

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.

∩ > ∩ - The cat is eating.

∩ > ∩ - People sleep.

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

∩ > ∩ - Fruits are food.

≈ > ∩ - Water is good.

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

∩ ∩ - I eat.

∩ ∩ - You are good.

Ambiguity

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

∩ ∩ - 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.

∩ - 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.

∩ - I, me, we, or us.

Direct objects

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

∩ > ∩ >> ≈ - The animal drinks the water.

∩ ≈ >> ∩ - I wash my hands.

∩ ∩ >> ∩ - You enlarge it.

Modifying Words

Words can be modified adding other words directly after them.

∩ ∩ - My house.

∩ ∩ - A good feeling.

To negate a word, put X after it.

∩ ∩ X - I'm not sleeping.

∩ X > ∩ - No one responded.

Each additional modifier affects the very first word.

∩ ∩ ∩ - Two plant lists.

∩ ∩ ∩ - A blue and black box.

You can insert L between words to change this behavior.

∩ ∩ ∩ ∩ - A two-plant list.

∩ ∩ ∩ ∩ - A dark-blue box.

Prepositions

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

∩ ∩ ∩ ∩ - I eat with cutlery.

∩ ∩ > ∩ ∩ - The rat is in the hall.

∩ ∩ ∩ ∩ - You sing like birds!

∩ ∩ ∩ ∩ - I'm back from work.

∩ > ∩ >> ∩ ∩ ∩ - 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

∩ > ∩ X ∩ - Is she playing?

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

∩ - Yes: [she is] playing.

∩ X - No: [she is] not playing.

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

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

∩ ∩ ∩ ∩? - Are you making fire?

∩ ∩ ∩ ∩ > ∩ ∩ ∩ ∩? - Is the cute cat in a box?

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

∩ ∩ > ∩ >> ∩ ∩ - Who's bringing the drinks?

∩ ∩ >> ∩? - What are you making?

Conjunctions

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

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

Repeat > for 2+ predicates.

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

Repeat >> for 2+ objects.

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

Do the same for prepositional phrases.

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

You can use ∩ to mean "or".

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

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

Interjections

Interjections are common. Add ∩ for emphasis.

∩ - Good!; Great!; Thanks!

∩ - Hello!; Hi!; Greetings!

∩ ∩ - 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.

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

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

∩ (∩ ∩ ∩ ∩ ∩) > ∩ - 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 ∩

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

∩ ∩ - Listen!

∩ ∩ - Please drink.

You can use ∩ after a subject to address them.

∩ (∩ ∩ ∩ ∩) ∩ - Paper!

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

∩ ∩ ∩ ∩ - Joy to you.

∩ ∩ ∩ - I should be working.

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

∩ (∩ ∩ ∩) ∩ ∩ - Eat, Ton.

Preverbs

Preverbs go before verbs to modify their meaning.

∩ ∩ ∩ - I can write.

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

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

Context

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

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

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

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

∩ ∩ ∩ ∩ - Why are you hot?

The preposition ∩ can be omitted in this case.

∩ ∩ ∩ ∩ - I sleep [at] night.

Numbers

Combine number words to add them up.

For example, 1 is 1, ∩ is 2, ∩ is 5, ∩ is 20, ∩ is 100, ∩ ∩ is 4, and ∩ ∩ 1 is 8.

The word ∩ can be used to mark ordinals.

∩ ∩ 1 > ∩ - The first book is good.

∩ ∩ ∩ ∩ 1 - 23rd Street.

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