



# Reading and speaking

## Te Gagana Tokelau

The Tokelau alafapeta (alphabet) is made up of fifteen mataituhi (letters).

### Vaueli *Vowels*

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There are five vaueli which have the same pronunciation as other Pacific languages, including te reo Māori (Māori language). Vaueli can be short or long (the long vowel sound is indicated with a macron).

**a, e, i, o, u** as in the English language: are, there, three, or, two

**ā, ē, ī, ō, ū** as in the English language: father, egg, feet, thought, loot

It is important that the short and long vowel sounds are used, as they distinguish between different words – e.g. mātua (mother) matua (to be a grown up).

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The letters of the alphabet are:

**a, e, i, o, u, f, g, k, l, m, n, p, h, t, and v**

### Konehane *Consonants*

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Gagana Tokelau has ten konehane:

**f, g, k, l, m, n, p, h, t, and v**

The Gagana Tokelau: is much like in English, except that:

- ‘f’ is pronounced like ‘hw’ you make the ‘h’ sound at the back of your throat and then constrict the sound so that it becomes a ‘w’. As an example, fakalogo (to listen) sounds like ‘h-wa-ka-longo’
- ‘g’ is pronounced with a ‘n’ sound in front of ‘g’ – making it a ‘nga’ sound, as in te reo Māori, or the ‘ng’ sound from the English word ‘song’. As an example tagi (to cry) is pronounced ‘tangi’
- ‘h’ is pronounced like ‘hy’ in words such as hau (to come) which sounds like ‘hy-au’

The Tokelau Dictionary (1986) was published by the Office of Tokelau Affairs. It uses the following alphabetical order.

Tokelau and English words are provided below to support your teaching and learning.

## **Tokelau Alafapeta** *Tokelau Alphabet*

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### **Aa**

Alofa  
*Love*

### **Ee**

Epaepa  
*Small sleeping  
mat for an infant*

### **Ii**

Ika  
*Fish*

### **Oo**

Oketopa  
*October*

### **Uu**

Uluhina  
*Male elders*

### **Ff**

Faimātua  
*Aunty*

### **Gg**

Gālua  
*Work*

### **Kk**

Kālena  
*Calendar*

### **Ll**

Lalaga  
*Weaving*

### **Mm**

Matau  
*Fishing hook*

### **Nn**

Niu  
*Coconut tree*

### **Pp**

Poto  
*Knowledge*

### **Hh**

Hiva  
*Dance*

### **Tt**

Tuluma  
*Wooden  
fishing box*

### **Vv**

Vaka  
*Canoe*

# Aogā / Aho uma / Kupu faigofie

*Useful / Everyday / Simple words*

## Common Phrases

Mālo ni	<i>Greetings / Hello</i>
Fakamālo atu kia te koutou uma	<i>Greetings everyone</i>
Tofa koutou	<i>Goodbye – to those who are leaving</i>
Tofa ni	<i>Goodbye – to those who are staying</i>
Fakamolemole	<i>Please</i>
Fakafetai	<i>Thank you</i>
Fakamalie atu	<i>Sorry</i>
Tulou	<i>Excuse me</i>

## Pleasantries

Ko ai to igoa?	<i>What is your name?</i>
Ko toku igoa ko _____	<i>My name is _____</i>
Ko koe e hau i fea?	<i>Where are you from?</i>
Ko au he tagata e hau i _____	<i>I am a person from _____</i>
Ko koe e faigaluega i fea?	<i>Where do you work?</i>
Ko au e faigaluega i _____	<i>I work at _____</i>
Eā mai koe?	<i>How are you (singular)?</i>
Eā mai koulua?	<i>How are you (dual)?</i>
Eā mai koutou?	<i>How are you (plural)?</i>
Ko au e manuia, fakafetai	<i>I am fine, thank you</i>

# Aogā / Aho uma / Kupu faigofie

*Useful / Everyday / Simple words*

## People

Matai	Chief
Faifeau	Church Minister
Tamaiti	Child
Tamana	Father
Matua	Mother
Tuafafine	Sister
Tuagane	Brother
Uō	Friends

## Office Talk

Kua kai koe? Ta olo oi kakai	<i>Have you eaten? Lets go eat</i>
Tulou mua ki te tuai atu o te tali...	<i>Apologies for the delayed response...</i>
E vëia ko taku imeli muamua atu ...	<i>As per my previous email...</i>
Ko au e fiafia ke talanoa atili	<i>Happy to discuss</i>
Taimi o te koleni!	<i>It's gym time!</i>
Vili mai	<i>Call me</i>
Fakamālo atu!	<i>Congratulations!</i>
Ko te Atua e lelei!	<i>God is good!</i>

## Faith is an important aspect of Tokelau culture.

Below is a short prayer and hymn that can be used at the start of your day, to open a meeting or small gathering.

### Tatalo Prayer

Tatou tatalo	<i>Let us pray</i>
Te matou tamana i te lagi	<i>Our heavenly father</i>
Liligi mai ko to manuia i te vaiaho fou tenei	<i>We ask for your blessings this week</i>
Fakamanuia mai ki matou uma	<i>To each and every one of us</i>
I te igoa o lehu e tatalo atu ai ki matou.	<i>In Jesus name we pray.</i>
Amene	<i>Amen.</i>

### Pehe Lotu Hymn

Ko te Atua e alofa ki a te au	<i>My God loves me</i>
Ko na mea manaia e ko kitea	<i>And all the wonders I see</i>
Te nuanua e hūhūlu mai ki toku famalama	<i>The rainbow shines through my window</i>
Ko te Atua e alofa ki a te au	<i>My God loves me.</i>

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PACIFIC LANGUAGE WEEKS  
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 Ministry for  
Pacific Peoples