

# Toki Pona

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Toki Pona is a language developed by linguist Sonja Lang, with only 137 words.

This side describes the entire grammar, the other side contains the entire vocabulary.

This version is based on v2 by jan Sa (Discord: Green Guy#5294), CC0.

Original by [blinry](#).

This version uses both *Toki Pona: The Language of Good* and *Toki Pona Dictionary* as its bases.

## Alphabet

Toki Pona uses these letters: **a e i j k l m n o p s t u w**

You can base them on their sounds in the IPA, but pronunciation doesn't matter.

## Basic sentences

The particle *li* separates the subject from the predicate.

*soweli li moku* – The cat is eating.

*jan li lape* – Someone is sleeping.

There is no verb "to be."

The part after *li* can be a noun or an adjective.

*kili li moku* – Fruits are food.

*telo li pona* – Water is good.

*telo li moku* – Water is a drink.

If the subject is *mi* or *sina* alone, the *li* is always omitted.

*mi moku* – I eat.

*sina pona* – You are good.

## Ambiguity

Toki Pona has ambiguity built into the language. You'll need proper context to understand the intended meaning of a sentence. Verbs have no set tense.

*mi moku* – I am eating / I was eating / I will be eating.

Many words have multiple or general meanings.

*soweli* – cat / dog / (any land mammal)

*kili* – (any fruit or vegetable)

Most words can act as nouns, verbs, adjectives, or adverbs.

*telo* – water / wet / to wash

*pona* – good, simple / to improve, to make better / well, greatly

Nouns have no singular/plural, and no definite/indefinite article:

*kili* – a fruit / the fruit / some fruits / the fruits

## Direct objects

The particle *e* separates a verb from its direct object.

*soweli li moku e telo* – The animal drinks the water.

*mi telo e soweli* – I wash the cat.

## Modifying words

Words can be modified by appending other words.

*jan lili* – small person, child

*tomo mi* – my house

*pilin pona* – a good feeling

To negate a word, append *ala*:

*mi lape ala* – I'm not sleeping.

*jan ala li toki* – No one is talking.

With multiple modifiers, they all modify the first word.

*lipu kasi tu* – two plant documents

*poki laso pimeja* – a blue and black box

You can change the way the modifiers interact using *pi*.

*lipu pi kasi tu* – a document of two plants

*poki pi laso pimeja* – a dark-blue box

## Prepositions

*kepeken*, *lon*, *sama*, *tan*, and *tawa* can act as prepositions. They go at the end of a sentence.

*mi moku kepeken ilo* – I eat with cutlery.

*soweli li lon tomo* – The animal is in the house.

*sina toki sama kala!* – You talk like a fish!

*mi kama tan esun* – I arrive from the store.

*ona li toki tawa sina* – They're talking to you.

## "And"

There are many ways to say "and." With subjects you use *en*.

*mi en sina li musi mute* – You and I are playing a lot.

With predicates you repeat *li*.

*soweli ni li lili li suwi* – This animal is small and cute.

With direct objects you repeat *e*.

*ona li jo e waso e kala* – She has a bird and a fish.

With prepositions you repeat the preposition.

*mi pali e tomo kepeken palisa kepeken kiwen* – I make the house using sticks and stones.

## Loaned Adjectives

Toki Pona does not use proper nouns, but rather proper adjectives:

*jan Sonja* – a Sonja person, a person named Sonja

*toki Tosi* – a Tosi (Deutsch) language, German

*ma Mewika li suli* – The US is big.

Loaned adjectives must follow Toki Pona's phonology. Toki Pona uses a (C)V(N) syllable structure. The C can only be one consonant. Vowel clusters, consonant clusters, and the sequences *wu*, *wo*, *ji*, *ti*, *nm*, and *nn* are disallowed.

## O

You can use *o* before a verb to turn it into a command.

*o kute!* – Listen!

*o pali* – Work, please.

You can use *o* after a subject to address that subject.

*jan Pape o!* – O Pape!

You can have *o* between a subject and predicate to express a wish, desire, request, etc.

*pona o tawa sina* – I wish for goodness to go to you.

*mi o pali* – I should be working.

Or it can also be a contraction of the first two uses.

*soweli Ton o moku* – Eat, Ton.

## Questions

There are two ways to form yes or no questions. The first way is "word *ala* word."

*sina moku ala moku?* – Are you eating?

To say yes, repeat the verb. To say no, say "verb *ala*" or "*ala*".

*moku* – yes

*moku ala / ala* – no

You can also append "*anu seme*".

*sina moku anu seme?* – Are you eating or what?

A common way to answer yes to these kinds of questions is with *lon* (meaning "true" or "affirmative").

*seme* can also be used to create nonpolar questions. Replace the word in question with *seme*.

*jan seme li toki?* – Who's talking?

*sina pali e seme?* – What are you making?

## Preverbs

Preverbs go before verbs to modify their meaning.

*mi kama sona* – I come to know.

*waso lili li wile suli* – The small bird wants to be big.

The words that can act as preverbs are *wile*, *kama*, *sona*, *lukin*, *ken*, *awen*, and sometimes *alasa*, *open*, and *pini*.

## Context

*la* can be used to mark the context of a sentence. *X la Y* means "In the context of X, Y."

*sina lon poka mi la mi pilin pona* – When you are by my side, I feel good.

Most prepositional terms can be moved behind a *la*.

*mi lape lon tenpo pimeja. tenpo pimeja la mi lape.* – I sleep at night.

*sina seli tan seme? tan seme la sina seli?* – Why are you hot?

## Numbers

Combine number words to add them up.

*wan* – 1. *tu* – 2. *luka* – 5. *tu tu* – 4. *luka tu wan* – 8

nanpa can be used to mark ordinals.

*jan nanpa wan li pona* – The first person is good.

**And... that's it!**

## Vocabulary - lipu nimi e toki pona

word	type	meaning
a	PART	(emphasis, emotion or confirmation)
akesi	NOUN	non-cute animal; reptile, amphibian
ala	ADJ	no, not, none
	NUM	zero, 0
alasa	VERB	to hunt, forage
ale / ali	ADJ	all; abundant, countless, bountiful, every, plentiful
	NOUN	abundance, everything, life, universe
	NUM	100
anpa	ADJ	bowing down, downward, humble, lowly, dependent
ante	ADJ	different, altered, changed, other
anu	PART	or
awen	ADJ	enduring, kept, protected, safe, waiting, staying
	PREV	to continue to
e	PART	(before the direct object)
en	PART	(between multiple subjects)
*epiku	ADJ	epic, awesome
esun	NOUN	market, shop, fair, bazaar, business transaction
ijo	NOUN	thing, phenomenon, object, matter
ike	ADJ	bad, negative; non-essential, irrelevant
ilo	NOUN	tool, implement, machine, device
insa	NOUN	centre, content, inside, between; internal organ, stomach
jaki	ADJ	disgusting, obscene, sickly, toxic, unclean, unsanitary
jan	NOUN	human being, person, somebody
*jasima	NOUN	mirror, reflection
	VERB	reflect

word	type	meaning
jelo	ADJ	yellow, yellowish
jo	VERB	to have, carry, contain, hold
kala	NOUN	fish, marine animal, sea creature
kalama	VERB	to produce a sound; recite, utter aloud
	NOUN	sound, noise
kama	ADJ	arriving, coming, future, summoned
	PREV	to become, manage to, succeed in
kasi	NOUN	plant, vegetation; herb, leaf
ken	PREV	to be able to, be allowed to, can, may
	ADJ	possible
kepeken	PREP	to use, with, by means of
**kijetesantakalu	NOUN	Musteloids, such santakalu as racoon
kili	NOUN	fruit, vegetable, mushroom
*kin		also, too
*kipisi	VERB	to cut, divide
kiwen	NOUN	hard object, metal, rock, stone
ko	NOUN	clay, clinging form, dough, semi-solid, paste, powder
**kokosila	VERB	to speak a language where toki pona ist more appropriate
kon	NOUN	air, breath; essence, spirit; hidden reality, unseen agent
*ku	VERB	interacting with <i>Toki Pona Dictionary</i>
kule	ADJ	colourful, pigmented, painted
kulupu	NOUN	community, company, group, nation, society, tribe
kute	NOUN	ear
	VERB	to hear, listen; pay attention to, obey
la	PART	(between the context phrase and the main sentence)
*lanpan	VERB	get, seize, steal
lape	ADJ	sleeping, resting
laso	ADJ	blue, green
lawa	NOUN	head, mind
	VERB	to control, direct, guide, lead, own, plan, regulate, rule

word	type	meaning
*leko	NOUN	square, block
len	NOUN	cloth, clothing, fabric, textile; cover, layer of privacy
lete	ADJ	cold, cool; uncooked, raw
li	PART	(between any subject except mi alone or sina alone and its verb; also to introduce a new verb for the same subject)
lili	ADJ	little, small, short; few; a bit; young
linja	NOUN	long and flexible thing; cord, hair, rope, thread, yarn
lipu	NOUN	flat object; book, document, card, paper, record, website
loje	ADJ	red, reddish
lon	PREP	located at, present at, real, true, existing
luka	NOUN	arm, hand, tactile organ NUM five
lukin	VERB	to look at, see, examine, observe, read, watch
	PREV	to seek, look for, try to
lupa	NOUN	door, hole, orifice, window
ma	NOUN	earth, land; outdoors, world; country, territory; soil
mama	NOUN	parent, ancestor; creator, originator; caretaker, sustainer
mani	NOUN	money, cash, savings, wealth; large domesticated animal
meli	NOUN	woman, female, feminine person; wife
*meso	NOUN	average, middle
mi	NOUN	I, me, we, us
mije	NOUN	man, male, masculine person; husband
*misikeke	NOUN	medicine, drug
moku	VERB	to eat, drink, consume, swallow, ingest
moli	ADJ	dead, dying
monsi	NOUN	back, behind, rear
*monsuta	NOUN	fear, monster
	ADJ	scary
mu	PART	(animal noise or communication)
mun	NOUN	moon, night sky object, star
musi	ADJ	artistic, entertaining, frivolous, playful, recreational, fun

word	type	meaning
mute	ADJ	many, a lot, more, much, several, very NOUN
*n	NOUN	hmm, uhh
*namako	NOUN	spice, additional
nanpa	PART	-th (ordinal number)
	NOUN	numbers
nasa	ADJ	unusual, strange; foolish, crazy; drunk, intoxicated
nasin	NOUN	way, custom, doctrine, method, path, road
nen	NOUN	bump, button, hill, mountain, nose, protuberance
ni	ADJ	that, this
nimi	NOUN	name, word
noka	NOUN	foot, leg, organ of locomotion; bottom, lower part
o	PART	hey! O! (vocative or imperative)
*oko	NOUN	eye
olin	VERB	to love, have compassion for, respect, show affection to
ona	NOUN	he, she, it, they
open	VERB	to begin, start; open; turn on
pakala	ADJ	botched, broken, damaged, harmed, messed up
	PHRASE	pakala a! - damn! (curse)
pali	VERB	to do, take action on, work on; build, make, prepare
palisa	NOUN	long hard thing; branch, rod, stick
pan	NOUN	cereal, grain; barley, corn, oat, rice, wheat; bread, pasta
pana	VERB	to give, send, emit, provide, put, release
pi	PART	of (regroup modifier)
pilin	NOUN	heart (physical or emotional)
	ADJ	feeling (an emotion, a direct experience)
pimeja	ADJ	black, dark, unlit
pini	ADJ	ago, completed, ended, finished, past, end
pipi	NOUN	bug, insect, ant, spider
poka	NOUN	hip, side; next to, nearby, vicinity
poki	NOUN	container, bag, bowl, box, cup, cupboard, drawer, vessel



word	type	meaning
pona	ADJ	good, positive, useful; friendly, peaceful; simple
pu	ADJ	interacting with the official Toki Pona book
sama	ADJ	same, similar; each other; sibling, peer, fellow
	PREP	as, like
seli	ADJ	fire; cooking element, chemical reaction, heat source
selo	NOUN	outer form, outer layer; bark, peel, shell, skin; boundary
seme	PART	what? which?
sewi	NOUN	area above, highest part, something elevated ADJ
sijelo	NOUN	body (of person or animal), physical state, torso
sike	NOUN	round or circular thing; ball, circle, cycle, sphere, wheel
	ADJ	(sike suno) of one year
sin	ADJ	new, fresh, another
sina	NOUN	you
sinpin	NOUN	face, foremost, front, wall
sitelen	NOUN	image, picture, representation, symbol, mark, writing
*soko	NOUN	mushroom
sona	VERB	to know, be skilled in, be wise about, have information on
	NOUN	info, wisdom, knowledge
	PREV	to know how to
soweli	NOUN	animal, beast, land mammal
suli	ADJ	big, heavy, large, long, tall; important; adult
suno	NOUN	sun; light, brightness, glow, radiance, shine; light source
supa	NOUN	horizontal surface, thing to put or rest something on
suwi	ADJ	sweet, fragrant; cute, innocent, adorable
tan	PREP	by, from, because of
taso	PART	but, however
	ADJ	only, (wan taso) alone
tawa	PREP	going to, toward; for; from the perspective of
	ADJ	moving
telo	NOUN	water, liquid, fluid, wet substance; beverage

word	type	meaning
	VERB	wash, to water
tenpo	NOUN	time, duration, moment, occasion, period, situation
toki	VERB	to communicate, say, speak, say, talk, use language, think
*tonsi	NOUN	non-binary, trans , gender nonconforming
tomo	NOUN	indoor space; building, home, house, room, structure
tu	NUM	two
unpa	VERB	sex, to have sexual / marital relations with
uta	NOUN	mouth, lips, oral cavity, jaw
utala	VERB	to battle, challenge, compete against, struggle against
walo	ADJ	white, whitish; light-coloured, pale
wan	ADJ	unique, united
	NUM	one
waso	NOUN	bird, flying creature, winged animal
wawa	ADJ	strong, powerful; confident, sure; energetic, intense
weka	ADJ	absent, away, ignored
wile	PREV	must, need, require, should, want, wish

\* These unofficial words have been marked as significant by the *Toki Pona Dictionary*, but do not appear in *Toki Pona: the Language of Good*. They are included here for lookup purposes, but you don't have to use them.

\*\* this word is a common joke word, not intended for serious use.