:

- You’re very welcome. / You’re most welcome. (formal)
- Not at all. (common in the UK)
- No problem.
- No. Thank **you**!
- The pleasure is all mine. / The pleasure is mine. / My pleasure. / Pleasure.
- I know you’d do the same for me.
- That’s alright.
- That’s OK.
- No problem.
- No worries. (common in Australia)
- Don’t mention it. (common in the UK)
- It was the least I could do. (common in the UK)
- Anytime.
- Sure! (common in the USA)
- It was nothing.

“To welcome” is also a verb. For example:

- I **welcomed** the couple to our restaurant.
- Please **welcome** Jonas and Thomas! (applause....)
- When I arrived, they **welcomed** me with open arms.