

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.

☹ > 𐀀 - The cat is eating.
𐀀 > 𐀁 - People sleep.

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

𐀀 > 𐀂 - Fruits are food.
≈ > 𐀃 - Water is good.

If the subject is 𐀄 or 𐀅 alone, > is always omitted.

𐀄 𐀂 - I eat.
𐀅 𐀃 - You are good.

Ambiguity

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

𐀄 𐀂 - 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.
𐀀 - Any fruit or vegetable.

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

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

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

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

Direct objects

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

☹ > 𐀂 >> ≈ - The animal drinks the water.
𐀄 ≈ >> 𐀇 - I wash my hands.
𐀅 𐀈 >> 𐀉 - You enlarge it.

Modifying Words

Words can be modified adding other words directly after them.

𐀄 𐀀 - My house.
𐀃 𐀃 - A good feeling.

To negate a word, put ✕ after it.

𐀄 𐀉 ✕ - I'm not sleeping.
𐀀 ✕ > 𐀀 - No one responded.

Each additional modifier affects the very first word.

𐀀 𐀀 𐀀 - Two plant lists.
𐀀 𐀈 𐀈 - A blue and black box.

You can insert 𐀀 between words to change this behavior.

𐀀 𐀀 𐀀 𐀀 - A two-plant list.
𐀀 𐀀 𐀈 𐀈 - A dark-blue box.

Prepositions

The words 𐀀, 𐀁, 𐀂, 𐀃, and 𐀄 can start prepositional phrases at the end of a sentence.

𐀄 𐀀 𐀀 𐀀 - I eat with cutlery.
☹ > 𐀁 𐀀 - The rat is in the hall.
𐀅 𐀈 𐀈 𐀈 - You sing like birds!
𐀄 𐀃 𐀃 𐀃 - I'm back from work.
𐀉 > 𐀀 >> 𐀇 𐀈 𐀈 - 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*

𐀉 > 𐀉 ✕ 𐀉 - Is she playing?

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

𐀉 - Yes: [she is] playing.
𐀉 ✕ - No: [she is] not playing.
✕ - No: [she is] not [playing].

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

𐀅 𐀈 𐀈 𐀈 𐀀? - Are you making fire?
☹ 𐀃 > 𐀁 𐀀 𐀀? - Is the cute cat in a box?

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

𐀀 𐀀? > 𐀈 >> 𐀂 ≈ - Who's bringing the drinks?
𐀅 𐀂 >> 𐀀? - What are you making?

Conjunctions

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

𐀄 + 𐀅 > 𐀉 𐀀 - You and I are playing a lot.

Repeat > for 2+ predicates.

☹ ↓ > 𐀃 > 𐀃 - This animal is small and cute.

Repeat >> for 2+ objects.

𐀉 > 𐀀 >> 𐀈 >> 𐀈 - She sees the birds and fish.

Do the same for prepositional phrases.

𐀄 𐀂 >> 𐀀 𐀀 𐀀 𐀀 - I built the hut with sticks and stones.

You can use 𐀃 to mean "or".

𐀄 𐀈 𐀈 𐀈 𐀃 𐀈 𐀈 - We'll either go to the store or to the park.
𐀈 𐀈 𐀈 > 𐀁 - That's either an insect or a lizard.

Interjections

Interjections are common. Add 𐀀 for emphasis.

𐀃 - Good!; Great!; Thanks!
𐀀 - Hello!; Hi!; Greetings!
𐀁 𐀀 - 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.

𐀀 (𐀀 𐀀 𐀀 𐀀) - A person named Sonja, a.k.a. Jan Sonja.
𐀀 (𐀀 𐀀 𐀀 𐀀) - The language "Tosi" (Deutsch), a.k.a. German.
𐀀 (𐀀 𐀀 𐀀 𐀀) > 𐀈 - 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 𐀀

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

𐀀 𐀀 - Listen!

𐀀 𐀀 - Please drink.

You can use 𐀀 after a subject to address them.

𐀀 (𐀀 𐀀 𐀀 𐀀) 𐀀 - Pape!

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

𐀃 𐀀 𐀈 𐀈 - Joy to you.
𐀄 𐀀 𐀂 - I should be working.

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

☹ (𐀀 𐀀 𐀀) 𐀀 𐀂 - Eat, Ton.

Preverbs

Preverbs go before verbs to modify their meaning.

𐀄 𐀂 𐀀 - I can write.
𐀈 𐀃 > 𐀈 𐀈 𐀈 - The small bird wants to become big.

The words 𐀈, 𐀈, 𐀀, 𐀀, 𐀈, 𐀈, and 𐀈 can be preverbs.

Context

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

𐀅 𐀁 𐀈 𐀄 𐀂 𐀀 𐀂 𐀈 𐀃 - When you are by my side, I feel good.

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

𐀈 𐀄 𐀅 𐀈 𐀈 𐀀 - Just like me, you know a lot.
𐀃 𐀀? 𐀅 𐀈 𐀈 - Why are you hot?

The preposition 𐀁 can be omitted in this case.

𐀀 𐀈 𐀅 𐀉 - I sleep [at] night.

Numbers

Combine number words to add them up.

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

The word 𐀀 can be used to mark ordinals.

𐀀 𐀀 1 > 𐀃 - The first book is good.
𐀀 𐀀 111 1 - 23rd Street.

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