



Lea Faka-Tonga

Tonga Language

PACIFIC
LANGUAGE
WEEKS



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

'Alafapeti Faka-Tonga | Guide & Alphabet

The Tongan language is phonetic in nature. It is important that when you see diacritics attached to vowels (i.e., 'a, ā, á), you are aware that the pronunciation and the meanings of the words can change. For example – kaka (to climb) or kākā (to cheat).

The fakau 'a (') or glottal stop, always comes before a vowel. This changes the pronunciation of the vowel to a shorter, sharper sound. This also changes the meanings of the words. For example – anga (behaviour) and 'anga (shark).

'a, 'e, 'i, 'o, 'u

(as in the English language: **ah** ha, **e**lephant, **inn**, **orange**, **oo**h la la)

'ā, 'ē, 'ī, 'ō, 'ū

(as in the English language: **A**men, **e**gg, **e**asy, **oh** no, **sou**p)

Lea Faka-Tonga has twelve konisonānite (consonants):

f h k l m n ng p s t v including the ['] fakau'a (glottal stop). The pronunciation of the consonants is similar to English. However, the 'ng' is pronounced like the 'nga' sound in Te Reo Māori, or the 'ng' sound from the English word 'song'. The Tongan language also uses fakamamafa pau (stress marks). The stress mark (á, é, í, ó, ú) seen at the end of a word tells us to make the vowel sound more exaggerated. For example, when we say the word Tongá it tells us to emphasise the 'a' sound at the end.

'Alafapeti Faka-Tonga | Tongan Alphabet

Aa

Afi (Fire)

Ee

Efu (Dust)

Ff

Fale (House)

Hh

Hala (Road)

Ii

Ipu (Cup)

Kk

Kahoa (Necklace)

Ll

Lele (Run)

Mm

Mango (Mango)

Nn

Niu (Coconut)

Ng/ng

Ngatu (Tapa)

Oo

Ono (Six)

Pp

Peleti (Plate)

Ss

Sote (Shirt)

Tt

Tamai (Father)

Uu

Ukamea (Iron)

Vv

Vaka (Canoe)

[']

Fakau'a (Glottal stop)
'Umata (Rainbow)

A E F H I
K L M N G O P S T U V '



Ngaahi Lea Faka-Tonga 'e 'aonga kiate koe

Useful / Everyday words



Tongan / Lea Faka-Tonga	English / Lea Faka-Pilitānia
Mälō e lelei	Greetings / Hello
Mälō e lelei	Greetings Everyone
'Alu ā	Goodbye – to those who are leaving (only if it applies)
Nofo ā	Goodbye – to those who are staying/Goodbye on the phone
Fakamolemole/Kātaki	Please
Mälō 'aupito	Thank you very much

Tongan / Lea Faka-Tonga	English / Lea Faka-Pilitānia
Fakamolemole	Sorry
Tulou or Kātaki fakamolemole	Excuse me
Ko hai ho hingoá?	What is your name?
Ko hoku hingoá ko _____	My name is _____
'Okú ke ha'u mei fē? Ko ho'o ha'u mei fē?	Where are you from?
Ko 'eku ha'u mei _____	I am from _____



Ngaahi Lea Faka-Tonga 'e 'aonga kiate koe

Useful / Everyday words



Tongan / Lea Faka-Tonga	English / Lea Faka-Pilitānia	Tongan / Lea Faka-Tonga	English / Lea Faka-Pilitānia
'Okú ke ngāue 'i fē?	Where do you work?	'Okú ke 'osi kai?	Have you eaten?
'Oku ou ngāue 'i _____	I work at _____	Ta 'alu 'o kai	Let's go eat
'Okú ke fēfē hake?	How are you (singular)?	Fakamolemole 'i he tuai 'eku fetu'utaki atú	Apologies for the delayed response...
'Oku mo fēfē hake?	How are you (dual)?	Hangē ko 'eku 'imeli atu ki mu'á	As per my previous email...
'Oku mou fēfē hake?	How are you (plural)?	'Oku ou fiefia ke ta talanoa	I'm happy to discuss
'Oku ou sai pē, mālō	I am fine, thank you	Taimi fakamālohisino	It's gym time! It's exercise/training time



Ngaahi Lea Faka-Tonga 'e 'aonga kiate koe

Useful / Everyday words



Tongan / Lea Faka-Tonga	English / Lea Faka-Pilitānia
Tā mai	Call me
Fakafeta'i	Thanksgiving, Giving praise
'Oku lelei 'a e 'Otua	God is good!
Matāpule	Talking Chief or Orator
Faifekau / Taki Lotu	Church Minister / Church Leader
Tama	Child

Tongan / Lea Faka-Tonga	English / Lea Faka-Pilitānia
Tamai	Father
Fa'ē	Mother
Tuofefine / Tokoua	Sister / Sister (same gender)
Tuonga'ane / Tokoua	Brother / Brother (same gender)
Kaungāme'a	Friends



Faith is an important aspect of the Tongan 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.

Lotu | Prayer

Tongan / Lea Faka-Tonga	English / Lea Faka-Pilitānia
Ke tau lotu	Let us pray
Ko 'emau Tamai 'oku 'i hēvani	Our Father in Heaven
'Oku mau kole ke ke tāpuaki'i 'a e uike' ni	We ask for your blessings this week
Mo kimautilou hono kotoa	And over each and every one of us
Ko 'emau lotu ia, 'ia Sisu Kalaisi ko homau 'Eiki, 'Emeni	That is our prayer, in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Himi 114 | Hymn 114

Tongan / Lea Faka-Tonga	English / Lea Faka-Pilitānia
'Eiki ko e 'ofa 'a 'au	Lord your love
Ko e moana loloto	Is liken to the depths of the ocean
Pea ngalo hifo ki ai	And lost in it are
'Eku ngaahi angahia	All my sins
Pea kuo 'ufi'ufi	Covering all
'Eku kovi kotoa pe	Of my transgressions

