

Summary by language family

LANGUAGE FAMILY

The genetic classifications given in the language entries name 141 different language families (that is, top-level genetic groups). Six of these, each of which has at least 5% of the world's languages, stand out as the major language families of the world. Together they account for nearly two-thirds of all languages and five-sixths of the world's population. Table 5 summarizes the distribution of languages and their populations within these six families. The columns are as for table 1, with the addition of a final column listing the countries under which the main entries for the languages of that family are found.

In addition to the other 135 language families, the genetic classification scheme also includes special categories for constructed languages, creoles, deaf sign languages, language isolates, mixed languages, pidgins, and unclassified languages. Table 6 summarizes the distribution of languages and their populations for these other language families and special categories. In most cases the population as a percentage of the world population is negligible; a figure is shown in that column only when the value is at least one-hundredth of one percent. Together tables 5 and 6 account for all known living languages of the world.

Table 5. Major language families of the world

Language family	Living languages		Number of speakers				Countries
	Count	Percent	Total	Percent	Mean	Median	
Afro-Asiatic	366	5.16	444,845,814	6.70	1,215,426	20,150	Algeria, Bahrain, Cameroon, Chad, Cyprus, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Georgia, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Libya, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Morocco, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Tunisia, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan, Yemen
Austronesian	1,224	17.24	324,883,805	4.89	265,428	3,500	Brunei, Cambodia, Chile, China, China–Taiwan, Cook Islands, East Timor, Fiji, French Polynesia, Guam, Indonesia, Kiribati, Madagascar, Malaysia, Marshall Islands, Mayotte, Micronesia, Myanmar, Nauru, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Niue, Northern Mariana Islands, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Suriname, Thailand, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, United States, Vanuatu, Viet Nam, Wallis and Futuna
Indo-European	440	6.20	3,077,112,005	46.32	6,993,436	166,000	Afghanistan, Albania, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, China, Croatia, Czechia, Denmark, Egypt, Faroe Islands, Fiji, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, India, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Isle of Man, Israel, Italy, Jersey, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Macedonia, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, Netherlands, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States, Vatican State, Venezuela
Niger-Congo	1,526	21.50	458,899,441	6.91	300,720	29,000	Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Malawi, Mali, Mayotte, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe
Sino-Tibetan	452	6.37	1,355,708,295	20.41	2,999,355	15,000	Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Kyrgyzstan, Laos, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Thailand, Viet Nam
Trans-New Guinea	478	6.73	3,553,780	0.05	7,435	1,500	East Timor, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea
Totals	4,486	63.19	5,665,003,140	85.28			

Table 6. Other language families of the world

Language family	Living languages		Number of speakers				Countries
	Count	Percent	Total	Percent	Mean	Median	
Algic	41	0.58	217,478		5,304	850	Canada, United States
Amtó-Musan	2	0.03	520		260	260	Papua New Guinea
Andamanese	4	0.06	501		125	122	India
Arafundi	3	0.04	1,960		653	400	Papua New Guinea
Arai (Left May)	6	0.08	2,005		334	340	Papua New Guinea
Arauan	5	0.07	5,870		1,174	740	Brazil
Australian	193	2.72	40,071		208	26	Australia
Austro-Asiatic	166	2.34	104,993,793	1.58	632,493	10,000	Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, India, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Thailand, Viet Nam
Aymaran	3	0.04	1,702,740	0.03	567,580	213,000	Bolivia, Peru
Barbacoan	3	0.04	27,360		9,120	9,390	Colombia, Ecuador
Bayono-Awbono	2	0.03	200		100	100	Indonesia
Border	15	0.21	17,080		1,139	410	Indonesia, Papua New Guinea
Bororoan	2	0.03	1,393		696	696	Brazil
Botocudoan	1	0.01	10		10	10	Brazil
Caddoan	5	0.07	46		9	10	United States
Cahuapanan	2	0.03	10,270		5,135	5,135	Peru
Cariban	29	0.41	66,776		2,303	600	Brazil, Colombia, Guyana, Suriname, Venezuela
Central Solomons	4	0.06	14,810		3,702	2,145	Solomon Islands
Chapac			1,019		505	44	Bolivia, Brazil
Chibcha			1,120		15,156	2,900	Colombia, Costa Rica, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama
Chimak			0		0	0	United States
Chinookan	2	0.03	65		32	32	United States
Chipaya-Uru	2	0.03	1,202		601	601	Bolivia

Language family	Living languages		Number of speakers				Countries
	Count	Percent	Total	Percent	Mean	Median	
Chocoan	7	0.10	114,860		16,409	5,510	Colombia, Panama
Chon	1	0.01	0		0	0	Argentina
Chukotko-Kamchatkan	5	0.07	6,875		1,375	80	Russian Federation
Chumashan	6	0.08	0		0	0	United States
Cochimí-Yuman	9	0.13	2,384		265	170	Mexico, United States
Constructed language	1	0.01	1,000		1,000	1,000	Poland
Coosan	1	0.01	0		0	0	United States
Creole	88	1.24	41,026,575	0.62	466,211	37,100	Antigua and Barbuda, Australia, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Brazil, Cameroon, Cape Verde Islands, Central African Republic, Chad, China–Macao, Colombia, Congo, Curacao, Democratic Republic of the Congo, East Timor, Equatorial Guinea, French Guiana, Ghana, Grenada, Guadeloupe, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Jamaica, Malaysia, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia, New Caledonia, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norfolk Island, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Réunion, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, São Tomé e Príncipe, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Africa, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Tanzania, Trinidad and Tobago, Turks and Caicos Islands, U.S. Virgin Islands, Uganda, United States, Vanuatu
Dravidian	85	1.20	228,108,690	3.43	2,683,632	26,000	India, Nepal, Pakistan
East Bird's Head-Sentani	8	0.11	71,730		8,966	5,875	Indonesia
East Geelvink Bay	12	0.17	8,005		667	300	Indonesia
East New Britain	6	0.08	13,800		2,300	1,950	Papua New Guinea
Eastern Trans-Fly	4	0.06	6,760		1,690	1,525	Australia, Papua New Guinea
Eskimo-Aleut	10	0.14	108,705		10,870	1,200	Canada, Greenland, Russian Federation, United States
Eyak-Athabaskan	40	0.56	205,129		5,128	85	Canada, United States
Fas	2	0.03	2,840		1,420	1,420	Papua New Guinea
Guajibohan	5	0.07	38,700		7,740	1,000	Colombia
Guaykuruan	4	0.06	49,350		12,338	3,500	Argentina, Brazil
Haida	2	0.03	24		12	12	Canada
Harákmbut	2	0.03	2,220		1,110	1,110	Peru
Hmong-Mien	38	0.54	9,331,720	0.14	245,572	65,500	China, Laos, Viet Nam
Huavean	4	0.06	14,670		3,668	1,585	Mexico
Iroquoian	9	0.13	16,439		1,827	100	Canada, United States
Jabutian	2	0.03	3		2	1	Brazil
Japonic	12	0.17	129,204,210	1.94	10,767,018	5,000	Japan
Jean	13	0.18	44,335		3,410	1,535	Brazil
Jicaquean	1	0.01	350		350	350	Honduras
Jivaroan	4	0.06	135,450		33,862	32,110	Ecuador, Peru
Karajá	1	0.01	2,670		2,670	2,670	Brazil
Kartvelian	5	0.07	4,113,630	0.06	822,726	62,600	Georgia, Israel, Turkey
Katukinan	2	0.03	10		5	5	Brazil
Kaure	3	0.04	900		300	250	Indonesia
Kaweskaran	1	0.01	12		12	12	Chile
Keresan	2	0.03	10,670		5,335	5,335	United States
Khoe-Kwadi	12	0.17	277,547		23,129	1,735	Botswana, Namibia, South Africa
Kiowa-Tanoan	5	0.07	7,230		1,446	1,500	United States
Koreanic	2	0.03	77,238,270	1.16	38,619,135	38,619,135	South Korea
Kwomtari	3	0.04	2,850		950	750	Papua New Guinea
Kx'a	4	0.06	109,860		27,465	25,100	Botswana, Namibia
Lakes Plain	19	0.27	9,655		508	300	Indonesia
Language isolate	77	1.08	854,180	0.01	11,093	51	Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chad, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, India, Indonesia, Japan, Mali, Mexico, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Russian Federation, Spain, Tanzania, United States, Venezuela
Lencan	1	0.01	0		0	0	Honduras
Lower Mamberamo	2	0.03	800		400	400	Indonesia
Maiduan	3	0.04	4		1	1	United States
Maipurean	54	0.76	683,009	0.01	12,648	650	Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Guyana, Honduras, Peru, Puerto Rico, Suriname, Venezuela
Mairasi			385		1,462	1,000	Indonesia
Mapud			410		130,205	130,205	Chile
Mascoy			998		2,333	1,355	Paraguay
Matacoan	7	0.10	60,280		8,611	2,150	Argentina, Bolivia, Paraguay
Maxakalian	2	0.03	1,270		635	635	Brazil
Mayan	31	0.44	6,512,723	0.10	210,088	54,200	Belize, Guatemala, Mexico

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Language family	Living languages		Number of speakers				Countries
	Count	Percent	Total	Percent	Mean	Median	
Maybrat	2	0.03	25,000		12,500	12,500	Indonesia
Misumalpan	4	0.06	152,050		38,012	4,525	Nicaragua
Miwok-Costanoan	8	0.11	19		2	0	United States
Mixe-Zoquean	17	0.24	163,704		9,630	8,000	Mexico
Mixed language	23	0.32	796,905	0.01	34,648	1,000	Armenia, Australia, China, Ecuador, France, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Ireland, Micronesia, Niger, Norway, Philippines, Russian Federation, Serbia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Tanzania, United Kingdom, United States
Mongol-Langam	3	0.04	1,970		657	420	Papua New Guinea
Mongolic	13	0.18	7,155,590	0.11	550,430	96,100	Afghanistan, China, Mongolia, Russian Federation
Mosetenan	1	0.01	5,320		5,320	5,320	Bolivia
Muran	1	0.01	360		360	360	Brazil
Muskogean	6	0.08	16,489		2,748	395	United States
Nambikwara	6	0.08	1,068		178	10	Brazil
Nilo-Saharan	201	2.83	50,326,960	0.76	250,383	44,000	Algeria, Benin, Central African Republic, Chad, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda
Nimboran	5	0.07	8,500		1,700	2,000	Indonesia
North Bougainville	4	0.06	10,020		2,505	2,350	Papua New Guinea
North Caucasian	33	0.46	6,603,775	0.10	200,114	6,180	Azerbaijan, Georgia, Russian Federation
Otomanguean	176	2.48	1,681,257	0.03	9,553	4,060	Mexico, Nicaragua
Paezan	4	0.06	61,000		15,250	10,500	Colombia
Palaihnihan	2	0.03	10		5	5	United States
Panoan	21	0.30	38,284		1,823	500	Bolivia, Brazil, Peru
Pauwasi	5	0.07	3,710		742	230	Indonesia, Papua New Guinea
Piawi	2	0.03	2,600		1,300	1,300	Papua New Guinea
Pidgin	13	0.18	113,001		8,692	0	Australia, India, Indonesia, Liberia, Nauru, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, South Africa, Suriname, United States, Zambia
Pomoan	7	0.10	49		7	1	United States
Puinavean	7	0.10	6,205		886	500	Brazil, Colombia
Quechuan	44	0.62	7,767,820	0.12	176,541	27,500	Argentina, Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru
Ramu-Lower Sepik	32	0.45	66,180		2,068	1,040	Papua New Guinea
Sahaptian	5	0.07	225		45	25	United States
Salish	25	0.35	1,826		73	12	Canada, United States
Sálivan	3	0.04	18,630		6,210	2,500	Colombia, Venezuela
Senagi	2	0.03	2,960		1,480	1,480	Indonesia, Papua New Guinea
Sepik	55	0.77	162,829		2,961	700	Papua New Guinea
Sign language	140	1.97	13,158,282	0.20	93,988	8,000	Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chad, Chile, China, China–Hong Kong, China–Taiwan, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Czechia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Laos, Latvia, Libya, Lithuania, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Moldova, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Puerto Rico, Romania, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Switzerland, Tanzania, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Zambia, Zimbabwe
Siouan-Catawban	14	0.20	10,249		732	117	Canada, United States
Skou	8	0.11	5,855		732	530	Indonesia, Papua New Guinea
Somahai	2	0.03	2,200		1,100	1,100	Indonesia
South Bougainville	9	0.13	68,700		7,633	3,000	Papua New Guinea
South-Central Papuan	22	0.31	16,312		741	365	Indonesia, Papua New Guinea
Tacanan	6	0.08	4,950		825	670	Bolivia
Tai-Kadai	90	1.27	80,886,958	1.22	898,744	71,800	China, India, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, Viet Nam
Tarascan	2	0.03	235,000		117,500	117,500	Mexico
Tequistlatecan	2	0.03	3,480		1,740	1,740	Mexico
Tiniguan	1	0.01	2		2	2	Colombia
Tor-Kwerba	24	0.34	16,195		675	400	Indonesia
Torricelli			1,505		1,991	750	Papua New Guinea
Totonac			1,120		23,510	3,135	Mexico
Tsimshian			1,388		463	350	Canada
Tucanoan	23	0.32	30,248		1,315	642	Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru
Tungusic	11	0.15	55,452		5,041	150	China, Russian Federation

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Language family	Living languages		Number of speakers				Countries
	Count	Percent	Total	Percent	Mean	Median	
Tupian	66	0.93	6,244,802	0.09	94,618	230	Bolivia, Brazil, French Guiana, Paraguay, Peru
Turkic	39	0.55	172,371,468	2.59	4,419,781	331,000	Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, China, Georgia, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lithuania, Moldova, Russian Federation, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan
Tuu	2	0.03	2,505		1,252	1,252	Botswana, South Africa
Unclassified	46	0.65	360,449		7,836	23	Afghanistan, Australia, Brazil, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, China, Colombia, Ethiopia, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, Peru, South Africa, Spain, United Kingdom, Venezuela, Viet Nam
Uralic	37	0.52	20,611,268	0.31	557,061	2,000	Estonia, Finland, Hungary, Latvia, Norway, Russian Federation, Sweden
Uto-Aztecan	58	0.82	1,925,793	0.03	33,203	5,255	El Salvador, Mexico, United States
Wakashan	6	0.08	698		116	98	Canada, United States
West Papuan	23	0.32	269,425		11,714	3,310	Indonesia
Wintuan	3	0.04	38		13	19	United States
Witotoan	7	0.10	15,897		2,271	194	Colombia, Peru
Yaguan	1	0.01	5,000		5,000	5,000	Peru
Yanomaman	5	0.07	32,100		6,420	5,070	Brazil, Venezuela
Yele-West New Britain	3	0.04	6,550		2,183	2,000	Papua New Guinea
Yeniseian	2	0.03	211		106	105	Russian Federation
Yokutsan	1	0.01	50		50	50	United States
Yuat	6	0.08	7,700		1,283	1,045	Papua New Guinea
Yukaghir	2	0.03	740		370	370	Russian Federation
Yukian	2	0.03	3		2	1	United States
Zamucoan	2	0.03	5,900		2,950	2,950	Paraguay
Zaparoan	3	0.04	90		30	35	Ecuador, Peru
<i>Totals</i>	2,613	36.81	978,034,375	14.72			

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