

# Small Communication Book for Common Twi

Ghana-Korea-Germany  
Church Partnership Youth Encounter

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*Brothers and sisters, what should we say then? When you come together, every one of you brings something. You bring a hymn or a teaching or a word from God. You bring a message in another language or explain what was said. All of those things must be done to make the church strong.*

— NIRV 1 Corinthians 14:26

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# 1 Pronunciation Help

a	most times like <b>bark</b>
e	short like in <b>let</b> or longer
ε	<b>head</b>
i	short like in <b>sit</b> or long like <b>sheet</b>
o	most times like <b>for</b>
ɔ	open O like in <b>pot</b>
u	like <b>look</b> or <b>choose</b>
g	<b>gate</b>
h	<b>hire</b>
s	<b>suit</b>
r	rolling tongue R
w	<b>wood</b>
dw	like <b>dj</b> ango
gy	<b>jungle</b>
hw	<b>sh</b> wa or <b>sh</b> ip
hy	<b>sh</b> irt
kw	<b>equ</b> iped
ky	<b>ch</b> ief
nw	like nyw
ny	Español
tw	like tshu or the word <b>chew</b>
an	short like zebra <b>a</b> and silent N if word end

## *1 Pronunciation Help*

Twi belongs to the Akan language family and consists of strong dialects like Asante, Akuapem, Fante and more. The book gives just small insights of a common Twi and you will find more local varieties of pronunciation and words. Depending on the way to count there are around 60 languages in Ghana, but the Twi group is the biggest, especially in the south. The language also spread to Suriname, Jamaica and other places around South America through the slave trade. The alphabet and some of the first publications in Twi come from German missionaries and thus most vowels and consonats are not too different from German pronunciation. But it's not easy like that and you'll need to practise not only the diphthongs but also tones.

## 2 Greetings

**Akwaaba!** Welcome!

**Mema wo akye! (Maakye!)** Good morning!  
*I-give you warmness*

**Mema wo aha! (Maaha!)** Good afternoon!

**Mema wo adwo! (Maadwo!)** Good evening!

***Possible answers for a greeting:***

**Yaa Eɛna!** (mother, but used for all women)

**Yaa Agya!** (father, used for all men)

**Yaa nua!** [ nwiya ] (sibling, for same age or younger)

**Wo ho te sɛn?** How are you?  
*You body feel how?*

**Mo ho te sɛn?** How are you (pl.)?  
*You (pl.) body feel how?*

**Ɛte sɛn?** How is it?  
*It-feel how?*

## 2 Greetings

**Me ho ye.** I'm fine.  
*I body good.*

**Onyame adom me ho ye.** By God's grace I'm fine.  
*God grace I body good.*

**Eye.** It's good.

**Bokoo!** Soft! (infrml.)

**Na wo nso e?** And how are you?  
*And you too same-question?*

**Menso me ho ye.** I'm also fine.  
*I-too I body good.*

**Yoo. Yeda Onyame ase.** Well, we thank God.  
*OK. We-lay God under.*

**Meda ase (paa/bebre). (Medaase.)** Thank you (good/much).  
*I-lay under.*

**Meda wo ase. (Meda w'ase.)** Thank you.  
*I-lay you under.*

**Menso meda mo ase.** Thank you(pl.) too.  
*I-too I-lay you(pl.) under.*

**Nante yie!** Save journey!

**Mehu wo akyire! (Akyire!)** (I) See you later!

**Yebehyia!** We will meet!

**Okyena yebehyia bio.** Tomorrow we'll meet again.

**Afe hyia pa! - Afe nko mmeto yen!** Happy New Year!  
*- May another year come and meet us!*



# 3 Introducing yourself

**Wo din de sɛn?** What is your name?

**Yɛfrɛ wo sɛn?** How are you called?  
*We-call you how?*

**Me din de Ama.** My name is Ama.

**Yɛfrɛ me Adwoa.** I'm called Adwoa.  
*We-call I Adwoa.*

**Wofri he?** Where do you come from?  
*You-from where?*

**Mefri Korea.** I'm from Korea.

**Wote he?** Where do you stay?  
*You-stay where?*

**Mete Combine.** I stay at Combine.

**Mebaa Ghana nnaawɔtwe baako nie.** I came to Ghana  
last week.  
*I-came Ghana week one ago.*

**Wobɛdi abosome sɛn wɔ Ghana?** How many months  
will you stay in Ghana?  
*You-will-eat months how-many in Ghana?*

### 3 Introducing yourself

**Medi nnaawɔtwe mienu.** I will stay two weeks.  
*I-will-eat week two.*

**Woadi mfiɛ sɛn?** How old are you?  
*You-have-eaten years how-many?*

**Medii mfiɛ dunkron.** I am 19 years old.  
*I-ate years ten-nine.*

**Wopɛ deɛn?** What do you want?  
*You-want what?*

**Mepɛ sɛ mesra Akosua.** I want to visit Akosua.  
*I-want that I-visit Akosua.*

**Wɔwoo wo da bɛn?** Which day are you born?  
*They-bear you day which?*

**Wɔwoo me Yawoada, enti yɛfrɛ me Yaw.** I'm born at  
Thursday and so am called Yaw.  
*They-born I Thursday, hence we-call I Yaw.*

## 4 Pronouns, Titles and Family

**me/mi** I, me, my, mine

**m'adamfo** my friend

**wo** you, your

**w'adamfo** your friend

**ɔɔ, ɔ-** (when combined with verb) he/she, him/her

**eno, ɛ-** (when combined with verb) it

**ne** his/her

**n'adamfo** his/her friend

**yɛ/yɛn** we, us, our

**y'adamfo** our friend

**mo** you, yours

**mo adamfo** your friend

**wɔ/wɔɔnom/wɔn/wɔm** they, their, them

Often to speak to a person the title/role is prepended.

## 4 Pronouns, Titles and Family

**family** abusua

**Maame/Ena, Enanom (pl.)** Miss, Ladies/Women  
*Mother, Mothers*

**Papa/Agya, Agyanom (pl.)** Mister, Gentlemen/Men  
*Father, Fathers*

**Obaa** woman, girl

**Abrantɛɛ, Ababawa** young boy, young girl

**Akwadaa/Akolaa** child/baby

**Ante** auntie

**wɔfa'se** mothers brother i.e. uncle  
→ special role in extended family

**Sewaa** aunt, "female father" i.e. fathers sister  
→ special role in extended family

**Bra, nnua beɛma** brother

**Sister (Sis'a), nnua baa** sister

**nua baa/barima panin** big sister/brother  
*sibling female/male senior*

**nua baa/barima kumaa/ketewa** small sister/brother  
*sibling female/male junior*

**(O)panyin** adult

**ntaa/ntaafɔɔ (pl.)** twins

**anuanom** younger people

**osugyani** bachelor

**mpena** fiancée, boyfriend

## 5 Tenses and Grammar

**Present tense** is composed by putting subject and predicate together. While here the stem form of the verb is used many words in Twi are changed when used in different tense and nouns too change when used in plural form.

**Enne medi Fufuo.** Today I eat Fufu.

**Mete ha.** I stay here. *Note: te has several meanings.*

**Menom nsuo.** I drink water.

**Abena (ɔ)te Twi.** Abena speaks Twi.  
*Abena-feel Twi.*

**Present progressive** is composed by adding a -re- between subject and predicate. When speaking this just becomes a vowel lengthening. Third person singular is an exception if it follows a name.

**Mereba. (Meeba.)** I'm coming/on my way.  
*I-now-come.*

**Meredi Fufuo. (Meedi Fufuo.)** I'm eating Fufu.  
*I-now-eat Fufu.*

## 5 Tenses and Grammar

**Felix εεsua Twi.** (*Not: Felix ɔɔsua.*) Felix is learning Twi.  
*Felix he-now-learn Twi.*

**Seesei worekɔ he? (Wookɔ he?)** Where are you going now?  
*Now you-now-go where?*

**Merekɔ fie. (Meekɔ fie.)** I am going home.  
*I-now-go house.*

**Merenom nsuo. (Meenom nsuo.)** I am drinking water.  
*I-now-drink water.*

**Yerekɔ nom koko. (Yεekɔ nom koko.)** We go to eat mais porrage.  
*We-now-go drink porrage.*

**ɔreyε deen? (ɔɔyε deen?)** What is he doing?  
*He-now-do what?*

**Future tense** is composed by adding a -bε- between subject and predicate. When speaking this can also just change e to ε.

**Mebεda. (Mεda.)** I will sleep.

**ɔkyena ɔbεtɔ mpaboa.** Tomorrow he'll buy shoes.

**Wobεdi deen?** You'll eat what?

**ɔkyena akyi Kwame bεkɔ Togo.** The day after tomorrow Kwame will go to Togo.

**Past tense** is formed by prolonging the vowel of the predicate (or just telling the time while using present tense).

**Mesua Fanti.** I have learned Fanti.

**Ennora anwummerɛ medii Ampɛsi.** Yesterday evening  
I ate Ampesi.

**Mete Germany mfie miɛnsa nie.** I lived in Germany  
three years ago.  
*I-stay Germany year three ago.*

**Imperative** forms of verbs do sometimes change (like **ka** to **kassa**). An example is ba which becomes bra, while others like ko remain unchanged.

**Mepa wo kyɛw, bra, wei.** Please come, ok? *I-Beg you  
mercy, come, ok?*

**Kɔ fa ntoosi ma me.** Go bring the tomato for me.

**Gye sika.** Take the money/change.

**Menka Twi paa. Enti kassa brofo ma me.** I don't speak  
Twi well. So speak English for me.

## 5 Tenses and Grammar

**Negations** of verbs are made by prepending **n** to them in most cases. But the consonant is changed if it starts with **d** like *da* which becomes *nna* or **b** like *bo* which becomes *mmo*.

**Wontɔ nsuo bio?** You don't buy water again?  
*You-not-buy water again?*

**Mentɔn no.** I don't sell this.  
*I-not-sell this?*

**Yenhyia seesei.** We don't meet now.

**Memmrɛ...** I am not tired... (*from: abrɛ*)

**Monnom bia?** You don't drink beer?

**Adɛn Kwaku nni gyeene?** Why does Kwaku not eat onion?  
*Why Kwaku not-eat onion?*

**Yɛnfrɛ me ɔburoni, me din de Lisa.** We don't call me  
ɔburoni/european, my name is Lisa.  
*We-not-call I ɔburoni, I name given(?) Lisa.*

**Woboa! - Daabi, memmoa.** You lie! - No, I don't lie.

**Menni sika.** I don't have money. (*from: wo*)

**Menye Amerikani.** I'm not an American.



## 6 Useful Words and Phrases

Sometimes you get a question on the street as a greeting. E.g. **Woreko he?** (Where are you going?) It might be that no answer is expected, but it's always ok to give it short and quick: **Meko krum.** (I go to town.) - Then you might often hear: **Ko bra.** (Go come.) And you can also use **Me ko ba.** (I go come.) when you leave.

**ne** and

**na** and/but, joints phrases or introduces a question

**Da yie!** Sleep well!

**Mepɛ sɛ meko gu nsuo.** I want to go to toilet (peeing).  
*I-like that I-go pour-out water.*

**adepa nkye** (said as "good bye" in the evening)

**Wote Twi, anaa?** You speak/understand Twi, right?

**Aane, meka Twi.** Yes, I speak Twi.

**Kakra kakra** Small small (a little)

**Dabi, mente Twi.** No, I don't speak/understand Twi.

## 6 Useful Words and Phrases

**Wo nso wote Twi anaa?** And you too, you speak Twi, right?

**Mepa wo kyɛw kassa breau!** Please speak slowly.

**Wose sɛn?** What do you say?

**Men te ase.** I do not understand.

**Maatse.** I got it.

**Adɛn ...?** Why ...?

**Agoo!?** (When entering a place) Hello, is there someone? Or knocking: **Kɔkɔkɔ** Answer: **Ameɛ!** Yes, someone is inside.

**Hwan a?** Who's outside?

**Ɛyɛ me, Kofi.** It's me, Kofi.

**Yoo, bra mu!** Ok, come in.

**Agoo!** (When approaching from the back) Attention, I'm coming!

**Hwe yie!** Watch out!

**Ɔɔyɛ deɛn?** What is he/she doing?

**Ɛyɛ me ya.** It hurts me.

**Kafra!** Sorry!

**Yɛn kɔ?** Shall we go?/Let's go.

**Mesi wo ha.** (In a Taxi/Trotro) I drop/alight here.

**Mete ha.** I stay here.

**Mɛware wo.** I'll marry you.

**Yoo, kɔ hu me papa wɔ Germany.** Well then, go see  
my father in Germany.

**M'aware dada.** I've married already.

**Me wɔ kunu/yere/mpena.** I have a husband/wife/boyfriend.

**Yɛfrɛ wo maame sɛn?** We call your mother how?

**Yɛfrɛ me mamme Yaa.** We call my mother Yaa.

**Asomdwe nka wo. - Enka wo nso** Peace be with you.  
- And with you.

**Mepɛ w'asɛm.** I like you.  
*I-like you'character.*

**Sister Akua kɔ sraa n'adamfo.** Sister Akua goes to visit  
her friend.

**Mɛda dua ase.** I'll sleep under the tree.  
*I'll-sleep tree under.*

**Medaa dan mu.** I am sleeping in the room.  
*I-now-sleep room in.*

**Ennora/Ennɛ/ɔkyena yɛ da bɛn?** What day was/is yes-  
terday/today/tomorrow?  
*Yesterday/today/tomorrow is day which?*

**Ɛyɛ dɛ.** It's sweet (food).

**Mafe wo.** I missed you.  
*Answer: Menso saa! Me too!*

## *6 Useful Words and Phrases*

**Wo ho ye fe.** You look beautiful.  
*You body is beautiful.*

**Tiafi wo ha?** Is there a bathroom?  
*Bathroom have here?*

**Eye me ya.** It hurts me.

## 7 On the market

Always start with a smalltalk (see other chapters) before negotiating. You might like to be cheeky and either ask for a lower price or to get some additional amount.

**Mekɔ Kro-mu. (Mekɔ krom.)** I go to town.

*I-go town-into.*

**Dwaaso ahe?** Where is the market?

**Ɛye fɛfɛ.** It's beautiful.

**Me pɛ wei.** I like this.

**Mepɛ bio.** I want more/again.

**Wei ye sɛn?/Wei sɛn?** How much is this?

**Sɛn?/Ɛye sɛn?** How much (is it)?

**Apple sɛn?/Apple Ɛye sɛn?** How much is the apple?

**Mepɛ sɛ, metɔ ntoma. Ntoma boɔ sɛn?** I want to buy cloth. Cloth price is how much?

**Yard baako 8 sidi (GHC).** One yard is 8 Cedi (GHC).

**Mepaakyɛ wo te so kakra.** Please, reduce a little.  
*I-beg-your-mercy you put-down a-bit.*

## *7 On the market*

**Yoo. Ma me 7 GHC.** Ok, give me 7 Cedi.

**Me ma wo 6 GHC.** I give you 6 Cedi.

**Mepɛ sɛ metɔ gyeene. Gyeene/ɛyɛ sɛn sɛn?** I want  
to buy onion. Onion/It is how much for how many?

**Mmiɛnsa 60 GHp/pesewa.** Three are 60 Pesewa.

**(Wo) Ma me edu. Na gye sika.** (You) Give me ten. And  
take (your) money.

**Or: Mepaa kyɛ wo to me so./Mepa wo kyɛw, to so kakra.**  
Please add some more for me (as gift).

## 8 Weekdays and how to find your way

People get names according to the weekday they are born. This list contains versions in one popular spelling.

day	day in Twi	male	female
Sunday	Kwasiada	Kwasi	Akosua
Monday	Ɛ-dwoada	Kwadwo	Adwoa
Tuesday	Ɛ-benada	Kwabena	Abenaa
Wednesday	Wukuada	Kwaku	Akua
Thursday	Yawoada	Yaw	Yaa
Friday	(E)fiada	Kofi	Afia
Saturday	Memeneda	Kwame	Ama

**The following questions or phrases come in handy when you miss directions and get lost.**

**Ɛye me se m'ayera.** I think I am lost.

**Ɛhefa na ɔkwan wei kɔ?** Where does this road go to?

## *8 Weekdays and how to find your way*

**Wowɔ kuro no asaase mfonini?** Do you have a map of the city?

**Meserɛ wo wobetumi akyerɛ me wɔ m'asaase mfonini yi so?** Can you please show me on my map?

**Ɛwa anaa?** Is it far from here?

**Ɛhefa na mɛhunu adɛse yi?** Where can I find this address?

**Mɛtumi anante ako hɔ?** Can I get there on foot?

### **Three basic Responses you might get**

You also have to know some basic responses you will get when you ask these questions.

**Ɛwɔ w'anɪm tee.** It is straight ahead.

**Fa wo nifa so.** Turn right.

**Fa wo benkum so.** Turn left.



## 9 Dictionary

### Verbs

**adeka** read

**ba** come (imp. bra)

**bisa** ask

**boa** help

**dane** turn

**didi/di (+ object)** eat

**fa** take (along)

**fe ano** kiss (lit. throw out  
lips)

**frɛ** call

**gye** take

**hata** dry

**hia** need/want

**home** breathe

**hu** blow, see

**huri** jump

**hwɛ** look

**hye** burn

**kae** remember

**ka** talk (imp. kassa)

**kɔ** go

**kɔ/tu mmrika** run

**kye** fry

**kyerɛ** teach

**kyia** greet

**nante** walk

**noa** cook

**nom** drink

## 9 Dictionary

**nunu** tickle

**nya** earn

**pam** sew

**pira** hurt

**pra** sweep

**shout** tiemu

**somu** hold

**spoil** see

**sre** laugh

**su** cry

**suro** fear

**susu** measure

**te n'ase** sit down

**to** buy

**ton** sell

**to** throw

**tu** fly

**wia** steal

**ye ntem** hurry

**yera** loose

## Numbers

For non-whole number, simply add single number's name to its base value.

**baako** one

**mienu** two

**miensa** three

**ε-nan** four (stem: nan,  
speak like nain)

**e-num** five ("- marks fol-  
lowing stem)

**e-nsia** six

**ε-nson** seven

**(ε)nwotwe** eight

**(ε)nkron** nine

**e-du** ten

**du-baako** 11

**du-num** 15

**du-nsia** 16

**du-nkron** 19

**aduonu, aduenu** 20

**aduasa** 30

**aduasa nson** 37

**aduanan** 40

**aduonum** 50

**aduosia, aduesia** 60

**aduocson** 70

**aduowctwe** 80

**aduocokron** 90

**cha** 100

## **Human Body**

**Eti/Etire/Ti** head

**Ti nwi** hair

**Enim** face

**Mo mma** forehead

**Eni** eyes

**Ese** teeth

**Hwene** nose

**Aso** ear(s)

**Ano** mouth

**(E)kon** neck

**Nsa** arm(s)

**Efu** stomach

**Ekyi** back

**Sisi** waist

**(E)nan** legs

**Ani akyi nwi** eyebrow(s)

**Afono** cheeks

**Abogwe** chin

**Abogwe se** beard

**Abeti/Mmbeti** Shoulder(s)

**Bo** chest

**Sre** thigh

**Kotodwe** knee

## Fruits and Vegetables

**Abrɔbɛ** pineapple

**Amako/Mako** pepper

**Amango** mango

**Ankaa, Akutu/Akutuo**  
orange

**Bankye** cassava

**Bayerɛ, beye** yam

**Bɔfre, Bɔɔfre** pawpaw,  
papaya

**Bɔɔdeɛ** plantain

**Gyeyney** onion

**Kwadu** banana

**Mankani** cocoyam

**Nkatiɛ** (pea)nuts

**Nkruma** Okro

**Ntoes, ntoosi** tomato

**Ntrowa/Ntɔrewa/Nyaadowa**  
egg plant, garden  
egg, aubergine

**Paya** avocado

**ɔkra/Agyinamoa** cat

## Colours

**kɔkɔɔ** red

**tumtum** black

**fitaa, fufuo** white

**sika kɔkɔɔ** gold (lit. gold  
red)

**bribri, bibri** blue

**bruu** blue

**ahaban mono** green (lit.  
new leaf)

**akokɔ srades** yellow (lit.  
chicken oil)

**ahaban dada** brown (lit.  
old leaf)

**akokɔbin** brown (lit.  
chicken shit)

**tuum** dark

## Wordlist

<b>abanoma</b> adopted child	<b>ɛnnora</b> yesterday
<b>abofra</b> child	<b>he</b> where
<b>abosome</b> months, bo- some = month	<b>hyira</b> bless
<b>afie</b> year, mfie = years	<b>ma so</b> lift up
<b>anɔpa</b> morning	<b>mfie</b> years, afie = year
<b>anwummersɛ</b> evening	<b>na</b> and/but/however, day (da)
<b>asanka</b> stone bowl for grinding	<b>nana</b> grandmother/father, king
<b>awia</b> noon, sun	<b>nanankansoa</b> great- grandchild
<b>bɛn</b> which	<b>nnawɔtwe</b> week ("days- eight")
<b>bosome</b> month, abosome = months	<b>nya</b> get, receive
<b>dabi da</b> never	<b>ɔbabarima</b> son
<b>da</b> day (noun), sleep (verb)	<b>ɔbanana</b> grandchild
<b>da n'ase</b> thank him (lay him'under)	<b>okunu</b> husband
<b>deen</b> what	<b>ɔkyena akyi akyi</b> two days after tomorrow (next-next)
<b>ɛmo</b> rice	
<b>ɛnnora akye</b> day before yesterday	<b>ɔkyena akyi</b> day after to- morrow

## 9 Dictionary

**ɔkyena** tomorrow

**onua** cousin

**Onyame** God

**ɔyere** wife

**Saa!** Is that so?!

**sɛn** how

**tapoli** mortar (kitchen  
tool for grinding)

**tikya** teacher

**wɔfaase** nephew, niece

**yi ayɛ** give praise

## Proverbs

**Nka-kra, nka-kra akoko benom nsuo**  
bit by bit the chicken will drink water

**Okoto nwo anoma** a crab does not bear a bird

Kai Lüke, Richard Akyea

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