

Toki Pona

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

The shows uses Latin spellings. Pronounce these per IPA standards. The alphabet is: a e i j k l m n o p s t u w

Basic Sentences

The particle > separates the subject from the predicate.

☞ > ʘ - The cat is eating.

ʘ > ʘ - People sleep.

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

ʘ > ʘ - Fruits are food.

≈ > ʘ - Water is good.

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

ʘ ʘ - I eat.

ʘ ʘ - You are good.

Ambiguity

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

ʘ ʘ - 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.

ʘ - Any fruit or vegetable.

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

≈ - Water, wet, or to wash.

ʘ - Good, to improve, or wellness.

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

ʘ - A fish, the fish, some fish.

ʘ - I, me, we, or us.

Direct objects

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

☞ > ʘ >> ≈ - The animal drinks the water.

ʘ ≈ >> ʘ - I wash my hands.

ʘ ʘ >> ʘ - You enlarge it.

Modifying Words

Words can be modified adding other words directly after them.

ʘ ʘ - My house.

ʘ ʘ - A good feeling.

To negate a word, put X after it.

ʘ ʘ X - I'm not sleeping.

ʘ X > ʘ - No one responded.

Each additional modifier affects the very first word.

ʘ ʘ ʘ - Two plant lists.

ʘ ʘ ʘ - A blue and black box.

You can insert L between words to change this behavior.

ʘ L ʘ ʘ - A two-plant list.

ʘ L ʘ ʘ - A dark-blue box.

Prepositions

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

ʘ ʘ ʘ ʘ - I eat with cutlery.

☞ > ʘ ʘ - The rat is in the hall.

ʘ ʘ ʘ ʘ - You sing like birds!

ʘ ʘ ʘ ʘ - I'm back from work.

ʘ > ʘ >> ʘ ʘ ʘ - They said that to you.

Questions

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

ʘ > ʘ X ʘ - Is she playing?

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

ʘ - Yes: [she is] playing.

ʘ X - No: [she is] not playing.

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

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

ʘ ʘ ʘ? - Are you making fire?

☞ ʘ > ʘ ʘ ʘ? - Is the cute cat in a box?

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

ʘ ? > ʘ >> ʘ ≈ - Who's bringing the drinks?

ʘ ʘ >> ? - What are you making?

Conjunctions

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

ʘ + ʘ > ʘ ʘ - You and I are playing a lot.

Repeat > for 2+ predicates.

☞ ↓ > ʘ > ʘ - This animal is small and cute.

Repeat >> for 2+ objects.

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

Do the same for prepositional phrases.

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

You can use ʘ to mean "or".

ʘ ʘ ʘ ʘ - We'll either go to the store or to the park.

ʘ ʘ ʘ > ʘ - That's either an insect or a lizard.

Interjections

Interjections are common. Add ʘ for emphasis.

ʘ - Good!; Great!; Thanks!

ʘ - Hello!; Hi!; Greetings!

ʘ ʘ - True!; Correct!

Loanwords

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

ʘ (ʘ ʘ ʘ ʘ) - A person named Sonja, a.k.a. Jan Sonja.

ʘ (ʘ ʘ ʘ ʘ) - The language "Tosi" (Deutsch), a.k.a. German.

ʘ (ʘ ʘ ʘ ʘ) > ʘ - 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 ʘ

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

ʘ ʘ - Listen!

ʘ ʘ - Please drink.

You can use ʘ after a subject to address them.

ʘ (ʘ ʘ ʘ ʘ) ʘ - Pape!

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

ʘ ʘ ʘ - Joy to you.

ʘ ʘ ʘ - I should be working.

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

☞ (ʘ ʘ ʘ) ʘ ʘ - Eat, Ton.

Preverbs

Preverbs go before verbs to modify their meaning.

ʘ ʘ ʘ - I can write.

ʘ ʘ > ʘ ʘ ʘ - The small bird wants to become big.

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

Context

The word ʘ can be used to mark the context of a sentence: *a ʘ b* means: In the context of *a*, *b*. This can mean time, cause, topic, etc.

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

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

ʘ ʘ ʘ ʘ ʘ - Just like me, you know a lot.

ʘ ? ʘ ʘ - Why are you hot?

The preposition ʘ can be omitted in this case.

ʘ ʘ ʘ ʘ - I sleep [at] night.

Numbers

Combine number words to add them up.

For exmaple, 1 is 1, ʘ is 2, ʘ is 5, ʘ is 20, ʘ is 100, ʘ ʘ is 4, and ʘ ʘ 1 is 8.

The word ʘ can be used to mark ordinals.

ʘ ʘ 1 > ʘ - The first book is good.

ʘ ʘ ʘ ʘ 1 - 23rd Street.

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

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

*These words are less common, and beginners should avoid them.