

LESSON 4

Greetings for Every Occasion

صبح بخیر

Morning to midnight, friend to grandmother. Today you get the greeting for every hour — and the one little choice that shows real respect: **to** or **shomâ**.

AFTER THIS LESSON YOU CAN...

- Greet by the time of day with the magic ending **bekheir** ("may it be good").
- Choose the right "you": casual **to** vs respectful **shomâ**.
- Ask *how are you?* formally — and answer, then bounce it back.
- Thank a friend the warm Tehrani way: **ghorbânet**.

THE PHRASE MAP

Say each one out loud — give the formal ones real warmth.

sobh bekheir

good morning

sobh = morning · bekheir = may it be good

shab bekheir

good night

same ending, new hour — that's the whole system

hâl-e shomâ chetore?

how are you? (formal)

for elders, new people, or any group

ghorbânet

thanks! (warm, casual)

literally "your sacrifice" — friends trade it all day

to

you (casual)

one friend, family your age — to chetori?

shomâ

you (respectful · plural)

when in doubt, this one — respect never offends

ONE ENGLISH "YOU" — TWO FARSI ONES

to — the casual you

For **one** person you're close to: a friend, a sibling, family your own age. You've used it since Lesson 1: **to chetori?** — how are YOU?

shomâ — the respectful you

For elders, for people you just met, for anyone you want to honor — **and** for more than one person (it's also the plural). The formal how-are-you: **hâl-e shomâ chetore?** — literally "how is your state?"

THE RULE OF THUMB

When in doubt → shomâ. Nobody was ever offended by too much respect. And when someone says "begu to!" — use the casual you — that's a little ceremony of friendship. Accept it with a smile.

Answer, then bounce

Someone greets you? The Lesson 1 rule still runs: answer warm, bounce it back. **Khubam, mamnun! Hâl-e shomâ chetore?** To a friend: **Khubam! To chetori?**

PERSIAN RESPECT — TWO FREE RULES

1 • Greet the oldest person first. Walking into any room or gathering, your first salâm goes to the most senior person — always.

2 • Stand up when an elder enters. A small move with a huge signal. Do these two things and every Iranian family will adore you.

THE SCENE — SAM MEETS AMIR

Leila's cousin drops by the grocery. Formal start, casual invitation, bro-hug ending.

SPEAKER	FARSI	ENGLISH
Leila	Sam — Amir! Amir — Sam!	Sam — meet Amir!
Sam	Salâm! Hâl-e shomâ chetore?	Hello! How are you? (formal)
Amir	Ghorbânet! Khubam!	Thanks, man! I'm good!
Amir	Shomâ?! Na bâbâ — begu "to"!	"Shomâ"?! C'mon — say "to"!
Sam	Khob... to chetori?	OK... how are YOU?
Amir	Khubam! Âfarin!	I'm good! Nice one! (bro-hug)
Leila	Che khub!	How nice!

WHAT JUST HAPPENED

Sam used **shomâ** with a stranger (correct!), Amir waved it off ("na bâbâ" = c'mon, no way), and they switched to **to** — friendship unlocked. Starting formal and being invited to casual is the exact rhythm of Iranian social life.

EXERCISES — PART 1

1 • Match

- | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. sobh bekheir | a. thanks! (casual) |
| 2. shab bekheir | b. you (respectful) |
| 3. hâl-e shomâ chetore? | c. good morning |
| 4. ghorbânet | d. good night |
| 5. to | e. how are you? (formal) |
| 6. shomâ | f. you (casual) |

2 • to or shomâ?

Circle the right "you" for each person:

your best friend (to / shomâ) · Amir's grandmother (to / shomâ) · a taxi driver you just met (to / shomâ)

your little cousin (to / shomâ) · a group of three friends (to / shomâ)

3 • Pick the greeting

8 AM, your teacher: _____ 11 PM, heading to bed: _____

Any time, anyone: _____

4 • Complete the scene

Sam (to a stranger): "Salâm! Hâl-e _____ chetore?"

Amir: "_____! Khubam!" (warm thanks) Amir: "Na bâbâ — begu _____!"

EXERCISES — PART 2

5 • Answer + bounce (out loud)

An elder asks: "Hâl-e shomâ chetore?" → You: _____, _____! Hâl-e _____ chetore?

A friend asks: "Chetori?" → You: _____! _____ chetori?

6 • Who greets first?

You walk into Leila's family gathering: grandmother, Leila, Amir, and a neighbor's kid are there. Number the order of your salâms: ____ Leila ____ grandmother ____ Amir ____ the kid

7 • Spot the switch

In the scene, circle the exact moment Sam is invited from formal to casual. What two words did Amir use to say "c'mon, no way"? _____

8 • Role-play (out loud)

Read the scene twice: once as Sam, once as Amir. Then improvise: greet your mirror at 8 AM formally, and at midnight casually. Bonus: end both with **ghorbânet**.

DAILY 5-MINUTE ROUTINE UNTIL LESSON 5

1) sobh bekheir when you wake, shab bekheir at lights-out (talk to your kettle if needed) 2) the two-yous drill: friend → to, elder → shomâ 3) the scene, both roles 4) drill track on a walk.

ANSWER KEY

- **1 • Match:** 1-c · 2-d · 3-e · 4-a · 5-f · 6-b
- **2 • to/shomâ:** friend=to · grandmother=shomâ · taxi driver=shomâ · little cousin=to · group=shomâ
- **3 • Greetings:** sobh bekheir · shab bekheir · salâm
- **4 • Scene:** shomâ · Ghorbânet · to
- **5 • Bounce:** Khubam, mamnun! Hâl-e shomâ chetore? — Khubam! To chetori?
- **6 • Order:** grandmother (1) → Leila or Amir (2-3) → the kid (4)
- **7 • The switch:** "Na bâbâ!" (then: begu "to")

PHRASES YOU OWN NOW

sobh bekheir

shab bekheir

hâl-e shomâ chetore?

ghorbânet

to ↔ shomâ

na bâbâ!

che khub!

NEXT — LESSON 5: WHO ARE YOU? INTRODUCING YOURSELF

Your name, where you're from, and the payoff of Lesson 1's little **-am**: esm-am... — the ending that turns words into introductions. Amir will be there. Probably with coffee.