

LESSON 9

The Politeness Starter Pack (Ta'ârof I)

Five words that make Iranians decide you were raised beautifully — and the national sport behind them: **ta'ârof**, the dance of generous offers.

AFTER THIS LESSON YOU CAN...

- Deploy the golden five: **lotfan**, **bebakhshid**, **khâhesh mikonam**, **ghorbân-e shomâ**, **befarmâid**.
- Recognize ta'ârof and perform the offer–refuse–insist–accept dance.
- Accept tea *correctly* — and answer **nush-e jân** when you serve.

THE PHRASE MAP

lotfan

please

for requests — lotfan, ye chây

bebakhshid

excuse me · sorry

one word, three jobs: apology, attention, passage

khâhesh mikonam

you're welcome

literally "I request" — the reply to any thanks

ghorbân-e shomâ

thank you (formal, warm)

full-dress version of ghorbânet

befarmâid

please · here you go · after you

the king — one word, infinite hospitality

chây

tea

the national drink — offered within 90 seconds of arrival

TA'ÂROF — THE RULE OF THREE

1 · They offer. Befarmâid — chây! **2 · You refuse, politely, once.** Na, merci! **3 · They insist.** Ta'ârof nakon! **4 · You accept — warmly.** Bâshe — kheyli mamnun!

It isn't fake. It's a dance where everyone gets to be generous: they get to insist, you get to be modest, and the tea gets drunk. **"Ta'ârof nakon!"** ("don't ta'ârof!") is your official license to accept immediately.

THE SCENE — THE TEA DANCE

SPEAKER	FARSI	ENGLISH
Leila	Befarmâid — chây!	Please — tea! (STEP 1)
Sam	Na, merci!	No, thanks! (STEP 2 — once!)
Leila	Ta'ârof nakon! Befarmâid!	Don't ta'ârof! Please! (STEP 3)
Sam	Bâshe — merci! Kheyli mamnun!	OK — thank you so much! (STEP 4)
Leila	Nush-e jân!	Enjoy! ("may it nourish your soul")

NEW SMALL WORDS WORTH KEEPING

na = no · **bâshe** = OK/fine · **kheyli** = very (kheyli mamnun = thanks very much) · **nush-e jân** = the host's blessing over food you're about to enjoy.

EXERCISES — PART 1

1 • Match

- | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. lotfan | a. you're welcome |
| 2. bebakhshid | b. please · here you go |
| 3. khâhesh mikonam | c. please (requests) |
| 4. befarmâid | d. tea |
| 5. chây | e. excuse me · sorry |

2 • Which word?

You bump someone: _____ · You hand someone tea: _____ · They say "merci":

3 • Order the dance

___ Ta'ârof nakon! ___ Befarmâid — chây! ___ Bâshe, kheyli mamnun! ___ Na, merci!

4 • True or false

a) Refusing the first offer is rude. (T/F) b) "Ta'ârof nakon" means keep refusing. (T/F) c) Ta'ârof lets both sides be generous. (T/F)

EXERCISES — PART 2

5 · You're Sam (out loud)

Leila: "Befarmâid — chây!" → You: _____ Leila: "Ta'ârof nakon!" → You: _____

6 · Upgrade the thanks

Casual (L4): _____ → formal, full-dress (today): _____

7 · Host mode

YOU are serving. Offer: _____! They accept. You bless it: _____!

8 · The full dance (out loud)

Play both roles of the scene twice — once as guest, once as host. Hand on heart optional but encouraged.

- **1:** 1-c · 2-e · 3-a · 4-b · 5-d
- **2:** bebakhshid · befarmâid · khâhesh mikonam
- **3:** 3 · 1 · 4 · 2
- **4:** a) F — one polite refusal is the dance · b) F — it ends it · c) T
- **5:** Na, merci! · Bâshe — kheyli mamnun!
- **6:** ghorbânet → ghorbân-e shomâ
- **7:** Befarmâid · Nush-e jân

NEXT — LESSON 10: CHECKPOINT · YOUR FIRST MEHMUNI

No new words. One evening, door to door, everything you own — plus your first self-recording task. Unit 1 ends here.