

Kreyòl

THE COMPLETE INDIGENOUS LANGUAGE GUIDE

LEARN TO SPEAK, UNDERSTAND, AND
CONNECT IN REAL-LIFE CONVERSATIONS



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BOOK TITLE

Kreyòl: The Complete Indigenous Language Guide

Subtitle:

Learn to Speak, Understand, and Connect in Real-Life Conversations

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INTRODUCTION

What is Haitian Creole?

Haitian Creole, known by its speakers as **Kreyòl Ayisyen**, is the heart language of over 11 million people in Haiti and millions more across the globe. It is a vibrant, expressive, and resilient Indigenous language of the Americas. Unlike French, Haitian Creole has its own grammar, rhythm, and soul. It's not a dialect—it's a full-fledged language, proudly carrying the stories of resistance, revolution, and culture from one generation to the next.

Rooted in the Indigenous spirit of unity and survival, Kreyòl was created out of necessity and love—a language of the people, by the people, for the people.

Why Learn It?

To learn Kreyòl is to connect deeply with the spirit of our indigenous culture and people.

To communicate with millions of native speakers.

To honor the culture, strength, and our Indigenous heritage.

To gain insight into an often misunderstood and misrepresented language.

To build bridges across indigenous communities, tell stories and more.

By learning Kreyòl, you become a part of a living tradition that values connection, identity, and respect.

How to Use This Book

This guide is designed for **every learner**—whether you're starting from scratch or brushing up on what you already know. The structure allows you to move step-by-step:

Start with the basics – Learn the alphabet, pronunciation, and foundational grammar.

Practice real conversations – From greetings to everyday chats, this section makes learning fun and practical.

Build fluency – Go beyond survival phrases. Learn idioms, proverbs, and cultural tips to sound natural and confident.

Use your toolbox – The glossary, bonus sections, and resources are there whenever you need quick help or extra practice.

Feel free to jump between sections, highlight key phrases, and use this book as your everyday guide.

Pronunciation Overview

Kreyòl is a **phonetic language**, meaning words are generally pronounced the way they are spelled. Once you master the sounds of the alphabet, reading and speaking becomes much easier.

Some quick pronunciation keys:

"ou" sounds like *"oo"* in *food*

"ch" is like *"sh"* in *shoe*

"an" is nasal, like *"on"* in *song*

"ay" sounds like *"eye"*

"è" sounds like *"eh"* in *bet*

We'll break down each of these sounds and more in the next chapter so you can pronounce Kreyòl clearly and confidently.

Your Notes

PART ONE: THE FOUNDATION

The Creole Alphabet & Sounds

Haitian Creole uses a modified version of the Latin alphabet consisting of **32 letters**. Unlike English or French, Kreyòl is **phonetic**—which means what you see is what you pronounce. This makes reading and speaking more intuitive once you learn the sounds.

The Creole Alphabet:

A, An, B, Ch, D, E, È, F, G, H, I, J, K, L, M, N, O, On, Ou, P, R, S, T, U, V, W, Y, Z

Note: There are no C, Q, or X in Kreyòl.

Letters like "**Ch**", "**An**", "**On**", and "**Ou**" are treated as single sounds (digraphs or nasal combinations).

Key Sound Guide:

Letter	Sound Like	Example in Kreyòl	English Equivalent
A	ah	<i>papa</i>	father
An	nasal "ah"	<i>mango an</i>	the mango
Ch	sh	<i>cheche</i>	to seek
E	uh	<i>men</i>	here (take this)
È	eh	<i>mè</i>	mother
I	ee	<i>fini</i>	finished
O	oh	<i>poto</i>	pole
On	nasal "oh"	<i>non</i>	no
Ou	oo	<i>kouman</i>	how
Ay	eye	<i>bay</i>	to give

Pro Tip: Practice nasal sounds like "an" and "on" in front of a mirror—your nose vibrates slightly when done correctly.

Basic Grammar You Need

Kreyòl grammar is **simple, efficient, and logical**. There are no verb conjugations and minimal gendered language. Here are the essentials:

Pronouns:

English Kreyòl

I mwen

You ou

He/She li

We nou

You (pl) nou

They yo

To Be (No Verb “To Be”):

There is no direct verb for “to be” in Creole. Instead, context tells you everything.

Mwen malad. → I (am) sick.

Li etidyan. → He/She (is) a student.

Nou kontan. → We (are) happy.

Negation:

To make a sentence negative, use “**pa**” before the verb or descriptive word.

Mwen pa byen. → I'm not well.

Li pa isit. → He/She is not here.

Tense Markers:

Instead of changing the verb, Kreyòl adds tense markers.

Tense	Marker	Example	Translation
Present	Ø	Mwen pale	I speak
Past	te	Mwen te pale	I spoke
Future	pral	Mwen pral pale	I will speak
Continuous	ap	Mwen ap pale	I am speaking

Essential Vocabulary

Let's get you started with words you'll use every day. We'll build more as we go, but these are your power words:

Greetings & Basics

English	Kreyòl
Hello	Bonjou (AM) / Bonswa (PM)
How are you?	Kijan ou ye?
I'm fine	Mwen byen
Thank you	Mèsi
Please	Souple
Yes / No	Wi / Non
Goodbye	Orevwa
What's your name?	Kijan ou rele?
My name is...	Mwen rele...

Days of the Week

English	Kreyòl
Monday	Lendi
Tuesday	Madi
Wednesday	Mèkredi
Thursday	Jedi
Friday	Vandredi
Saturday	Samdi
Sunday	Dimanch

Coming Next: *PART TWO: CONVERSATION TIME!*

We'll walk through everyday conversations, real-life situations, and dialogues to help you speak naturally and fluently.

PART TWO: CONVERSATION TIME!

Daily Conversations

These are your everyday expressions—used at home, in the street, at work, or among friends.

Common Expressions

English	Kreyòl
Good morning	Bonjou
Good evening	Bonswa
How are you doing?	Kijan ou ye?
I'm good / Not too bad	Mwen byen / Pa tròp mal
What are you doing?	Kisa w ap fè?
I'm working	Mwen ap travay
Are you hungry?	Ou grangou?
A little bit	Yon ti jan
I don't understand	Mwen pa konprann
Speak slowly please	Pale dousman souple

Real-Life Situations

Let's place you in actual scenarios where these expressions come alive.

At the Market

English	Kreyòl
How much is this?	Konbyen sa a ye?
Too expensive	Twò chè
I want this one	Mwen vle sa a
I'm just looking	Mwen sèlman ap gade

English	Kreyòl
I'll take it	Mwen ap pran li

Asking for Help

English	Kreyòl
Can you help me?	Èske ou ka ede mwen?
I'm lost	Mwen pèdi
Where is the bathroom?	Ki kote twalèt la ye?
Call the police	Rele polis la

Meeting Someone

English	Kreyòl
What's your name?	Kijan ou rele?
My name is...	Mwen rele...
Nice to meet you	Mwen kontan rankontre ou
Where are you from?	Ki kote ou sòti?
I'm from the U.S.	Mwen sòti Ozetazini

Mini Dialogues

Let's see how these words and phrases come together in real exchanges.

Dialogue 1: Meeting for the First Time

Pierre: Bonjou! Kijan ou ye?

Marie: Mwen byen, e ou menm?

Pierre: Mwen byen tou. Kijan ou rele?

Marie: Mwen rele Marie. E ou?

Pierre: Mwen rele Pierre. Mwen kontan rankontre ou.

Marie: Mwen menm tou!

Translation

Pierre: Good morning! How are you?

Marie: I'm well, and you?

Pierre: I'm good too. What's your name?

Marie: My name is Marie. And you?

Pierre: My name is Pierre. Nice to meet you.

Marie: Me too!

Dialogue 2: At a Restaurant

Waiter: Bonswa. Ki sa ou ta renmen manje?

Customer: Mwen ta renmen diri ak pwa, souple.

Waiter: Ou vle bwè anyen?

Customer: Wi, mwen vle yon ji zoranj.

Waiter: Trè byen. M ap pote sa pou ou.

Translation

Waiter: Good evening. What would you like to eat?

Customer: I'd like rice and beans, please.

Waiter: Do you want something to drink?

Customer: Yes, I want an orange juice.

Waiter: Very good. I'll bring that for you.

Dialogue 3: Asking Directions

Visitor: Eskize mwen. Ki kote otèl la ye?

Local: Ou wè legliz la? Otèl la dèyè legliz la.

Visitor: Mèsi anpil!

Local: Pa gen pwoblèm!

Translation

Visitor: Excuse me. Where is the hotel?

Local: You see the church? The hotel is behind the church.

Visitor: Thank you very much!

Local: No problem!

Coming up next:

PART THREE: BUILDING FLUENCY

Idioms & Sayings

Practice Makes Perfect

Your Creole Toolbox

PART THREE: BUILDING FLUENCY

Idioms & Sayings

These Haitian proverbs and sayings add color, rhythm, and cultural insight to conversations. Knowing a few will boost both your fluency and connection with Indigenous speakers.

Kreyòl Proverb	Literal Meaning	Actual Meaning / Usage
Dèyè mòn gen mòn.	Behind mountains, more mountains.	Life is full of challenges.
Piti piti zwazo fè nich li.	Little by little, the bird builds its nest.	Patience and persistence lead to success.
Lè ou wè chen ap danse, ou dwe gade pou mizisyen an.	When you see a dog dancing, look for the musician.	Nothing happens without a cause.
Sak vid pa kanpe.	An empty sack can't stand.	You can't function without nourishment or support.
Wòch nan dlo pa konnen doulè wòch nan solèy.	The stone in the water doesn't know the pain of the stone in the sun.	Those who are comfortable may not understand your struggles.

Tip: Use proverbs in casual conversation to sound like a seasoned speaker.

Practice Makes Perfect

Here we give you easy exercises to reinforce everything you've learned so far. This can be turned into interactive lessons, flashcards, or audio practice for future versions of the book.

1. Translate These Sentences:

My name is Marie. →

I am hungry. →

Where is the bathroom? →

I want some water. →

Nice to meet you. →

Answers at the end of this section.

2. Create Your Own Dialogue

Prompt: You're meeting someone at a cultural festival. Write at least **6 lines** of a simple conversation introducing yourself, asking where they're from, and talking about the food.

3. Fill in the Blank (Vocabulary Drill)

Sentence	Missing Word
Bonjou, kijan ____ ye?	_____
Mwen soti ____ Ayiti.	_____
Ki sa ou vle ____?	_____
Mwen ____ manje diri ak pwa.	_____
Mèsi ____!	_____

Your Creole Toolbox

Before you go, here's a summary reference section—a tool you can flip to anytime.

Basic Sentence Structure

Subject + Verb + Object

Mwen renmen manje. → I love to eat.

Li ap vini. → He/She is coming.

Tense Markers

Tense	Marker	Example
Present	Ap	Mwen ap pale → I am speaking
Past	Te	Mwen te ale → I went
Future	Pral	Li pral vini → He will come

Must-Know Verbs

English	Kreyòl
To be	Se
To have	Gen
To go	Ale

English Kreyòl

To want	Vle
To eat	Manje
To speak	Pale

Pronouns

English Kreyòl

I / Me	Mwen
You	Ou
He/She	Li
We	Nou
They	Yo

Answer Key (Practice Section)

1. Translations:

Mwen rele Marie.

Mwen grangou.

Ki kote twalèt la ye?

Mwen vle dlo.

Mwen kontan rankontre ou.

3. Fill in the Blank:

Ou _____

Nan _____

Manje _____

Vle _____

Anpil _____

Your Notes

APPENDIX

1. Glossary: Quick Kreyòl Reference

Kreyòl Word/Phrase	English Translation	Notes
Bonjou	Good morning	Common greeting
Kijan ou ye?	How are you?	Friendly, casual
Mèsi	Thank you	Often said with a smile
Tanpri	Please	Use for politeness
Bondye	God	Used spiritually
Lakay	Home	Deep cultural resonance
Zanmi	Friend	“Real friend” = bon zanmi
Kè kontan	Happy (heart joyful)	Emotionally expressive

This list can grow as we develop the full dictionary later in an extended workbook.

2. Bonus Section: Culture, Spirit, & Stories

Cultural Insights

"Lakay se lakay" – Home is home. Haitians take pride in their roots, village, and family.

Respect for elders – Older generations are deeply honored; it's common to say *Bonjou granmoun* (Good morning, elder).

Griot & fried plantains – Food is community, with traditional meals bonding families and generations.

Spiritual Words & Phrases

Kreyòl Word Translation		Spiritual Use
Bondye	God	The Creator in Haitian spirituality
Lwa	Spirits/Deities	From Vodou tradition
Sèvitè	Servant (of spirit)	A spiritual practitioner
Lespri	Spirit	Can refer to Holy Spirit or general spirit
Benediksyon	Blessing	Commonly said after prayers or greetings
Rete limyè	nan Stay in the light	A spiritual encouragement

Note: Haitian Vodou and Christianity often coexist. The language reflects both worlds, with reverence.

Mini Folk Tale: *Tizon Bouk*

Tizon Bouk was a clever young boy who could talk to animals. One day, he helped a bird escape a trap and was gifted the ability to call on the winds. With this, he saved his village from drought. The elders say his name when winds change suddenly: "**Tizon Bouk ap pase!**"

3. Resources for Continued Learning

haitiancreole.net – Vocabulary practice and audio lessons

YouTube: Channels like *Learn Haitian Creole with Pascal*

Apps: **Mango Languages** or **Memrise** with Haitian Creole modules

Books: *Ti Koze Kreyòl* (beginner's Haitian Creole workbook)

Facebook Groups: “Learn Haitian Creole” communities

That officially wraps the content of your book:

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