

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

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

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

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

𐌿 𐌿 - I eat.
𐌿 𐌿 - You are good.

Ambiguity

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

𐌿 𐌿 - 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.

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

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

𐌿 - 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 > 𐌿 >> 𐌿 - The animal drinks the water.
𐌿 >> 𐌿 - I wash my hands.
𐌿 >> 𐌿 - You enlarge it.

Modifying Words

Words can be modified adding other words directly after them.

𐌿 𐌿 - My house.
𐌿 𐌿 - A good feeling.

To negate a word, put 𐌿 after it.

𐌿 𐌿 - I'm not sleeping.
𐌿 > 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 - A two-plant list.
𐌿 𐌿 𐌿 - A dark-blue box.

Prepositions

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

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

Questions

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

𐌿 > 𐌿 𐌿 - Is she playing?

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

𐌿 - Yes: [she is] playing.
𐌿 𐌿 - No: [she is] not playing.
𐌿 - 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 𐌿 to form an open-ended question.

𐌿 > 𐌿 >> 𐌿 𐌿 - Who's bringing the drinks?
𐌿 𐌿 >> 𐌿? - What are you making?

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 >> 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.

Interjections

Interjections are common. Add 𐌿 for emphasis.

𐌿 - Good!; Great!; Thanks!
𐌿 - Hello!; Hi!; Greetings!
𐌿 𐌿 - 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.

𐌿 𐌿 𐌿 - A person named Sonja, a.k.a. Jan Sonja.
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.

Preverbs

Preverbs go before verbs to modify their meaning.

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