



toki pona

Developed by linguist Sonja Lang, toki pona is a language with ~130 words.

It uses only 14 IPA phonemes: *a e i o u j k l m n p s t u w*

Basic Sentences

The particle > separates the subject from the predicate.

🐱>🍖 - *The cat is eating.*

👤>🛌 - *People sleep.*

There is no verb “to be.” The part after > (predicate) can be a noun or an adjective.

🍎>🍌 - *Fruits are food.*

💧>🌊 - *Water is good.*

If the subject is P or b alone, the > is always omitted.

P🍌 - *I eat.*

b🌊 - *You are good.*

Ambiguity

Toki Pona words are less specific than English words, so one-to-one translation is not as easy.

P🍌 - *I am eating, I was eating, or I will be eating.*

Many words have multiple or general meanings.

🐾 - *A cat, dog, or any land mammal.*

🍌 - *Any fruit or vegetable.*

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

≈ - *Water, wet, or to wash.*

🌟 - *Good, simple, to improve, or wellness.*

Nouns have no number and there is no “a” or “the”.

🐟 - *A fish, the fish, some fish.*

P - *I, me, we, or us.*

Direct objects

The particle >> signifies the direct object. This also makes the previous word into a verb.

🐱>>🍷≈ - *The animal drinks the water.*

P≈>>🚿 - *I wash my hands.*

bV>>📏 - *You enlarge it.*

Modifying words

Words can be modified by appending other words.

👦 - *Child (small human).*

🏠 - *My house.*

🥰 - *A good feeling.*

To negate a word, append ×

P×🌙 - *I’m not sleeping.*

👤×>🗣️ - *No one is talking.*

With multiple modifiers, they all modify the first word.

🌿🌿 - *Two plant lists.*

🔵🖤 - *A blue and black box.*

You can change the way the modifiers interact using pi .

🌿.🌿 - *A two-plant list.*

🌿.🖤 - *A dark-blue box.*

Prepositions

🍌, 🍌, 🍌, and 🍌 can act as prepositions. They go at the end of a statement.

P🍌🍌 - *I eat with cutlery.*

🐱>🏠 - *The animal is in the house.*

b🎵=🐦 - *You sing like a bird!*

P🏠>🍌 - *I return from work.*

👤>🗣️>🗣️ - *They said that to you.*

Questions

There are three ways to form a question. If you want a yes-or-no answer, use verb × verb.

👤>🎮×🎮 - *Is she playing?*

This will usually result in one of three types of replies:

👤 - *Yes: [she is] playing.*

👤× - *No: [she is] not playing.*

× - *No: [she is] not [playing].*

If you want to check something, end the sentence with Y?

b🔥Y? - *Are you making fire?*

🐱^>📦Y? - *Is the cute cat in a box?*

Replace unknown info with ? to form an open-ended question.

👤?>🍷≈ - *Who’s bringing the drinks?*

b🍷? - *What are you making?*

Interjections

Interjections are common. Add ! for emphasis.

🌟 - *Good! / Great! / Thanks!*

🗣️! - *So powerful!*

👋 - *Hello! / Hi! / Greetings!*

÷ - *True! / Correct!*

🍴 - *Bon appetit!*

Conjunctions

There are many ways to say “and”. Use + for 2+ subjects.

P+b>🎮 - *You and I are playing a lot.*

For 2+ predicates, repeat >.

🐱↓>🐱^ - *This animal is small and cute.*

For direct objects, repeat >>.

👤>👤>🐦>> - *She sees a bird and a fish.*

For prepositions, repeat the preposition.

P🍌>🏠🍌 - *I build the house using sticks and stones.*

Y can be used to mean “or.”

↓>🌟Y - *Is this good or bad?*

PYb>🏠 - *You or I are going to the store.*

Loanwords

Toki Pona uses **proper adjectives**, not nouns.

These are marked by a box. Only the first sound of each word is read.

👤[👤👤👤] - *A person named Sonja, a.k.a. jan Sonja.*

🗣️[🗣️🗣️] - *The language “Tosi” (Deutsch), a.k.a. German.*

🌍[🌍🌍🌍]V - *The land Mewika (USA) is big.*

Loanwords should try to follow Toki Pona’s rules for syllables:

- They have exactly one vowel.
- They may have n at the end.
- The first syllable in a word may start with a vowel.
- The others must all start with a consonant.
- The combinations wu, wo, ji, ti, nm and nn are avoided.

The word !

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

!👂 - *Listen!*

!🍷 - *Please drink.*

You can use ! after a subject to address them.

👤[👤👤]! - *Eten! (Aden)*

You can place ! between subject and predicate to express a wish, desire, request, etc.

🌟!🌟 - *Joy to you.*

P!🍌 - *I should be working.*

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

🍌[🍌!🍌]!🍌 - *Eat, Sasa. (Sasza)*

Preverbs

Preverbs go before verbs to modify their meaning.

P🍌 - *I can write.*

🐦>🏠V - *The small bird wants to become big.*

The words 🍌, 🍌, 🍌, 🍌, and 🍌 can be preverbs.

Context

The word) can be used to mark the context of a sentence:

a) b means: In the context of a, b. This can mean time, cause, topic, etc.

b.🍌.P)P🍌 - *When you are by my side, I feel good.*

The word) is often used to move a prepositional phrase to the front of the sentence.

=P)🍌 - *Just like me, you know a lot.*

👤?)🔥 - *Why are you hot?*

The preposition ÷ can be omitted in this case.

🌙)P - *I sleep [at] night.*

Numbers

Combine number words to add them up.


For example, 1 is 1, 11 is 2, 11 is 5, 111 is 20, ∞ is 100, 111 is 4, and 1111 is 8.

The word # can be used to mark ordinals.


📖#1🌟 - *The first book is good.*

†#1111 - *26th Street.*

people

	jan person, somebody	
	kulupu group, community, company, collection, team	
	mama parent, caretaker; creator	
	meli female, feminine	
	mi (1st-person) I, me, we, us	
	mije male, masculine	
	ona (3rd-person) he, she, it, they, ...	
	sina (2nd-person) you, y'all	
	tonsi nonbinary; transgender	

body

	insa inside, center, between, middle; organ, stomach	
	kute ear; hear, listen	
	lawa head, mind; lead; leader; rule	
	luka hand, arm; 5	
	lukin look, see, examine; eye; try	
	monsi behind, back, rear	
	nena nose, bump, hill, button	
	noka foot, leg; roots, lower part	
	pilin heart, feeling (emotion, sense)	
	selo outer layer, skin, peel, shell, bark; boundary	
	sijelo body, physical state, torso	
	sinpin vertical surface, wall; front, face	
	uta mouth, lips	

things

	ijo thing, object, matter	
	ilo tool, machine, device, instrument	
	leko square, cube, block, brick	
	linja long and flexible thing, rope, hair, line, string	
	lipu flat object, paper, document, card, website	
	lupa door, window, hole, pit, portal	
	namako spice, ornament; extra, additional	
	nena nose, bump, hill, button	
	palisa long hard object, rod, stick	
	poki container, bag, bowl, box, cup, category	
	sike circle, sphere; cycle, orbit, year	
	supa horizontal surface, bed, floor, table, platform, stage	

































necessities

	esun market, shop; trade, buy, sell	
	len cloth, fabric; hidden, private	
	mani money, currency; valuables	
	misikeke medication, medical practice	
	moku eat, drink; food	
	pan bread, grain, potato, pasta, rice	
	tomo building, room, tent, shelter	
	wile want, must, need	



















sight

	jelo yellow, yellowish color	
	kule color; aspect of sense, timbre, pitch, flavor, texture; queer	
	laso blue, green, turquoise, indigo	
	loje red, reddish color	
	lukin look, see, examine; eye; try	
	pimeja black; dark, unlit; dark color	
	sitelen image, picture, symbol, writing	
	walo white; light-colored, bright color	























activity

	alasa hunt, forage, seek, attempt, try	
	esun market, shop; trade, buy, sell	
	jo have, hold, carry, contain	
	kalama to make noise; sound	
	kepeken using, with, by means of	
	kipisi cut, split, slice; piece, part	
	ku to interact with Toki Pona Dictionary by Sonja Lang	
	lape sleep, rest	
	pali work, create, take action on	
	pana give, send, emit, provide	
	pu to interact with Toki Pona: The Language of Good by Sonja Lang	
	sitelen image, picture, symbol, writing	
	su to interact with the illustrated story book series produced by Sonja Lang	
	toki talk, communicate; tale; language	
	unpa sex, to have sexual relations	
	utala fight, compete, battle; challenge	

state

	ante different, change, changed, other	
	awen stay, remain, wait; protect, save; to continue	
	kama arrive, summon; future; become	
	ken can, may, ability; possible; allow, enable; to be able to	
	open begin, start; turn on; opening	
	pini finish, stop; turn off; close, end, final	
	tawa motion, walking, flight, travel; going to, for; from the perspective of	
	tempo time, moment, period, duration	
	weka away, absent, distant; remove, rid	









connection

	anu (possibility marker), or	
	e (direct object marker)	
	en (multiple subject marker)	
	kin too, also	
	la (context marker)	
	li (predicate marker)	
	lon located at; real, true, exist	
	pi (regroups modifiers)	
	seme (question marker); what, which	
	tan by, from, because; origin, cause	
	taso only, exclusively; but, however	





























critters

	akesi reptile, amphibian, scaly animal	
	kala fish, marine animal	
	kijetesantakalu raccoon, procyonid, musteloid	
	pipi insect, bug, spider, tiny crawling creature	
	soweli land animal, beast	
	waso bird, flying animal, winged animal	























evoke

	a (emphasis/emotion interjection); ah, oh, haha, eh, um	
	mu (animal noise/onomatopoeia)	
	n (thinking interjection); hm, uh	
	o (vocalive/imperative marker), must, ought, should, could, would	

descriptions

	ante different, change, changed, other	
	ike bad, negative, unpleasant, cringe, complex, harmful, unneeded	
	jaki disgusting, unclear, toxic	
	kiwen hard object, stone, rock, metal	
	ko clay, dough, something pliable, powder, sand	
	lawa head, mind; lead; leader; rule	
	lili little, small, short; few; young	
	namako spice, ornament; extra, additional	
	nasa strange, unusual, silly, unexpected; drunk	
	pona good, positive, pleasant, simple, friendly, useful, peaceful, based	
	sama same, similar; sibling, peer; as, like	
	sin new, fresh; another, extra	
	suli big, heavy, large; important; adult	
	suwi sweet; cute, innocent, adorable	






















elements

	kasi plant, vegetation; herb, leaf	
	kili fruit, vegetable	
	kiwen hard object, stone, rock, metal	
	kon air, breath, wind; spirit, soul	
	lete cold, cool, frozen; raw	
	ma earth, land, soil; country, territory	
	mun moon, night sky object, star	
	seli hot, warm; heat, fire; burn	
	soko mushroom, fungus, lichen	
	suno sun, light source; light, glow	
	telo water, liquids, drinks; to wash, to clean	

counting

	ala not, nothing, no; 0; (negation); (yes-no question)	
	ale all, everything, entirety; any; 100	
	luka hand, arm; 5	
	mute many, several; very; 20	
	nanpa number, -th	
	tu 2; separate, divide, split	
	wan 1; combine, join, mix	

locating

	anpa bottom, underside; below; defeat, humble, lowly	
	insa inside, center, between, middle; organ, stomach	
	lon located at; real, true, exist	
	monsi behind, back, rear	
	ni this, that, these, those	
	poka side, hip; next to, near	
	poki container, bag, bowl, box, cup, category	
	selo outer layer, skin, peel, shell, bark; boundary	
	sewi up, top, above; divine, sacred, supernatural; awesome, inspiring	
	sinpin vertical surface, wall; front, face	
	weka away, absent, distant; remove, rid	