

Toki Pona

Developed by linguist Sonja Lang, Toki Pona is a language with around 130 words.

Basic Sentences

The particle > separates the subject from the predicate.

- 𐌿 > 𐌺 - The cat is eating.
- 𐌺 > 𐍺 - People sleep.

There is no verb "to be". The part after > can be a noun or an adjective.

- 𐌿 > 𐌺 - Fruits are food.
- ≈ > 𐍺 - Water is good.

If the subject is 𐌿 or 𐍺 alone, > is always omitted.

- 𐌿 𐌺 - I eat.
- 𐍺 𐍺 - You are good.

Ambiguity

Toki Pona words are less specific than English, so direct translation is challenging.

- 𐌿 𐌺 - I am eating, I was eating, or I will be eating.

Many words have multiple or general meanings.

- 𐌿 - A cat, dog, or any land mammal.
- 𐌿 - Any fruit or vegetable.

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

- ≈ - Water, wet, or to wash.
- 𐍺 - Good, to improve, or wellness.

Nouns have no number and there is no "a" or "the".

- 𐍺 - A fish, the fish, some fish.
- 𐌿 - I, me, we, or us.

Direct objects

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

- 𐌿 > 𐌺 >> ≈ - The animal drinks the water.
- 𐌿 ≈ >> 𐌿 - I wash the cat, or I apply water to the cat.
- 𐍺 𐍺 >> 𐍺 - You enlarge it.

Modifying Words

Words can be modified adding other words directly after them.

- 𐌿 𐍺 - My house.
- 𐍺 𐍺 - A good feeling.

To negate a word, put 𐍺 after it.

- 𐌿 𐍺 𐍺 - I'm not sleeping.
- 𐌺 𐍺 > 𐌿 - No one responded.

Each additional modifier affects the very first word.

- 𐌿 𐌿 𐌿 - Two plant lists.
- 𐌿 𐌿 𐌿 - A blue and black box.

You can insert 𐌿 between words to change this behavior.

- 𐌿 𐌿 𐌿 𐌿 - A two-plant list.
- 𐌿 𐌿 𐌿 𐌿 - A dark-blue box.

Prepositions

The words 𐌿, 𐍺, 𐍺, 𐌿, and 𐌿 can start prepositional phrases at the end of a sentence.

- 𐌿 𐌿 𐌿 𐌿 - I eat with cutlery.
- 𐌿 > 𐍺 𐌿 - The rat is in the hall.
- 𐌿 𐌿 𐍺 - You sing like birds!
- 𐌿 𐌿 𐌿 - I'm back from work.
- 𐍺 > 𐌿 >> 𐌿 𐌿 - They said that to you.

Conjunctions

There are many ways to say "and". Use 𐌿 for 2+ subjects.

- 𐌿 𐌿 > 𐌿 𐌿 - You and I are playing a lot.

Repeat > for 2+ predicates.

- 𐌿 𐌿 > 𐌿 > 𐌿 - This animal is small and cute.

Repeat >> for 2+ objects.

- 𐍺 > 𐌿 >> 𐌿 >> 𐌿 - She sees the birds and fish.

Do the same for prepositional phrases.

- 𐌿 𐌿 >> 𐌿 𐌿 𐌿 - I built the hut with sticks and stones.

You can use 𐌿 to mean "or".

- 𐌿 𐌿 𐌿 𐌿 - We'll either go to the store or to the park.
- 𐌿 𐌿 > 𐌿 - That's either an insect or a lizard.

Loanwords

Toki Pona uses proper *adjectives*, not nouns. These are marked by a box. Only the first sound of each word is read.

- 𐌿 𐌿 𐌿 - A person named Sonja, a.k.a. jan Sonja.
- 𐌿 𐌿 𐌿 - The language "Tosi" (Deutsch), a.k.a. German.
- 𐌿 𐌿 𐌿 > 𐌿 - 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 𐌿

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

- 𐌿 𐌿 - Listen!
- 𐌿 𐌿 - Please drink.

You can use 𐌿 after a subject to address them.

- 𐌿 𐌿 𐌿 - Pape!

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

- 𐌿 𐌿 𐌿 - Joy to you.
- 𐌿 𐌿 𐌿 - I should be working.

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

- 𐌿 𐌿 𐌿 - Eat, Ton.

Interjections

Interjections are common. Add 𐌿 for emphasis.

- 𐌿 - Good!; Great!; Thanks!
- 𐌿 - Hello!; Hi!; Greetings!
- 𐌿 - True!; Correct!

Questions

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

- 𐍺 > 𐌿 𐌿 - Is she playing?

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

- 𐌿 - Yes: [she is] playing.

- 𐌿 𐍺 - No: [she is] not playing.
- 𐍺 - No: [she is] not [playing].

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

- 𐌿 𐌿 𐌿 ? - Are you making fire?
- 𐌿 𐌿 > 𐌿 𐌿 ? - Is the cute cat in a box?

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

- 𐌿 ? > 𐌿 >> 𐌿 ≈ - Who's bringing the drinks?
- 𐌿 𐌿 > ? - What's he making?

Preverbs

Preverbs go before verbs to modify their meaning.

- 𐌿 𐌿 𐌿 - I can write.
- 𐌿 𐌿 > 𐌿 𐌿 - The small bird wants to become big.

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

Context

The word 𐌿 can be used to mark the context of a sentence: *a* 𐌿 *b* means: In the context of *a*, *b*. This can mean time, cause, topic or any other relationship to the main sentence.

- 𐌿 𐌿 𐌿 𐌿 𐌿 - When you are by my side, I feel good.

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

- 𐌿 𐌿 𐌿 𐌿 𐌿 - Just like me, you know a lot.
- 𐌿 𐌿 > 𐌿 𐌿 - Why are you hot?

The preposition 𐌿 can be omitted in this case.

- 𐌿 𐌿 𐌿 - 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, 1111 is 100, 11111 is 4, and 111111 is 8.

The word 𐌿 can be used to mark ordinals.

- 𐌿 𐌿 1 > 𐌿 - The first book is good.
- 𐌿 𐌿 11111 1 - 23rd Street.

a 𐀀 marks emphasis, emotion	kon 𐀓 air, spirit, essence, unseen agent	mun 𐀓 night sky object	sijelo 𐀓 body, torso, physical state
akesi 𐀓 reptile, amphibian	*ku 𐀓 interact with <i>Toki Pona Dictionary</i>	musi 𐀓 entertaining, fun, recreational	sike 𐀓 circular object, cycle, of one year
ala 𐀓 no, not, nothing, zero	kule 𐀓 color, colorful	mute 𐀓 many, a lot, very, quantity	sin 𐀓 new, another, fresh
alasa 𐀓 to hunt, forage, seek, try	kulupu 𐀓 community, group, company, nation	*n 𐀓 indicates thinking, recognition	sina 𐀓 second-person pronoun
ale (ali) 𐀓 all, every, 100	kute 𐀓 ear, to hear	*namako 𐀓 spice, additional	sinpin 𐀓 face, front, wall
anpa 𐀓 downward, humble, lowly	la 𐀓 marks context	nanpa 𐀓 -th, number	sitelen 𐀓 image, picture, writing, symbol
ante 𐀓 different, other, changed	lape 𐀓 sleeping, resting	nasa 𐀓 strange, unusual, foolish, silly	*soko 𐀓 mushroom
anu 𐀓 connects phrases with "or"	laso 𐀓 blue, green	nasin 𐀓 way, read, doctrine, method	sona 𐀓 to know, wisdom, knowledge, info
awen 𐀓 enduring, kept, protected, to continue to	*lanpan 𐀓 take, seize catch, receive, get	nena 𐀓 bump, hill, nose	soweli 𐀓 land mammal
e 𐀓 marks direct objects	lawa 𐀓 head, mind, ruler, to lead, to regulate	ni 𐀓 this, that	*su 𐀓 interacting with the illustrated story books
en 𐀓 connects multiple subjects	*leko 𐀓 square, block	nimi 𐀓 word, name	sunu 𐀓 light source, sun, bright
*epiku 𐀓 epic, cool, awesome, amazing	len 𐀓 cloth, fabric, cover, layer of privacy	noka 𐀓 foot, leg, lower part	supa 𐀓 horizontal surface, thing to put objects on
esun 𐀓 store, to trade	lete 𐀓 cool, cold, raw	o 𐀓 marks command or address	suwi 𐀓 sweet, cute
ijo 𐀓 thing, object, phenomenon	li 𐀓 marks the predicate	*oko 𐀓 eye, ocular, visual	tan 𐀓 from, by, because of
ike 𐀓 bad, negative, irrelevant	lili 𐀓 small, little, few, a bit, young	olin 𐀓 to love, to respect	taso 𐀓 but, however, only
ilo 𐀓 tool, device, instrument	linja 𐀓 long and flexible thing, string, cord, hair, thread	ona 𐀓 third-person pronoun	tawa 𐀓 going to, for, moving
insa 𐀓 center, inside, content, organ, stomach	lipu 𐀓 flat object, paper, card, document, website	open 𐀓 to begin, to start, opening	telo 𐀓 liquid, water, beverage
jaki 𐀓 disgusting, unclean, toxic	loje 𐀓 red, reddish	pakala 𐀓 broken, damaged, to mess up	tenpo 𐀓 time, duration, moment, period
jan 𐀓 person, someone	lon 𐀓 located at, present at, true	pali 𐀓 to do, to work on	toki 𐀓 to say, language
*jasima 𐀓 mirror, reflection, opposite	luka 𐀓 arm, hand, five	palisa 𐀓 long hard object, rod, stick	tomo 𐀓 indoor space, building, home
jelo 𐀓 yellow, yellowish	lukin 𐀓 to see, examine	pan 𐀓 grain, pasta, bread, rice	*tonsi 𐀓 non-binary, trans
jo 𐀓 to have, carry, contain, hold	lupa 𐀓 door, hole, orifice	pana 𐀓 to give, to emit, to send	tu 𐀓 two
kala 𐀓 sea creature	ma 𐀓 earth, land, outdoors, soil	pi 𐀓 regroupers modifiers	unpa 𐀓 sex, to have sexual relations
kalama 𐀓 sound, to make a sound, to utter	mama 𐀓 parent, creator, caretaker	pilin 𐀓 to feel, heart, feeling	uta 𐀓 mouth, lips, oral
kama 𐀓 arriving, coming, future, to become	mani 𐀓 money, cash, currency item	pimeja 𐀓 black, dark, unlit	utala 𐀓 to battle, challenge
kasi 𐀓 plant, vegetation, grass, leaf	*meli 𐀓 female	pini 𐀓 finished, past, end	walo 𐀓 white, light-colored, pale
ken 𐀓 to be able to, can, may, possible	*meso 𐀓 midpoint, medium, neither one nor the other	pipi 𐀓 bug, insect	wan 𐀓 one, unique
kepeken 𐀓 to use, with, by means of	mi 𐀓 first-person pronoun	poka 𐀓 hip, side, nearby	waso 𐀓 flying creature
*kijete-santakalu 𐀓 Musteloid, raccoon	*mije 𐀓 male	poki 𐀓 container, bag, box, bowl, cup	wawa 𐀓 strong, powerful, confident, energetic
kili 𐀓 fruit, vegetable	*misikeke 𐀓 medicine, medicinal	pona 𐀓 good, useful, simple, positive	weka 𐀓 absent, away
*kin 𐀓 also, too	moku 𐀓 to eat, to drink, food	pu 𐀓 interacting with <i>Toki Pona: The Language of Good</i>	wile 𐀓 must, need, want
*kipisi 𐀓 to cut, to divide, part, division	moli 𐀓 dead, dying	sama 𐀓 similar, as, like	
kiwen 𐀓 hard object, metal, stone, rock	monsi 𐀓 back, behind, rear	seli 𐀓 fire, heat source	
ko 𐀓 clay, semi-solid, paste, powder	*monsuta 𐀓 fear, monster, scary	selo 𐀓 outer form or layer, skin, peel	
	mu 𐀓 an animal noise	seme 𐀓 what? which?	
		sewi 𐀓 area above, highest part, di-vine, sacred	

These definitions are shortened to fit one page. For thorough definitions and usage, use [lipu Linku](#).

*These words are less common. Avoid them with beginners.