



Te Gagana Tokelau

Tokelau Language

PACIFIC
LANGUAGE
WEEKS



Ministry for
**Pacific
Peoples**
Te Manatū mō ngā Iwi o te Moana-nui-ā-Kiwa

Te Gagana Tokelau | Tokelau Language



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

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

There are five vaueli (vowels):

These vaueli 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).

Gagana Tokelau has ten konehane (consonants):

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

Aa

Alofa
(Love)

Ee

Epaepa
(Small sleeping mat
for an infant)

Ii

Ika
(Fish)

Oo

Oketopa
(October)

Uu

Uluhina
(Male elders)

Ff

Faimātua
(Aunt)

Gg

Gāluaega
(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)

**A E I O U
F G K L M N P H T V**



Aogā/Aho uma/Kupu faigofie

Useful/Everyday/Simple Words



Te Gagana Tokelau	English
Mālo ni	Greetings/Hello
Fakamālo atu kia te koutou uma	Greetings Everyone
Tofa koutou	Goodbye – to those who are leaving
Tofa ni	Goodbye – to those who are staying
Fakamolemole	Please
Fakafetai	Thank you
Fakamalie atu	Sorry

Te Gagana Tokelau	English
Tulou	Excuse me
Ko ai to igoa?	What is your name?
Ko toku igoa ko _____	My name is _____
Ko koe e hau i fea?	Where are you from?
Ko au he tagata e hau i _____	I am a person from _____
Ko koe e faigaluega i fea?	Where do you work?
Ko au e faigaluega i _____	I work at _____



Aogā/Aho uma/Kupu faigofie

Useful/Everyday/Simple Words



Te Gagana Tokelau	English
Eā mai koe?	How are you (singular)?
Eā mai koulua?	How are you (dual)?
Eā mai koutou?	How are you (plural)?
Ko au e manuia, fakafetai	I am fine, thank you
Kua kai koe? Ta olo oi kakai	Have you eaten? Let's go eat
Tulou mua ki te tuai atu o te tali....	Apologies for the delayed response...

Te Gagana Tokelau	English
E vēia ko taku imeli muamua atu	As per my previous email...
Ko au e fiafia ke talanoa atili	Happy to discuss
Taimi o te koleni!	It's gym time!
Vili mai	Call me
Fakamālo atu!	Congratulations!
Ko te Atua e lelei!	God is good!



Aogā/Aho uma/Kupu faigofie

Useful/Everyday/Simple Words



Te Gagana Tokelau	English
Matai	Chief
Faifeau	Church Minister
Tamaiti	Child
Tamana	Father

Te Gagana Tokelau	English
Matua	Mother
Tuafafine	Sister
Tuagane	Brother
Uō	Friends



Faith is an important aspect of the 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

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

Pehe Lotu | Hymn

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

