

VOSA VAKAVITI

A brief guide to using the Fijian language

About vosa vakaViti

Vosa vakaViti (Fijian) belongs to the Melanesian languages of the Oceanic subgroup that includes most Pacific languages. The official languages of Fiji are Fijian, Fijian Hindi and English.

The Fijian language can be divided into Eastern and Western island varieties, which reflect historical migration to the Fiji islands. Standard Fijian is based on Bauan, an Eastern variety used for official purposes such as for government and business, and also education and broadcasting.

The Fijian alphabet | Na lewe ni yatu vosa vakaViti

The core Fijian alphabet has 24 letters.

The vowels **A, E, I, O** and **U** have the same pronunciation as in most other Pacific languages, including te reo Māori.

The consonants are **B, C, D, F, G, J, K, L, M, N, P, Q, R, S, T, U, V, W** and **Y**.

The consonants are pronounced as in English with a few differences:

B – “mb” as in lumbar

Bula is pronounced “Mbu-la”

C – “th” as in father

Yacata (one of the Lau islands in Fiji) is pronounced “ya-tha-ta”

D – “nd” as in Sunday

Nadi (a city in Fiji) is pronounced “na-ndi”

G – “ng” as in finger

Gauna (time) is pronounced “nga-una”

Q – “nq” as in finger

Qaravi (to serve) is pronounced “nqa-ra-vi”



Everyday language

ENGLISH	VOSA VAKAVITI
Hello	Bula
Good morning	Yadra vinaka
Greetings (to two)	Drau bula
Greetings (to three or more)	Dou bula
Greetings (formal)	Ni sa bula vinaka
Greetings everyone	Ni sa bula vinaka kece sara
I'm pleased to meet you	Au marautaka ni daru sa mai sota
Goodbye	Ni sa moce
How are you (singular)?	Iko sa vacava tiko?
How are you (dual)?	Drau sa vacava tiko?
How are you (plural)?	Dou sa vacava tiko?
I am well, thank you	Au daumaka tiko, vinaka
I am tired	Au sa wawale
I am sick	Au tauvi mate tiko
I am so-so	Au sini macala tiko
I am happy	Au sa marau tiko
And yourself?	O iko?
Take care of yourself	Vanuinui vinaka tiko vei iko
See you later	Qai sota tale
See you tomorrow	Qai sota ni mataka
See you next week	Qai sota na macawa mai oqo
Blessings/God bless	Kalougata tiko

ENGLISH	VOSA VAKAVITI
Good luck	Vanuinui vinaka tiko
Call me	Qiriti au
Send me a message	Qai tukutuku mai
Please	Kerekere
Thank you (very much)	Vinaka (vakalevu)
You're welcome	Sa donu vinaka
Excuse me	Tulou
Sorry	Vosota
Have you eaten?	Iko sa kana oti?
Come and eat with me	Ni mai kana
Thank you for the food	Vinaka na kakana
Yes	Io
No	Sega
Have a good day	Vanuinui vinaka na siga nikua
Have a good week	Vanuinui vinaka na macawa oqo
Have a good weekend	Mua ni macawa vinaka vei iko
Have a good holiday	Marautaka na nomu gade
Merry Christmas	Marau ni siganisucu
Happy New Year	Marautaka nai yabakivou
Happy birthday	Marau ni nomu siganisucu
Happy Fijian Language Week	Marau ni Macawa ni Vosa vakaViti
Lots of love	Loloma vei iko

Words of encouragement

ENGLISH	VOSA VAKAVITI
Great work	Vinaka na cakacaka vinaka
You can do it	O iko na rawata
Congratulations	Vakanuinui vinaka
Just do it	Cakava ga
Give it a go	Tovolea mada
Great	Totoka
Nice	Wananavu
God is good	Na Kalou e vinaka
Keep it up	Toso tiko

Relationship-building

ENGLISH	VOSA VAKAVITI
What is your name?	Ocei na yacamu?
My name is _____	Na yacaku ko _____
Where are you from?	O kemuni mai vei?
I am from _____	Au gone ni _____
Where do you live?	Kemuni vaka itikotiko e vei?
I live in _____	Au vakaitikotiko e _____



Email language

ENGLISH	VOSA VAKAVITI
I hope you're well	Au nuitaka ni ko bulabula vinaka tiko
Thank you for your email	Vinaka vakalevu na imeli
Thank you for your response	Vinaka vakalevu na tukutuku mai
Thank you for your clarification	Vinaka vakalevu na veivakararamataki
Thank you for your help	Vinaka vakalevu na nomuni veitokoni
That's a good question	Dua na taro vinaka qori
I will come back to you tomorrow	Au na qai sauma na nomui vola ena mataka
I will come back to you next week	Au na qai sauma na nomui vola ena macawa mai oqo
I will come back to you soon	Au na qai sauma na nomui vola ena dua na gauna lekaleka ga oqo
Apologies for the delayed response	Vosota na noqu sauma bera na nomui vola
As per my previous email ...	Me vaka na imeli sa oti ...
Please see attached document	Qai raica nai vola sa sema vata tiko yani qori kei na imeli
As per our conversation ...	Me vaka na nodaru veivosaki sa oti ...
Happy to discuss	Au marautaka me veiwaseitaka kina
I look forward to your response	Au sa namaka tiko na nomui sau kina noqui imeli
I look forward to seeing you	Au sa namaka tiko medaru sota
Kind regards / Cheers	Vanuinui vinaka

Talking about work

ENGLISH	VOSA VAKAVITI
Where do you work?	O cakacaka tiko e vei?
I work at _____	Au cakacaka tiko e _____
I have worked here for _____ (months / years)	Sa (vula / yabaki) _____ na noqu cakacaka tiko e ke
What is your job?	Na cava na nomu cakacaka?
I am a _____	O au na _____
Teacher	Qase ni vuli
Student	Gone vuli
Nurse	Nasi
Doctor	Vuniwai
Librarian	Dauniveiqaravi ena vale ni tukutuku maroroi
Manager	Manidia
Musician	Dauni qiriqiri
Police officer	Ovisa
Advisor	Dauni vakasala
Where do you study?	O vuli tiko e vei?
I study at _____	Au vuli tiko e _____

Numbers

0 Saiva	1 Dua	2 Rua	3 Tolu	4 Va	5 Lima	6 Ono	7 Vitu	8 Walu	9 Ciwa
10 Tini	11 Tini ka dua	12 Tini ka rua	13 Tini ka tolu	14 Tini ka va	15 Tini ka lima				
16 Tini ka ono	17 Tini ka vitu	18 Tini ka walu	19 Tini ka ciwa	20 Ruasagavulu					



Proverbs

Dau kele na waqa na toba malumu.

Meaning Boats only anchor in calm waters.

Application People, like boats, find stability and make progress when their surroundings or circumstances are calm and steady.

Sivi mada na veikau qai kalu.

Meaning Do not celebrate or boast until you've completed a task.

Application Do not take pride in announcing something before you have actually accomplished it.

Kevaka walega mo kaciva na lomavuku,
ka kacivaka na kila ka.

Meaning To have knowledge is to be wise.

Application Having knowledge helps a person make wise and informed decisions.

Cultural note

Tabua: Whale's tooth

The tabua, traditionally a polished whale's tooth, is a sacred object in Fijian culture. The teeth were originally taken from the lower jaw of sperm whales found stranded on Fijian beaches. The tabua carries spiritual, social, and political significance and is used in important ceremonies to express respect, seek forgiveness, seal agreements, mark chiefly occasions, and accompany major life events such as births, marriages, funerals, and reconciliations. Presenting a tabua is governed by strict protocol and conveys sincerity, humility, and commitment.

The practice is still seen in cultural, church, and family contexts within the Fijian community in New Zealand. Although whale teeth are now rare and protected, traditional tabua that were brought from Fiji generations ago or carefully passed down within families continue to be used.

Prayers

VOSA VAKAVITI	ENGLISH
Masu Meda masu mada Tamai keimami mai lomalagi Keimami kerea na nomuni veivakalougatataki ena macawa oqo Vei keimami yadudua sara Keimami masu ena yaca i Jisu Emeni	Prayer Let us pray Our heavenly father We ask for your blessings this week To each and every one of us In Jesus' name we pray Amen
Masu ni kana Turaga Keimami vakavinvinakataka na kakana e sa varau tu oqo Kalougata na liga era vakarautaka, ka me solia vei keimami na kaukauwa kei na bula vinaka Ena yaca i Jisu Emeni	Prayer to bless food Father God We thank you for this food Please bless the hands that prepared it, and let it give strength and health to our bodies In Jesus' name Amen
He Kaikōhau Below is a traditional Te Reo Māori karakia or kaikōhau used in the Aotearoa context. <i>Nau mai ngā hua. Nau mai ngā pai. Nau mai kia nui. Kia hāwere ai. Tihei mauri ora.</i> A kaikōhau is an expression of hope welcoming all things positive – including bountiful harvests, good health and work or study achievements. It can be used during Matariki celebrations as you prepare for the new year ahead, before you share a meal, or to open or close a meeting. Here is an adaptation of this kaikōhau in vosa vakaViti, with an English translation.	
<i>Kidavaki na veika kece sara era tubu Kidavaki na veika kece sara era vinaka Me ra vuavuai vinaka Ka levu talega Ka sega ni mudu</i>	<i>Welcome all that has grown Welcome all that is good May it be plentiful And in abundance And forever, and ever</i>

