



# Te Gagana Tokelau

## Tokelau Language

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Ministry for  
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Te Manatū mā 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 vauei (vowels):

These vauei have the same pronunciation as other Pacific languages, including te reo Māori (Māori language). Vauei 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				
<b>Aa</b>	<b>Ee</b>	<b>Ii</b>	<b>Oo</b>	<b>Uu</b>
Alofa (Love)	Epaepa (Small sleeping mat for an infant)	Ika (Fish)	Oketopa (October)	Uluhina (Male elders)
<b>Ff</b>	<b>Gg</b>	<b>Kk</b>	<b>Ll</b>	<b>Mm</b>
Faimātua (Aunty)	Gāluēga (Work)	Kālena (Calendar)	Lalaga (Weaving)	Matua (Fishing hook)
<b>Nn</b>	<b>Pp</b>	<b>Hh</b>	<b>Tt</b>	<b>Vv</b>
Niu (Coconut tree)	Poto (Knowledge)	Hiva (Dance)	Tuluma (Wooden fishing box)	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
<b>Eā mai koe?</b>	How are you (singular)?
<b>Eā mai koulua?</b>	How are you (dual)?
<b>Eā mai koutou?</b>	How are you (plural)?
<b>Ko au e manuia, fakafetai</b>	I am fine, thank you
<b>Kua kai koe? Ta olo oi kakai</b>	Have you eaten? Let's go eat
<b>Tulou mua ki te tuai atu o te tali....</b>	Apologies for the delayed response...

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



# Aogā/Aho uma/Kupu faigofie

## Useful/Everyday/Simple Words



Te Gagana Tokelau	English
<b>Matai</b>	Chief
<b>Faifeau</b>	Church Minister
<b>Tamaiti</b>	Child
<b>Tamana</b>	Father

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

## Pehe Lotu | Hymn

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

