

## 1. Basic features of colloquial Jakartan Indonesian: Presentation

This first section will introduce you to some bare essentials. It shows you:

- some common colloquial words
- colloquial shortenings of some words you will know already
- colloquial changes to the sound of many words, along with to their spelling
- colloquial dropping of prefixes on some verbs

Read the sentences 1-19. Use the guide supplied below each sentence to work out what all the words mean. All colloquial features are marked in **bold font**.

### 1. **Cewek** itu **lagi** duduk **bareng** **temen**.

That girl was sitting with a friend.

[Formal: Perempuan itu sedang duduk bersama teman.]

*Colloquial items:*

- cewek = young woman  
lagi = indicates action-in-progress  
bareng = together, together with  
temen (“t’M’N”) = *teman* with sound change of *a* → *e*: friend

### 2. **Bokap** bilang Tuti **emang** **nggak** boleh **main** di luar.

Dad said Tuti really isn’t allowed to play outdoors.

(Formal: Ayah berkata Tuti memang tidak boleh bermain di luar.)

*Colloquial items:*

- bokap = father  
bilang = to say  
emang: = short for *memang*: indeed, certainly  
enggak (“ngGA”) = no, not. [Also *nggak*, *gak*, or *ga*.]  
main = *bermain* with dropped prefix: to play

### 3. Rumahnya **gede** **banget**.

His house is really big.

(Formal: Rumahnya besar sekali.)

*Colloquial items*

- gede (“g’DE”) = big  
banget (“BAng’t”) = very, extremely

4. Dia sering **ngomong kayak gitu. Nggak** minta dengan sopan, **nggak bilang makasih.**

She often talks like that. Doesn't ask for things politely, doesn't say thanks.

(Formal: Dia sering berbicara seperti itu. Tidak minta dengan sopan, tidak mengatakan terima kasih.)

*Colloquial items*

ngomong	= to talk.
kayak	= similar, like.
gitu	= short for <i>begitu</i> : like that, thus
nggak (“ngGA”)	= no, not. [Also enggak, gak, ga.]
bilang	= to say
makasih	= short for <i>terima kasih</i> : thanks

- *kayak gitu* it is the normal colloquial way to say ‘like that’ (rather than *kayak itu*).

5. Dia **kasih gue duit.**

He gave me money.

(Formal: Dia memberi saya uang.)

*Colloquial items:*

kasih	= to give
gue (“guwé”)	= me, I. [Also <i>gua</i> ].
duit	= money

6. **Cuma lu aja yang pinter** berenang.

You're the only one who's good at swimming.

(Formal: Hanya kamu saja yang pandai berenang.)

*Colloquial items:*

cuma	= only [Also <i>cuman</i> ]
lu	= you. (Also <i>lo</i> , <i>elu</i> , or <i>elo</i> .)
aja	= <i>saja</i> with dropped ‘s’: only, just.
pinter	= clever, good at. [Also <i>pintar</i> ]

7. **Gue bawa buku biar nggak** bosan.

I brought a book so that I wouldn't be bored.

(Formal: Saya membawa buku supaya tidak bosan.)

*Colloquial items:*

gue (“guwé”)	= I, me. [Also <i>gua</i> ]
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bawa = *membawa* with dropped prefix: to bring  
biar = so that, in order that  
nggak = no, not. [Also *enggak, gak, ga*]  
bosen (“BOs’n”) = *bosan* with sound change of *a* → *e*: bored.

## 8. Kalo makan rendang mending pake tangan aja.

If you eat beef rendang it’s better to just use your hands.

(Formal: Kalau makan rendang lebih baik memakai tangan saja.)

*Colloquial items:*

kalo = *kalau* with sound change of *au* → *o*: if, when.  
mending = better;  
pake (“paké”) = *pakai* (i.e. ‘memakai’ with dropped prefix) + sound change of *ai* → *é*: to use  
aja = *saja* with dropped ‘s’: just, only

## 9. Gimana bikin lirik buat lagu?

How do you make lyrics for a song?

(Formal: Bagaimana membuat lirik untuk lagu?)

*Colloquial items:*

gimana = short for *bagaimana*: how  
bikin = to make  
buat = for

## 10. Susah banget cari tempat kayak gini.

It’s really hard to find a place like this.

(Formal: Sukar sekali mencari tempat seperti ini.)

*Colloquial items:*

susah = hard, difficult  
banget (“BAng’t”) = very, extremely  
cari = *mencari* with dropped prefix: to seek, find  
kayak = seperti; similar to  
gini = short for *begini*: like this

- *kayak gini* is the normal colloquial way to say ‘like this’ (rather than *kayak ini*).

## 11. Gue en nyokap berangkat bareng naik mobil.

I and Mum left together by car.

(Formal: Saya dan ibu berangkat bersama naik mobil.)

*Colloquial items:*

gue (“guwé”) = I, me [Also gua]

en (“én”) = and

nyokap = mother

bareng = together

## 12. Cowok itu pengen ngomong sama lo.

That guy wants to talk to you.

(Formal: Lelaki itu ingin berbicara dengan kamu.)

*Colloquial items:*

cowok = young man, guy.

pengen (“péngén”) = to want, wish. (Also *pingin*.)

ngomong = to talk

sama = multi-purpose preposition. Here it means ‘to’

lo = you [Also *elo*, or *elu*, or *lu*]

## 13. Gua mo minum kopi tapi udah abis.

I wanted to drink coffee but it was all gone.

(Formal: Saya mau minum kopi tetapi sudah habis.)

*Colloquial items:*

gua (“guwa”) = I, me. [Also gué]

mo = *mau* with sound change of *au* → *o*: want

tapi = short for *tetapi*: but.

udah = *sudah* with dropped ‘h’: already

abis = *habis* with dropped ‘h’: all gone

## 14. Elu bakal kerja di mana?

Where are you going to work?

(Formal: Kamu akan bekerja di mana?)

*Colloquial items:*

elu (“elu”) = you [Also *lu*, *elo*, or *lo*]

bakal = will, going to

kerja = *bekerja* with dropped prefix: to work

## 15. Dia gak dateng. Mungkin lagi sibuk kali ya?

He didn’t come. Maybe he’s busy, hm?

(Formal: Dia tidak datang. Mungkin sedang sibuk barangkali, ya?)

*Colloquial items:*

gak = no, not. [Also *enggak*, *nggak*, or *ga*]  
dateng (“DA’tng”) = *datang* with sound change of *a* → *e*: to come  
lagi = a marker of action-in-progress  
kali = short for *barangkali*: maybe, perhaps. [Also *ngkali*]

## 16. **Pas beli komputer ni gue tanya** garansinya berapa lama.

When I bought this computer I asked how long the guarantee was.

(Formal: Ketika membeli komputer ini saya bertanya garansinya berapa lama.)

*Colloquial items:*

pas = ‘when’, referring to an event or state in the past  
beli = *membeli* with dropped prefix: to buy  
ni = short for *ini*: this. (Also *nih*.)  
gue (“guwé”) = I, me. [Also *gua*]  
tanya = *bertanya* with dropped prefix: to ask

## 17. **Lu enggak** usah bilang makasih sama tuh cowok.

You don’t need to say thanks to that guy.

(Formal: Kamu tidak usah mengucapkan terima kasih kepada lelaki itu.)

*Colloquial items:*

lu = you [Also *elu*, *lo*, *elo*]  
enggak (“ngGA”) = no, not [Also *nggak*, *gak*, *ga*]  
bilang = to say  
makasih = short for *terima kasih*: thanks  
sama = multi-purpose preposition. Here it means ‘to’  
tuh = short for *itu*: that. [Also *tu*]  
tuh cowok = *cowok itu*, with reversed order of *tuh* and noun

## 18. Pintu **gak** kunci biar entar gampang masuk.

The door was not locked so that later it would be easy to get in.

(Formal: Pintu tidak terkunci supaya nanti mudah masuk.)

*Colloquial items:*

gak (“ngGA”) = no, not [Also *enggak*, *nggak*, *ga*]  
kunci = *terkunci* with ‘ke-’ prefix to replace ‘ter-’: locked.  
biar = so that, in order that  
entar [“nTAR”] = later, later on  
gampang = easy

## 19. Kita liat tu mobil di luar ruma.

We saw that car outside our house.

(Formal: Kami melihat mobil itu di luar rumah.)

*Colloquial items:*

kita = 'we': is used both including *and excluding* the hearer

liat = lihat (i.e. *melihat* with dropped prefix) + dropped 'h': to see.

tu = short for *itu*: that.

tu mobil = *mobil itu*, with reversed order of *tuh* and noun

ruma = *rumah* with dropped 'h': house

### Summary of colloquial features introduced above

<i>Words</i>	<i>meaning</i>	<i>formal equivalent</i>
bakal	marker of future time	akan
banget	very	sekali
bareng	together	bersama
biar	so that, in order that	supaya
bikin	to make	membuat
bilang	say	berkata
bokap	father	ayah
buat	for	untuk
cewek	young woman	perempuan muda
cowok	guy	lelaki
cuma (or cuman)	only	hanya
duit	money	uang
en	and	dan
entar	later, going to	nanti
gampang	easy	mudah
gede	big	besar
gue (or gua)	I	saya
kasih	give	beri
kayak	like, similar	seperti
kita	we ( <i>exclusive</i> )	kami
lagi	marker of action-in-progress	sedang
lu (or elu, lo, elo)	you	kamu
mending(an)	better	lebih baik
nggak (or enggak, gak)	no, not	tidak
ngomong	talk	berbicara
nyokap	mother	ibu
pas	when (in past)	ketika
pintar/pinter	clever, good at	pandai
pengen (or pingin)	want, wish	ingin
sama	multi-purpose preposition	pada, dengan, oleh, etc
susah	difficult	sukar

- *gue* (or *gua*) is the most common word used among young Jakartans to say “I/me” in relaxed situations (although some prefer e.g. *aku*).
- *elu* (or *elo*, *lu*, *lo*) is the most common word they used to address each other in relaxed situations (although some prefer e.g. *kamu*).

<i>Shortened words</i>	<i>meaning</i>	<i>full form</i>
tapi	but	tetapi
emang	indeed, certainly	memang
gimana	how	bagaimana
gini	like this	begini
gitu	like that	begitu
kali	maybe, perhaps	barangkali
makasih	thanks	terima kasih
ni	this	ini
tu	that	itu

### ***Sound changes (with changes to the spelling too)***

- “a” in the last syllable of many words is replaced by unstressed “e”, i.e. by the schwa sound (e.g. *temen* = “tM<sup>ː</sup>N” instead of *teman*)
- “ai” diphthong is replaced by “é ” in many words (e.g. *pake* “paké” instead of *pakai*)
- “au” diphthong is replaced by “o” in many words (e.g. *kalo* instead of *kalau*)
- “s” sound is dropped at the start of certain words (e.g. *aja* for *saja*; *uda* for *sudah*)
- “h” sound in some words is dropped at the start of the word or start of a syllable (e.g. *abis* for *habis*; *liat* for *lihat*)
- “h” sound is dropped at the end of some words (e.g. *lebi* for *lebih*)

Note: certain words often take *more than one* of those sound changes. Then they can look very unlike their formal counterpart, e.g. *uda* for *sudah*; *item* for *hitam*; *ijo* for *hijau*

### ***Grammar changes***

- “ber-” prefix can be dropped from many verbs (e.g. *bicara* for *berbicara*)
- “meN-” prefix can be dropped from any transitive verb, or at least any reasonably common one (e.g. *bawa* for *membawa*)
- “ke-” replaces “ter-“ prefix in many verbs; mostly ones where “ter-” expresses accidental meaning (e.g. *kebawa* for *terbawa*)
- “ini/ nih” and “itu/ tuh” can come *before* the head word. (e.g. *nih orang* instead of *orang nih*)