

Turkish Language Recipe Cards

Consonant Harmony

Consonant harmony is not as common or as simple as e-type or i-type vowel harmony. It affects reading and writing Turkish, but is perhaps easier when speaking as the change is not so obvious.

When a word ending in a consonant is suffixed by a vowel, then some consonants change. This may also be described as softening the consonant.

Consonant	Example	Meaning	Change to	Example	Meaning
-ç	<i>Ağaç</i>	<i>Tree</i>	-c-	<i>Ağac-ımız</i>	<i>Our tree</i>
<vowel>-k	<i>Köpek</i>	<i>Dog</i>	-ğ-	<i>Köpeğ-im</i>	<i>My dog</i>
<consonant>-k	<i>Renk</i>	<i>Colour</i>	-g-	<i>Altın Reng-i</i>	<i>Gold Colour</i>
-p	<i>Kitap</i>	<i>Book</i>	-b-	<i>Kitab-ım</i>	<i>My Book</i>
-t	<i>Gitmek</i>	<i>To go</i>	-d-	<i>Gid-iyor-um</i>	<i>I am going</i>

When a word ending in one of a list of consonants takes a suffix starting with 'd', then the suffix is changed, and starts instead with 't'. Common suffixes starting 'd' include *-de (-da) -den (-dan)* and the past tense of verbs *-dim -din -di* etc.

The list of consonants is long and not obvious: C Ç D F H K P S Ş T
With practice, you will probably notice that this change makes pronunciation easier.

Example	Meaning	Example	Meaning
<i>Gitmek</i>	<i>To go</i>	<i>Git-ti</i>	<i>He went</i>
<i>Görüşmek</i>	<i>To meet</i>	<i>Onu Görüş-tüm</i>	<i>I met him</i>
<i>Çıkmak</i>	<i>To exit</i>	<i>Çık-tınız</i>	<i>You went out</i>
<i>Çarpmak</i>	<i>To hit/strike</i>	<i>Topu Çarp-tı</i>	<i>He hit the ball</i>
<i>Basmak</i>	<i>To step on</i>	<i>Bas-tım</i>	<i>I stepped on</i>
<i>İçmek</i>	<i>To drink</i>	<i>İç-tim</i>	<i>I drank</i>
<i>Raf</i>	<i>Shelf</i>	<i>Raf-ta</i>	<i>On the shelf</i>