

Na'vi in a Nutshell

Version 2.8

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Chapter 1: The Alphabet

1.1 Vowels

Vowels in Na'vi are everything. They indicate a new syllable, and can in fact be syllables all by themselves. Na'vi has the following vowels: a, ä, e, i, ì, o, u; aw, ay, ew, ey; ll, rr. They are pronounced the way an American would pronounce the following:

Vowel	Sounds Like
a	a in father, o in dog
ä	a in cat, tan, bad
e	e in when, send
i	tree, sea, me
ì	i in chin, wind, sip
o	o in wrote, so, toe
u	boot, lute, moon
aw	ow in tower, ou in sound
ay	eye, bye, why
ew	oa in oasis, reversed; eyo in Na'vi
ey	say, make, raisin
ll	ll in allow; a soft l
rr	a rolled r in Spanish, but stronger

Tip: Think of ay, ew, ey, ll, and rr as single entities even though they are composed with two letters.

1.2 Consonants

There are 20 consonants in Na'vi: f, h, k, kx, l, m, n, ng, p, px, r, s, t, ts, tx, v, w, y, z, and ʔ. The consonants b, c, d, j, and q do not exist and the consonants g and x cannot exist by themselves. They are pronounced as you would expect in English with the following exceptions:

Consonant	Sounds Like
kx, px, tx	k, p, t but with a “pop” (hold your breath when pronouncing)
ng	ng in sing
r	tt in little, t in water, dd in cuddle
ts	ts in tsunami, zz in pizza
ʔ (glottal stop)	the pause in uh-oh

Tip: As with the vowels, think of kx, ng, px, ts, and tx as single entities.

Language Note #1.1: f, h, ts, s, v, z can only be at the beginning of a syllable. So a word like yuf is not possible.

Language Note #1.2: Only f, ts, and s can appear with other consonants. So words like **fmelok** *to test* and **sngel** *garbage* are allowed, whereas a word starting with “pr” or ending with “mp” would be forbidden.

Language Note #1.3: Only the following consonants may end a syllable: px, tx, kx, p, t, k, ‘, m, n, ng, r, and l.

1.2.1 Lenition

Lenition is the changing of one consonant into another for the ease of pronunciation. In Na'vi lenition occurs when you make the plural form of a noun or when you add certain adpositions to words (see section 7). The following consonants undergo lenition under these circumstances:

px, tx, kx → p, t, k respectively

p → f

t, ts → s

k → h

' → ∅ (vanishes)

Chapter 2: Nouns

Nouns have two genders: masculine and feminine. They can be distinguished by the use of the suffix **-an** and **-e** respectively. For example, **tsmuk** *sibling* becomes **tsmukan** *brother* or **tsmuke** *sister*.

Language Note #2.1: Word stress can also indicate different meanings in words (though it is rare). Consider the word **tute**. If the stress is on the first syllable (**tute**), it means *person*, but if the stress is on the second syllable (**tute**), it means *female*. And if you were curious, *male* is **tutan**, not tutean.

Language Note #2.2: The stress remains on the same syllable regardless of the addition of prefixes, suffixes or infixes. On monosyllabic words it is obvious. For words with more than one syllable, the stressed syllable will be underlined, when known.

There is no "a" or "the" in Na'vi, so a noun like **atxkxe** *land* could translate as *land*, *a land*, or *the land*.

2.1 Plurals

Na'vi has, in addition to a general plural, special plural forms for two and three of a thing. To form a plural, simply attach the corresponding prefix to the noun. Consider:

	Prefix	Plural
nari <i>eye</i>	me+	menari (<i>two</i>) <i>eyes</i>
kelku <i>home</i>	pxe+	pxehelku (<i>three</i>) <i>homes</i>
tokx <i>body</i>	ay+	aysokx <i>bodies</i>

Tip: All plural prefixes cause lenition, hence they are written with a "+" sign following them. Any prefix that does not cause lenition will be written with a "-" sign after it. When a noun is pluralized with **ay+** and lenition occurs, you have the option to drop the prefix. This is known as the short form of the plural:

ancestor **pizayu** → **ayfizayu** → **fizayu** both mean *ancestors*
cliff **'awkx** → **ayawkx** → **awkx** both mean *cliffs*

Language Note #2.3: Some plurals have a form of vowel contraction:

'eylan *friend* → **meylan** *two friends* not meeylan
'ekong *beat* → **pxekong** *three beats* not pxeekong

Language Note #2.4: There is no short plural form for ‘**u** *thing*. It is always **ayu** (never **u**). And for words beginning with ‘**rr** or ‘**ll**, no short plurals and no lenition ever:

me’Rrta	<i>two Earths</i>	not meRrta
mi ‘Rrta	<i>in/on Earth</i>	not mi Rrta

2.2 Noun Formation

Nouns can be created from other words with the use of the prefix **tì-**. As examples, we have the noun **tìkawng** *evil* coming from the adjective **kawng** meaning *bad, evil*; we also have **tìrey** *life* from the verb **rey** *to live*. It is important to note, however, that this method cannot be used productively. New words are subject to the Na’vi Language Committee’s approval.

2.2.1 Noun“ing”

When you want to use the -ing form of a verb as a noun add the prefix **tì-** and the infix <**us**> (see section 6.2.1):

<i>to sing</i>	rol → tirusol	<i>singing</i>
<i>Her singing is beautiful.</i>		Pe-yä tirusol lu lor.

With **si** verbs (section 5.5) simply drop the **si** to create this form.

2.2.2 The suffixes -yu and -tu

The suffix **-yu** is attached to a verb in order to form a noun representing the person who performs the verb:

<i>to hunt</i>	taron → taronyu	<i>hunter</i> (literally, one who hunts)
<i>to weave</i>	täftxu → täftxuyu	<i>weaver</i> (one who weaves)

The suffix **-tu** attaches to a noun to mean the person who does/makes the noun, similar to the way **-yu** works on verbs:

<i>visual art</i>	reltseo → reltseotu	<i>artist</i> (one who makes visual art)
<i>part</i>	hapxi → hapxitu	<i>member</i>

Chapter 3: Pronouns

3.1 The Basics

The standard singular pronouns I, you, he/she are **oe**, **nga**, **po** respectively. They behave exactly like nouns in respect to plurality. So, *you* is **menga** referring to two people; *they* is **pxefo** referring to three people; and **ayoe** would mean *we* in a general sense or when the number of people being referred to is not specifically two or three.

Language Note #3.1: **Po** can mean *he* or *she* WITHOUT the gender suffixes. ONLY include them when what you are saying is ambiguous without them.

3.2 Excluding and Including

In addition to the normal pronouns, Na'vi has different forms for excluding and including the person with whom you are speaking. All the forms you have seen thus far exclude the person. For example **ayoe** means *we* (*but not you*).

The inclusive forms are easy, just tack on an **ng** to the exclusive forms. Therefore, *we* (*the two of us*) is **oeng**; *we* (*the three of us*) is **pxoeng**; and *we* (*group*) is **ayoeng**.

Armed with all this information we can construct the complete pronoun table:

	Singular	Dual	Trial	Plural
1 st Exclusive	oe	moe	pxoe	ayoe
1 st Inclusive		oeng	pxoeng	ayoeng
2 nd Person	nga	menga	pxenga	aynga
3 rd Person	po	mefo	pxefo	ayfo/fo

Language Note #3.2: There is also the pronoun **sno** meaning *his/her/their own*, but for the time being only one specific form (see LN#3.11) is known to be valid.

Language Note #3.3: **Awnga** is an alternative form of **ayoeng** that is more colloquial, but means the exact same thing.

Language Note #3.4: There is also the pronoun **fko** meaning *one* or *they* in the general sense (such as “one must be strong if one wants to survive on Pandora”).

Language Note #3.5: To create indefinite pronouns add the suffix **-o** to a noun:

thing ‘u → **‘uo** *something*

<i>person</i>	tute → tuteo	<i>somebody, someone</i>
<i>place</i>	tseng → tsengo	<i>somewhere, someplace</i>

Language Note #3.6: There are two remaining pronouns **tsa'u** and **tsaw** in Na'vi. They both can mean *that thing* or *it*, and both can be used interchangeably, though with differences in endings. **Tsa'u** behaves normally (see chapter 4), but **tsaw** drops its **w** when any suffix is placed on it (example in 3.3).

3.3 Possession

In English, possession is formed primarily through the use of the apostrophe: Jake's avatar, the tree's branches. With pronouns *me* becomes *my*, *we* becomes *our*, etc. The possession is formed with the suffix **-yä** if the noun ends in a vowel (but not **o**, or **u**), and **-ä** otherwise.

Palulkan-ä kllpxiltu	<i>Thanator's territory</i>	
'ite-yä tsko	<i>daughter's bow</i>	
Omatikaya-ä kelku	<i>The Omatikaya's home</i>	only known exception
soaiä utral	<i>family's tree</i>	irregular (not soaiayä)
Kxu-ä fya'o	<i>Harm's way</i>	not kxu-yä

The possession can also mean *of the*: **txep-ä atan** *the light of the fire (or fire's light)*

Word order does not matter, so **atan txep-ä** would mean the same thing.

Language Note #3.7: For pronouns ending in **ng**, an extra **e** is added before the suffix:

ayoeng → **ayoeng-eyä** *our*

Language Note #3.8: For pronouns ending in a vowel, this **e** replaces the vowel:

nga → ng-eyä	<i>your</i>
fo → f-eyä	<i>their</i>
tsaw → ts-eyä	<i>its</i>

Language Note #3.9: You can drop the **ä** on the pronouns for colloquial/informal speech if you so desire.

Language Note #3.10: To say *mine*, *yours*, *theirs*, etc, use the corresponding possessive pronoun with the dummy word **pum**: **pum oeyä**, **pum ngeyä**, **pum feyä** respectively.

Language Note #3.11: The possessive pronoun **sneyä** is used only (for now at least) with the third person singular and plural to mean *his/her/their own*.

Chapter 4: Cases

4.1 The Agentive and Patientive

When the subject (nouns/pronouns) of a sentence performs some action (verb) that affects another thing (direct object), special endings must be placed on the subject (called the agentive) and the direct object (called the patientive) to indicate role. The endings are as follows:

	Ends in Vowel	Ends in Consonant
Agentive	-l	-il
Patientive	-t(i)	-it

As an example, consider the verb **yim** *to bind* in the following sentences:

<i>I bind.</i>	Oe yim.	No direct object, so no agentive.
<i>I bind her.</i>	Oe-l yim po-ti.	Direct object, so use the age/pat.
<i>We(you and I) bind her.</i>	Oeng-al yim po-t.	
<i>You bind the banshee.</i>	Nga-l yim <u>ikran</u>-it.	

Language Note #4.1: Looking at the 2nd and 3rd sentences, you will see that the **i** on the patientive ending is optional, hence why it is written in parentheses above. Choose whichever sounds better to you in your particular sentences.

Language Note #4.2: Remember this is only true when the direct object ends in a vowel. You could not remove the **i** in **ikranit** in the 4th sentence as that would result in **ikrant**, and “nt” is not a possible consonant cluster to end a syllable (LN#1.3). And for those of you thinking this could work if the direct object somehow ended in **f**, **ts**, or **s**, see LN#1.2.

Language Note #4.3: Regarding the inclusive pronoun forms: the **ng** that we tacked onto the exclusive forms comes from **nga** (**oeng** essentially means I’m including *you* in “we” for example). When one of these pronouns takes an ending (agentive, patientive, or dative), the **a** reappears in place of what you would expect (See the 3rd sentence above: **oeng-al**, not **oeng-il**).

Language Note #4.4: Even though they are considered vowels, **rr** and **ll** take the same endings as any consonant: **krrä**, **krrit**, etc *not* **krryä**, **krri(i)**, etc.

4.2 The Dative

The dative is employed when a 3rd party (indirect object) is affected by the subject performing an action on a direct object. Here are the endings:

	Ends in Vowel	Ends in Consonant
Dative	-r(u)	-ur

Now for some examples with **yim** to *bind* and **ting** to *give*:

I bind her to him.

Oe-l yim poe-ti po-r.

You bind the banshee to the tree.

Nga-l yim ikran-it utral-ur.

We give the land to them.

Ayoe-l ting atxkxe-t fo-ru.

The dative also makes appearances in special verb constructions (see below).

Pronunciation Note: When **oe** is by itself or at the end of a word (e.g. **moe**), each vowel is pronounced individually; when it has an ending (**oeyä, oel, oeti, oeru**) or occurs in the middle of a word the vowels are pronounced as “we” in wept, went, or wed. Finally, in the dual and trial forms, regardless of whether there’s an ending, the vowels are pronounced individually. So, **oe** has two syllables, **oel** has one syllable, **pxoe** has two syllables and **pxoel** also has two syllables. If you hear someone pronounce **oeru** as “ohehroo” instead of “wehru,” they are speaking formally.

4.3 The Suffixes -ri and -iri

These suffixes are used to form the topical. Because the topical causes so much confusion, and since anything phrased with the topical can be said without it (with notable exceptions, see section 9.9), the best advice I can give is to not learn it at all, at least for now. I’ve included it here for completeness only. Focus your efforts elsewhere.

Language Note #4.5: The vowels **aw, ay, ew,** and **ey,** take the consonant ending except in the patientive or dative case where they could take either. For these cases, both letters must be used with the vowel ending, e.g. the patientive could be either **-it** or **-ti**, but never just **-t**. The vowels **ll** and **rr** take the *consonant* endings.

Chapter 5: Verbs

Verbs in Na’vi are not conjugated for person. So *I am, you are, he is*, are **oe lu, nga lu, and po lu**, respectively.

Tip: When using the verb **lu** *to be*, the subject never takes an ending.

Language Note #5.1: Use **lu** in all instances of *to be* except for when you are talking about being at a specific location. In that case use the verb **tok**:

I am at home.

Oe-l kelku-ti tok.

Verbs are modified for different tenses, however, through the use of infixes. There are two infix positions: the first for tense <1>, the second for mood <2>. They are placed *before the vowels* of the second to last and final syllables, respectively. This is why vowels in Na’vi are so important. When the verb has only one syllable, the two infixes are placed next to one another in their respective order:

Archetype	Number of Syllables	Infix positions
emza’u <i>to pass (a test)</i>	3	emz<1>a’<2>u
‘i’awn <i>to stay, remain</i>	2	‘<1>i’<2>awn
omum <i>to know</i>	2	<1>om<2>um
hum <i>to leave, depart</i>	1	h<1><2>um

Pronunciation Note: When by itself it’s pronounced **omum**, but when part of another word or when paired with an infix (see below) the stress shifts to the **o**: *iyomum*.

5.1 Tenses

In an effort to keep linguistic terminology to a minimum, I will just start doing examples with the verb **taron** *to hunt*:

Infix	Meaning	Form	Translation
<ay>	<i>will verb</i>	tayaron	<i>will hunt</i>
<iy>	<i>will verb soon about to verb</i>	tiyaron	<i>will soon hunt about to hunt</i>
<er>	<i>be verb-ing</i>	teraron	<i>is/ am/ are hunting</i>
<im>	<i>just verbed</i>	timaron	<i>just hunted</i>
<am>	<i>verbed</i>	tamaron	<i>hunted</i>
	<i>have verbed</i>	tolaron	<i>have hunted</i>

Language Note #5.2: There are alternate forms of the two future tenses which are <isy> and <asy>. They are used (optionally) to indicate unambiguous determination to bring about something: **Oe tsw<isy>ayon.** *I will fly soon.*

Language Note #5.3: Na’vi can form combination verbs with the forms nounverb or verbverb. When this occurs the infix rules apply to the primary verb only. As examples:

ral *meaning* + **peng** *to tell* → **ralpeng** *to interpret* **ralp<1><2>eng** “tell” meaning
yom *to eat* + **ting** *to give* → **yomting** *to feed* **yomt<1><2>ing** “give” eat

5.1.1 Special Contractions

Some verbs start to look funny when combined with or <er>. When this happens, contractions are used to make the pronunciations better and clean up their appearances. Consider the following two circumstances with **plltxe** *to speak* and **frfen** *to visit*:

I have spoken **Oe ptxe** Not plltxe
You are visiting **Nga frfen** Not f<er>rrfen or f<er>fen

The difference in the forms is due to where the stress is in the word. Infixes never affect the stress of a verb, so in the case of **plltxe**, you have a contraction of the l’s; but in **frfen**, the r contraction would affect the stress, so it’s prohibited and you default back to the original word.

5.1.2 Compound Infixes

To form compound tenses you need compound infixes. Here they are:

Infix	Combo	Meaning	Example
<aly>	ay + ol	<i>will have verbed</i>	Oe y<aly>om srekr nga pähem trray. <i>I will have eaten before you arrive tomorrow.</i>
<ary>	ay + er	<i>will be verbing</i>	Po s<ary>op trray. <i>She will be traveling tomorrow.</i>
<ily>	iy + ol	<i>will soon have verbed</i>	Oe tsaheyl s<ily>i ikran-ur. <i>I will soon have bonded with an ikran.</i>
<iry>	iy + er	<i>will soon be verbing</i>	Nga tsw<iry>ayon mi saw. <i>You will soon be flying in the sky.</i>
<irm>	im + er	<i>was just verbing</i>	Oe p<irm>lltxe nga-ru tsa-teri. <i>I was just speaking to you about it.</i>
<ilm>	im + ol	<i>have just verbed</i>	Po-l ultxar<ilm>un tawtute-ti. <i>She has just encountered a skyperson.</i>
<arm>	am + er	<i>was verbing</i>	Oe-l v<arm>irä ‘upxaret. <i>I was spreading the message.</i>
<alm>	am + ol	<i>had verbed</i>	Fo fp<alm>il teri fmawn. <i>They’d thought about the news.</i>

These still occupy <1>, so you can combine them with moods, if you so desire.

5.2 Moods

Conveying mood is really straightforward. If you are happy about doing the verb use the infix <ei> and if you are unhappy about doing the verb use the infix <äng>. Remember that these occur in the <2> spot:

I am flying (yay!) **Oe tsw<er>ay<ei>on**
I will stop (ugh!) **Oe ft<ay><äng>ang**

Tip: The letter combination **äng** does not always indicate mood. For example, there is the verb **pängkxo** to chat, converse. Looking at it you will see that **äng** is not in the correct infix position. Furthermore you could never have the word pkxo (LN #1.3).

In addition to these two, there is also the evidential infix <ats> that is used to convey uncertainty or indirect knowledge:

You might want to tell her. **Nga n<ats>ew p<iv>eng po-ru.**
They must have gone to the river. **Fo-l ke tok fitseng-it. Fo-l k<ats>ä ne kilvan.**

You also use it when commenting on another person's state of being (since you can't know for certain how they are): **Oe sti** I'm angry BUT **Po st<ats>i** He is (seems to be) angry.

Mood infixes do not compound like tenses, so you can only use one at a time.

5.3 Modal Verbs

There are eight modal verbs in Na'vi: **zene** must, to have to, **zenke** must not (see section 5.8.1), **tsun** can, to be able to, **new** to want, **kan** to aim. **fmi** to try, attempt, **sngä'i** to begin, start, and **var** to persist/continue in state/action. The modal verb must always immediately precede the dependent verb. You cannot have a direct object with *must* or *can*, so when using these verbs the subject never takes an agentive ending:

I must go. **Oe zene k<iv>ä.** Never oe-l zene kivä
You can go. **Nga tsun k<iv>ä.** Never nga-l tsun kivä

New has the exact same form, but it can also take a direct object (you can want "something"). This leads to a less common, but equally valid form:

I want to go **Oe-l new futa k<iv>ä.**
I want you to go away **Oe-l new futa nga k<iv>ä neto.**

Futa has no literal translation, it's just there as a place holder: In the first sentence above, you want "something" and that something is "to go." If this seems to violate the modal verb rule, it's because the subject has been omitted in the dependent clause. This can be

done when the subject in both clauses does not change. More about **futa** in chapter eight. For the reason why the <iv> infix is used, see section 5.4 below.

Kan normally means *to aim*, but when used as a modal verb, it behaves exactly like **new** and expresses intention:

Oel kan futa ngal ‘<iv>em wutsoti. *I intended (for/that) you to cook dinner.*
Oe kan tsp<iv>ang po-t. *I intended to kill him.*

Compare this with the infixes in LN# 5.2. In the above example you may not have actually succeeded, but if you use either <isy> or <asy> you will do it.

Var used modally means *to keep doing something*:

Var k<iv>ä ko! *Let’s keep going!*
Oe var t<iv>ok fitseng-it. *I’m still here.*

Language Note #5.4: When a modal is used with another verb and there is a patientive object, you have the option of adding the agentive ending to the subject if you so desire:

Oe-l kan tsp<iv>ang po-t. *I intended to kill him. (Compare above)*

5.4 The <iv> infix

The <iv> infix is applied to all modal verb combinations and placed inside the non-modal verb, hence its appearance in every **kä** *to go* above. You put it in the first <1> infix position always. It is also used to express a wish or hope in the future: ‘<Iv>ong **Na’vi!** *Let Na’vi bloom!*

Language Note #5.5: When a sentence with “want verb” has a direct object, the direct object takes the patientive suffix even though the subject does not take the agentive:

Oe new ‘<iv>eyng ng-eyä tipawm-it.
I want to answer your question. tipawmit, not tipawm

Compare this sentence with the last example of section 5.3. If the subject of both clauses is the same, you can omit it, but now since there’s no explicit direct object as there is in 5.3, you don’t have the agentive ending on **oe**.

This infix also means *would*:

I would return if I could stay longer **Oe t<iv>ätxaw txo oe tsivun ‘<iv>i’awn nulkrr**
Would you tell me the truth? **P<iv>eng nga-l oe-ru tingay-it srak?**

The infix is used with verb(s) in clauses following **fte** *so that* and **fteke** *lest*:

I'm coming (in order) to help you

Oe z<er>a'u fte oe srung s<iv>i ngaru.

Finally, it is used with **tsni** clauses (see section 8.1.4). See section 5.5 for my use of **ngaru**.

5.4.1 Compound <iv> infixes

Welcome to perhaps the most difficult section in the guide. The hardest part will not be writing the Na'vi, but accurately interpreting it into English. For these combinations the <iv> part of the infix represents a possibility, while the other infix takes care of the tense:

Infix	Combo	Meaning	Example
<iyev> <iyev>	iv + ay/iy	Future Possibility	k<iyev>ame (<i>goodbye</i>) <i>May (we) see (each other again) in the future.</i>
<ilv>	iv + ol	Past Possibility	Nirangal oe k<ilv>ä fo-hu. <i>If only I had gone with them.</i>
<irv>	iv + er	Present Possibility	Txo oe k<irv>ä po-hu, nga l<iv>u nitram. <i>If I were going with her, you would be happy.</i>
<imv>	iv + am iv + im	Past Possibility	Txo ayoe t<imv>aron nga-hu, ke fl<iv>ä nga. <i>If we hunted with you, you wouldn't succeed.</i>

Tip: **Nirangal** is used to express unattainable wishes, or at least wishes that the speaker considers unattainable (*If only; oh that; etc*) and only takes <ilv> or <irv>.

One of the biggest problems in translating these types of statements into Na'vi is that most English speakers don't get it right in English to begin with. To demonstrate, consider the sentence *If he was here, he would tell you the truth*:

Take a second to read it again, does it sound right to you? Almost anyone you ask would say this is correct. It's not. By saying "if," you have created a counterfactual statement (a possibility) which requires the subjunctive tense. The correct version of the statement above would be *If he were here, he would tell you the truth*.

Why does this matter you ask? Imagine you're translating the incorrect statement without really thinking about it. You would get **Txo pol t<am>ok fitseng-it, po p<iv>eng ngaru tingay-it**. In the correct version **tamok** would be **tivok**.

This becomes even more difficult when you start compounding tenses. Compare:

Oh that I was going with you

Nirangal oe k<arm>ä nga-hu

WRONG

Oh that I were going with you

Nirangal oe k<irv>ä nga-hu

RIGHT

Now for the really hard example (try to translate it before reading on): *If you hadn't been eating when we arrived, we could have cooked something*.

The first step is to notice where the focus is in the sentence. Here it's on the arrival (). That's the concrete event. Everything else is a possibility related to it. Now let's look at

“you.” When the arrival occurs you are eating. The act coincides with the arrival. So despite the fact that it sounds like it’s a past possibility (<ilv>) it’s actually a present possibility (<irv>; remember the focus is on the arrival). Another way of saying this part of the sentence would be “if you weren’t eating.” Finally the last part of the statement: “could have” is also “would have been able to” which is a past possibility (<ilv>), and since “cook” follows this modal verb, it takes the usual <iv>. Putting it all together we get: **Txo nga ke y<irv>om krr a ayoe pähem, ayoeng-il ts<ilv>un ‘<iv>em ‘uo-t.** For **krr a**, see section 8.1.2.

5.5 Should

The verb **sweylu** is used for *should* (literally “it’s best”), but there are two ways of using it depending on whether you are using it to express something that has happened or has yet to happen. If it’s a future possibility use the verb along with **txo** and the <iv>. If it has already occurred, use it with **fwa** and . Compare

Txo oe k<iv>ä...	<i>If I were to go...</i>
Sweylu txo oe k<iv>ä	<i>I should go</i>
Sweylu fwa oe kä	<i>I should have gone</i>

In the third sentence above, the implication is that going was the right thing to do, not that you are lamenting the fact that you didn’t go. Never use **sweylu** for counterfactual statements such as this.

5.6 Creating Verbs

The auxiliary verb **si** can be paired with nouns to form verbs in Na’vi:

nari eye → **nari si** to watch out, be careful
eltu brain → **eltu si** to pay attention
uvan game → **uvan si** to play (a game)

All infixes go inside **si**, and when a sentence has an **si** verb, the object takes the dative ending:

Oe pamrel si ay+li’u-ru.	<i>I write words.</i>
Eltu si karyu-ru!	<i>Pay attention to the teacher!</i>

Tip: If the dative bothers you here, think of “X si Y” as “engage in the X-activity to/for Y.”

Language Note #5.6: When two **i**’s or an **i** and an **ì** wind up together due to infixes, no contraction occurs. Instead, **y** is inserted between them. Consider **irayo si** to thank. You thank someone because you are happy with whatever it is they did. So you would employ the <ei> infix: **Oe irayo seiyi nga-ru** I thank you.

Tip: You “give thanks” *to* someone, so that “someone” is the indirect object. Think of the subject here, and indeed with all **si** verbs, like you do with **zene** and **tsun**. If you don’t like this, then just say **irayo** *thanks*.

Language Note #5.7: In many cases **si** sounds like it could mean *to do/make* but it cannot be used as such by itself. The closest verbs we have for “to make” is **txula** *to build* and **ngop** *to create*.

5.7 The “self” Infix <äp>

There are no words for *myself, yourself*, etc in Na’vi. They are achieved through the infix <äp> that is always put in a special position <0> which immediately precedes <1>. Consider **yur** *to wash* and **tse’a** *to see*:

<i>I wash myself</i>	Oe y<äp>ur
<i>You will wash yourself</i>	Nga y<äp><ay>ur
<i>They saw themselves(ugh!)</i>	Ay+fo ts<äp><am>e’<äng>a

Language Note #5.8: **Tse’a** is *to see* in a physical sense. **Kame** is *to see into* (beyond the physical sense).

5.8 The Causative Infix <eyk>

This infix, which also occurs in the <0> position, is used in the construction “*to force/make* verb.” In this construction, the one who “is forced/made” is put in the dative:

<i>It makes you think.</i>	Tsa-l fp<eyk>il nga-ru.	Not nga-ti
<i>He made me build it.</i>	Po-l oe-ru tx<eyk>ula tsa-t.	Not oe-ti

It can also be used to allow verbs that normally don’t have direct objects in Na’vi to take direct objects. Compare:

<i>I begin</i>	Oe sngä’i	No direct object
<i>You start the game</i>	Nga-l sng<eyk>ä’i uvan-it	direct object
<i>Nothing will change</i>	Ke’u ke l<ay>atem	No direct object
<i>Evil changes you</i>	Ti-kawng-il l<eyk>atem nga-t	direct object

Language Note #5.9: Verbs that do not take direct objects are known as intransitive. Some are strictly transitive (take a direct object) and some can be both, depending on context. Here’s the list of verbs that we know to be strictly intransitive:

hahaw	<i>to sleep</i>	latem	<i>to change</i>
--------------	-----------------	--------------	------------------

sngä'i	<i>to begin, start</i>	syaw	<i>to call</i>
tätxaw	<i>to return</i>	tem	<i>to shoot</i>
tsun	<i>to be able to, can</i>	yomting	<i>to feed</i>
zene	<i>to have to, must</i>		

Language Note #5.10: It's useful to think of **si** verbs as intransitive, but remember that when it comes to direct objects, they have their own constructions (section 5.5). Only use **<eyk>** with them if you specifically want the “force/make” meaning. Also, since their direct objects take the dative, the person being forced takes the patientive instead:

I make you write a book.

Oe-l pamrel s<eyk>i nga-ti puk-ur.

Tip: The order when combining **<äp>** and **<eyk>** is always **<äp><eyk>**.

Language Note #5.11: Verbs that normally take direct objects can be used without direct objects (compare the first two sentences below). When these verbs are used with the causative they are still transitive, so they take the agentive case (see the last two sentences):

He hunts.

Po taron.

He hunts a hexapede.

Po-l taron yerik-it.

He makes you hunt.

Po-l t<eyk>aron ngaru.

He makes you hunt a hexapede.

Po-l t<eyk>aron ngaru yerik-it.

5.9 Commands

To command someone to do something you can either use the standard form of the verb, or more politely use an **<iv>** infix with the verb:

Go away!

Kä neto!

K<iv>ä neto!

Protect The People.

Hawnu Omatikaya-ti.

Omatikaya-ru ti-hawnu s<iv>i.

The first sentence is the straightforward construction. The second is an **si** verb construction with the noun form **tihawnu**. It is also what Eytukan says to Neytiri in the movie.

5.9.1 Negative Commands

There are a few ways to negate a command. The first, most commanding, and most useful is with **rä'ä**:

Don't be afraid!

Txopu rä'ä si!

Don't be a moron!

Skxawng rä'ä lu!

Tip: Never put the noun between **rä'ä** and **si**.

For a softer tone, use **zenke**. This carries the implication of obligation:

You're leaving! You mustn't go. **Nga h<er>um! Nga zenke k<iv>ä.**

Note the difference between this and **Nga ke zene k<iv>ä** *You don't have to go/you need not go.*

5.10 Tense vs. Aspect (Optional)

I will not be marking the stress of the words in this section and before beginning I want to reemphasize the fact that this section is completely optional. Even if you want to learn it, I STRONGLY suggest not even looking at it until you have read through chapter eight. This section will have some linguistic terminology; there is no way around it.

Looking back at sections 5.1 and 5.1.2, I grouped basically every infix together and called them tenses. This is not actually true, though the examples given are reasonable approximations for most situations. The infixes ****, **<er>**, and **<arm>** are not actually tenses, they're aspects.

The first thing to note is that the purpose of a tense is to relate one time period to another. In the sentence **Oe y<am>om ttram krr a nga p<am>ähem** *I ate yesterday when you arrived*, you're relating the two events that happened the day before to the present. Furthermore you are also relating the two events temporally to one another as viewed from your present (they both happened at the same time in your past). You're viewing the events from an external perspective. Aspect is concerned with, well, the "aspects" of an event itself from an internal viewpoint. Taking the above example again, if we were to say **Oe yom ttram krr a nga pähem**, we are now "physically" at that moment instead of the present.

The aspect **** is known as perfective, meaning it puts you in the moment, but still views an action as complete from within that moment. To go inside that action further, we have the past imperfective aspect **<arm>**. This zooms in on the action. Consider the differences in the following short story:

Ttram oe taron. Tengkr oe t<arm>aron, oel tse'a palulukanit. Oe txopu si ha oe tul neto. Tengkr oe t<arm>ul, oel tse'a futa Neytiri tsw<arm>ayon ulte oe poru syaw. Po kkä ulte 'awsiteng moe tätxaw ne Kelutral...

Yesterday I hunted. As I was hunting, I saw a thanator. I was afraid, so I ran away. While I was running, I saw Neytiri flying and I called to her. She descended and together we returned to Hometree...

Tolaron establishes the setting and the main event as a whole.

Tarmaron puts us inside the main event itself and allows us to explore what happens.

tsole'a, **txopu soli**, **tolul**, and **kolkä** are what happen within the main event.

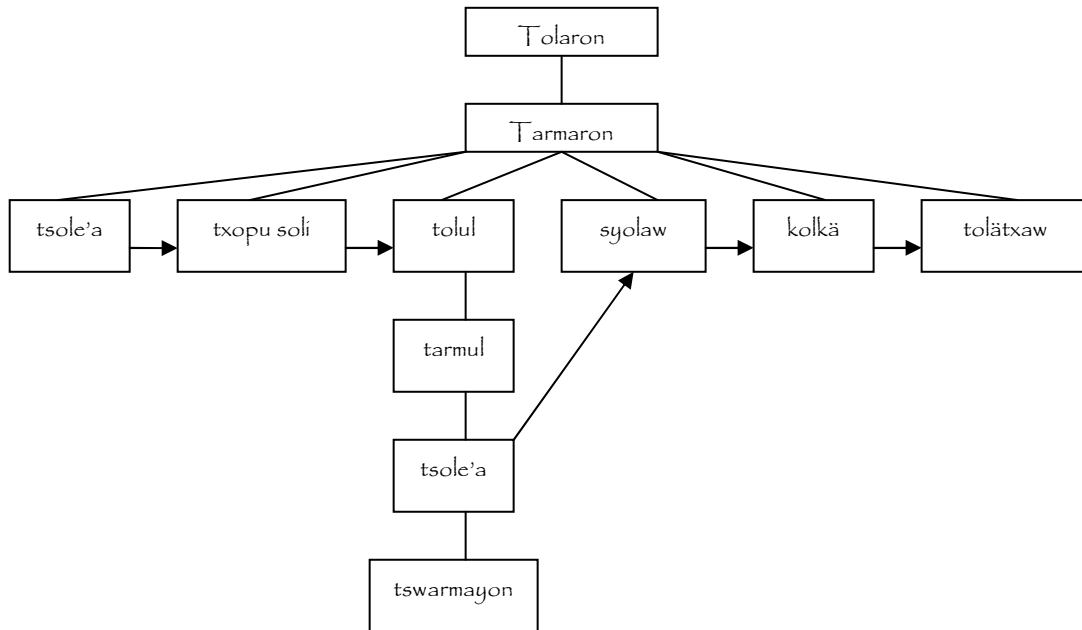
Tarmul puts us inside a secondary event within the main event.

Tsole'a, is what happens in the secondary event.

Tswarmayon puts us inside what happens in the secondary event.

Syolaw takes us out of the secondary event, putting us back in the main event.

Tolätxaw completes the main event.



Now compare this story to something similar with tense:

Trram oe t<am>aron, oel ts<am>e'a palulukanit ulte t<am>ätxaw ne Kelutral.

Yesterday I hunted, I saw a thanator and returned to Hometree.

In the first story it seems like you're right there on the ground with the narrator, you experience things as he does. The second story feels detached and clinical, like someone is reading a fact sheet to you: movie versus picture. You also don't know in the second story how the events relate to each other. Did you see the thanator during the hunt? Is it the reason you returned to Hometree? Or are they all just separate events that happened yesterday? You don't know without more information.

Finally, until we know more, these guidelines are useful for stories and the like; but if you were just saying one sentence that was in the past tense you could use either <am> or . They are not exclusive, the meanings are clear either way and it really is a preference at this point. This is further exemplified by the infix <alm> (see 5.1.2), used to indicate that something happened before something else in the past.

Chapter 6: Adjectives and Adverbs

6.1 Adjectives

When you describe something with the verb *to be*, it's really straightforward:

The sun is yellow **Tsawke lu rim**
The skies are blue **Saw lu ean**
The girl is pretty **Tute lu sevin**

When you don't use **lu**, you must attach an **-a-** to the side of the adjective closest to the noun it modifies:

yellow sun **tsawke a-rim**
blue skies **ean-a saw**
beautiful night **lor-a txon**

Tip: **Lor** is used to describe a thing, **sevin** is used to describe a female (see above), **sayrip** is used to describe a male.

Language Note #6.1: When the adjective begins or ends with **a**, vowel contraction occurs:

large branch **apxa vul** not apxa-a vul

6.1.1 Colors

The basic colors in Na'vi are as follows:

Color Range	Na'vi	Color	Na'vi
<i>red to orange</i>	tun	<i>white</i>	teyr
<i>yellow</i>	rim	<i>gray</i>	ngul
<i>green to blue</i>	ean	<i>deep/dark</i>	vawm
<i>violet to purple</i>	'om	<i>light</i>	neyn
<i>brown</i>	kllvawm	<i>bright/vivid</i>	txanatan
<i>black</i>	layon		

I now like to think of ROYGBIV in English as TRE'O.

To specify the colors further, use the adposition (see 7.1) **na-** keeping the hyphen(s):

menari aean-na-taw

menari atawna-ean

both mean *sky-blue eyes*

To use the colors as nouns, add the suffix **-pin**:

I like (the color) purple.

Sunu oeru 'ompin.

Language Note #6.2: When adding this suffix to colors ending in **-n**, the **n** changes to **m**: so **tun** becomes **tumpin**, etc.

6.2 Creating Adjectives

The prefix **le-** is used to create adjectives:

trr *day* → **letrr** *daily*

fpom *peace, well-being* → **lefpom** *happy, peaceful, joyous*

Language Note #6.3: Use **lefpom** to describe things. For people use **nitram**. And to describe your internal state use **'efu** *to feel*: **Oe 'efu som** *I'm hot*.

Language Note #6.4: When an adjective with **le-** is before the noun it modifies, put an **a** on it as expected. But when the adjective appears after the noun it modifies you don't need the **a** as the **le-** already indicates its role:

dangerous animal

lehrrap-a ioang or **ioang lehrrap**

6.2.1 The Active Participle Infix <us>

This infix, which is placed in the <1> location, turns the -ing form of the verb into an adjective:

tswayon *to fly* → **tsw<us>ayon** *flying*

tswusayon-a ikran *the flying ikran*

fyawintxu *to guide* → **fyaw<us>intxu** *guiding*

atan a-fyawusintxu *guiding light*

6.2.2 The Passive Participle Infix <awn>

This infix, which is placed in the <1> location, turns the past tense form of the verb into an adjective:

tungzup *to drop* → **t<awn>ungzup** *dropped*

tawnungzup-a txewk *dropped club*

sop *to travel* → **s<awn>op** *traveled*

tute a-sawnop nitxan *well-traveled person*

Tip: Remember, these are adjectives, so the **-a-** is needed.

Language Note #6.5: When using <us> and <awn> with **si** verbs, the infix goes inside the **si** and the verb gets hyphenated when written to avoid confusion:

helping person

tute asrung-s<us>i.

6.3 Adverbs

There's really not much to say about adverbs other than how to create them. Use the prefix **ni-** to do so:

the noun **tingay** *truth* → **ningay** *truly*

the adjective **ftue** *easy* → **niftue** *easily*

Tip: Don't automatically think "adverb" when you see **ni**. There's **nin** *to look (at)*.

6.3.1 Mind Your Manners

To describe the manner in which you do something combine **ni-** with **fya'o** and the appropriate adjective. As an example, consider **Po poltxe nilaw**. This could be translated as *She spoke clearly* or *Clearly, she spoke*. It's ambiguous what you're saying. However, with our formulation it becomes unambiguous: **Po poltxe nifya'o a-law**. *She spoke clearly (she spoke in a clear manner)*. More examples:

letrtrtr

ordinary → **nifya'o letrtrtr**

in an ordinary manner

hiyik

funny/strange → **nifya'o a-hiyik**

in a strange (or funny) manner

Chapter 7: Adpositions and Other Prefixes

7.1 Adpositions

Adposition is just a fancy term for a thing that can appear before or after a word. It is the speaker's choice. They can represent many different types of words. In Na'vi, adpositions that come before the word they complement are separate, distinct entities. If they follow the word they complement, they are attached to the word as a suffix. For example, the word for *and*, **si** can be used as follows:

Ontu si kinam

nose and leg

ay+li'u horensi

words and rules

Language Note #7.1: **si** is used to connect two things. To connect two sentences use **ulte**.

Here is the list of known adpositions, marked for lenition:

Adposition	Meaning	Adposition	Meaning
äo-	<i>under</i>	na-	<i>like, as</i>
eo-	<i>before, in front of</i>	ne-	<i>to (direction)</i>
fa-	<i>with (by means of)</i>	nemfa-	<i>inside</i>
few-	<i>across (opposite side of)</i>	pxaw-	<i>around</i>
fkip-	<i>up among</i>	pxel-	<i>like, as</i>
fpi+	<i>for (the benefit/sake of)</i>	pximaw-	<i>right after</i>
ftu-	<i>from (direction)</i>	pxisre+	<i>right before</i>
hu-	<i>with (accompaniment)</i>	ro+	<i>at (location)</i>
ilä+	<i>by, via, following</i>	rofa-	<i>beside, alongside</i>
io-	<i>above</i>	sin-	<i>on, onto</i>
ka-	<i>across (covering thoroughly)</i>	sre+	<i>before (time)</i>
kip-	<i>among</i>	ta-	<i>from</i>
kxamlä-	<i>through</i>	takip-	<i>from among</i>
lok-	<i>close</i>	takkip-	<i>from up among</i>
luke-	<i>without</i>	teri-	<i>about, concerning</i>
maw-	<i>after (time)</i>	uo-	<i>behind</i>
mi+	<i>in</i>	vay-	<i>up to</i>
mikam-	<i>between</i>	wä+	<i>against (opposition)</i>
mungwrr-	<i>except</i>		

Language Note #7.2: Lenition only occurs if the adposition precedes the word. The adposition **ilä** may have the stress on either syllable.

Language Note #7.3: With verbs of motion, **ne-** can be omitted if you place the destination after the verb.

7.2 Other Prefixes

These prefixes attach to the front of a word they modify normally. You have already seen a few (section 2.1). The list is below marked for lenition, when known:

Prefix	Meaning
ay+	<i>(general) plural</i>
fi-	<i>this</i>
fay+	<i>these</i>
fra-	<i>every</i>
me+	<i>2 of a thing</i>
pxe+	<i>3 of a thing</i>
tsa-	<i>that</i>
tsay+	<i>those</i>

7.3 Questions

Question words are formed with the special particle **-pe+**. As indicated it may be placed as a prefix or a suffix, but when used as a prefix it causes lenition:

Na'vi	English
peu, 'upe	<i>what? (thing)</i>
pesu, tupe	<i>who?</i>
pefnel, fnepe	<i>Which kind?</i>
pefya, fyape	<i>how?</i>
pehem, kempe	<i>what? (action)</i>
pehrr, krrpe	<i>when?</i>
pelun, lumpe	<i>why?</i>
peseng, tsengpe	<i>where?</i>
polpxay, holpxaype	<i>How many?/What number?</i>
pimtxan, himtxampe	<i>How much?/What amount?</i>

Language Note #7.4: This particle can combine with the plural **ay+** to form **pay+**: **payutral?** *Which trees?*

Language Note #7.5: When the question can be answered with a yes/no, the sentence that asks the question must have **srak(e)**; and for *isn't it?* or *right?* use **kefyak**:

How do you know this?

Fyape nga-l omum fi'u-ti?

Did you build this?

Txula nga-l fi'u-t srak?

That's the truth, isn't it?

Tsaw lu tingay kefyak?

Language Note #7.6: These words can only be used for questions. If you want to use *what, who, where, etc* in the middle of a sentence as an adverb, you must use other words (See chapter 8).

7.4 The Suffixes -tsyip and -vi

-tsyip is known as the diminutive marker and is applied to either nouns, pronouns, or proper names. It can be used to express affection (much like a grandparent might call a grandchild “little boy/girl”) or to insult someone (what can you do about it, “little” (worthless) warrior?) or ironically, as self-deprecation (you’re much stronger than little ole me).

-vi is a suffix meaning a part of a whole, or “little bit” of something. It cannot be used as freely as **-tsyip**. Compare the two in the following examples:

utraltsyip

bush

txepvi

spark

tsmuketsyip

“little” sister

atanvi

ray (of light)

7.5 The Suffix -o

We’ve already seen how this suffix can create indefinite pronouns (LN 3.5), but it can also be used to express duration if attached to a time word:

for many days

srr-o

I have been studying for almost three years.

Oe ftia pxey-a zisit-o stum.

Chapter 8: Sentences

Up to this point, I have written the words in every sentence in the same order as English for the sake of clarity. Because of the different types of case endings, word order in Na'vi is relatively free. For example the sentence *The creature with the mighty heart is good* could be written as follows:

Swirä **txe'lanhu** **a-fkew** **siltsan** **lu.**
creature *heart with* *mighty* *good* *be*

Language Note #8.1: When you say in Na'vi what would be a prepositional phrase in English, the noun in the prepositional phrase never takes an ending:

I'm speaking with the warrior. **Oe p<er>lltxe hu tsamsiyu.**

There are some restrictions on word order though:

1. Possession words should appear directly on either side of what they possess:

Lor **mokri** **pe-yä lu.**
beautiful *voice* *her* *be*
Her voice is beautiful.

2. Adjectives and adverbs should appear next to the nouns and verbs they modify:

Fra'u-ti **omum** **kanu-a** **'ite-l.**
everything *know* *smart* *daughter*
The smart daughter knows everything.

3. If you say “not verb,” the **ke** goes before the verb:

Ke new oe-l futa nga k<iv>ä.
not want I that you to go
I don't want you to go.

4. The part of the sentence you want to carry the most meaning/emphasis goes at the beginning, with the end representing a little more emphasis than the rest of the sentence. The particles **nang**, used to express surprise and **pak**, used to express disparagement always goes at the end.

8.1 Complex Sentences

When two sentences are combined together, keep the words from each sentence on their respective side of the conjunction joining the two sentences:

F<ay>rifen oe-l nga-t ulte oeng 'awsiteng kām<ay>akto.
will visit I you and we together will ride out
I will visit you and we will ride out together.

8.1.1 The Pronoun a

This pronoun can be translated as *that*, *which*, or *who*. It is used to modify a noun much like the adjective **a**, except that the “adjective” now is a phrase and the pronoun is a separate entity:

Oe-r sm<am>on olo'eyktan a t<im>erkup.
I knew clan leader who just died
I knew the clan leader who just died.

Language Note #8.2: In English, *that* is not always written, but in Na’vi it must be.

Fpe' ay+nga-l oe-r fitxan niftxavang a 'upxare-t stawm oe-l.
sent you to me so passionately that message heard I
I have heard the message [that] you have sent me so passionately.

You can also use this pronoun in conjunction with the **<er>** infix as an equally valid alternative for **<us>**. Compare:

Toruk a-h<us>ahaw lu mi lehrrap. Toruk a h<er>ahaw lu mi lehrrap.

Both can be translated as *A sleeping Toruk is still dangerous.*

8.1.2 When

When in non-question sentences is **a krr** or **krr a** depending on the clause it modifies:

Nga p<am>āhem a krr, fitseng-it oe-l ke t<am>ok.
you arrived when here I no was
When you arrived, I was not here.

H<am>um oe krr a nga z<am>a'u.
left I when you came
I left when you came.

Tip: You can also use **a krr/krr a** for its literal translation (*at the time that*).

8.1.3 The Many Faces of fi'u

By itself, **fi'u** means *this (thing)*:

This thing is hot. **Fi'u lu som.**
He has eaten this thing. **Po-l yom fi'u-t.**

But when **fi'u** is used in conjunction with **a**, we have these special forms:

fi'u a → **fwa**
fi'u-l a → **fula**
fi'u-t a → **futa**
fi'u-ru a

These forms have no literal translation necessarily. They serve more as place holders for phrases that are being used as agents, patients, direct objects, etc. Consider the following:

Law lu oe-ru fwa nga new z<iv>a'u ayoehu.
clear be to me this you want to come us with
It is clear to me that you want to come with us.

What you are literally saying is “This *you-want-to-come-with-us-thing* is clear to me.”

This can also apply to prepositional phrases when the thing following the preposition is more than just a noun:

without beginning to cry **luke fwa sngä'i tsng<iv>awvik**
except I can't come **mungwrr fwa oe ke tsun z<iv>a'u**

Note in the first example above that **sngä'i** is being used as a modal verb, hence the infix in **tsngawvik**. **Fwa** is used with intransitive verbs.

When the phrase functions as the subject (agentive) of the sentence use **fula**:

Fula nga za'u oeti lrrtok s<eyk>i.
this you have come me smile makes
That you have come makes me smile.

You have already seen how **futa** can work with the modal verb **new**, but it applies when the phrase is the patientive part of the sentence (i.e. with transitive verbs):

Omum oe-l futa ti-fyawintxu-ri oe-yä p<er>ey ay+nga niwotx.
know I this guidance my be waiting you all
I know you are all waiting for my guidance.

Here, you are literally saying “I know *something*” and that *something* is *you are waiting for my guidance*.

Language Note #8.3: There are alternate forms of **fwa** and **futa** that may be used once the topic they allude to have been established. These forms are **tsawa** and **tsata**. It’s similar to the distinction between *it* and *that*, but this is not always clear, and the choice to use these alternate forms are at the speaker’s discretion.

8.1.4 Tsnì, The Other “That”

With verbs like **ätxäle si** *to request* and **silpey** *to hope* you cannot use **fwa** or **futa** constructions:

I hope you will stay with us.
I request that he give it to her.

Oe silpey tsni nga ‘<iv>i’awn ayoehu.
Oe ätxäle si tsni po-l t<iv>ing tsa-t poer.

Note the subjunctive here because they are possibilities. Also important is that “the things” being hoped for or requested can function as sentences on their own. If the direct objects were simple things, you just use the normal construction:

I requested it.

Oe ätxäle s<am>i tsa-ru.

8.1.5 Where

Where constructions are made with the noun **tseng(e)** *place*. There are different ways of saying it, depending on your meaning. If you are saying *where* then it's relatively straight forward, just say *the place that*. If you want to say *where to*, then you need a place holder (like **futa** or **fwa**) to stand in for the *to*, achieved with the inanimate *it* **tsaw**. Consider the following two examples:

Oe-l ke omum tsenge-t a po tok.
I not know where she be (at)
I don't know where she is.

Oe tsa-ne ke tsun z<iv>a'u a tseng-it nga-l k<er>ä.
I it to not can come where you be going
You are going (to) where I cannot come.

In the 1st example you are basically saying *I don't know the place that she is*. It's exactly what you would write if you saying "I don't know the *she's-at* place" using **a**.

In the 2nd example you are saying "I cannot come *to it*" where *it* is *the place [that] you are going*.

Tip: Remember that **tsenget** and **tsengit** above should be on the same side of **a** as the agentive, as they are part of those clauses. Here's one more example:

Fo-1 **ts<am>e'a** **tseng-it a** **k<am>ä** **t<sa-ne oe.**
they saw where went to it I.
They saw where I went (to).

8.1.6 How and Why

We don't have official formulations for these words when they are not being used for questions, but most use **fy'a'o a** *the way that* for *how*, and **oeyk a** *the reason that* for *why*:

Omum **nga-l** **fy'a'o-t a** **fko-l** **'<iv>em** **fi'u-t** **srak?**
know you the way that one would cook this thing yes/no?
Do you know how to cook this?

Fo-1 **omum** **oeyk-it a** **nga** **ftia** **nitxan** **fratrr.**
they know the reason that you study much everyday
They know why you study so much everyday.

8.2 Streamlining Sentences

When two adjacent clauses have the same subject, you can drop the subject from the second clause:

Zene **nga** **k<iv>ä** **tseng a** **t<sa-ne (nga) new** **k<iv>ä.**
must you go the place to that to it want go.
You've gotta go where you wanna go.

The same deletion rule applies to direct objects, when it can be understood from context:

I saw something [that] I want. **Oe-l** **tse'a** **'uo-t a** (oe-l tsat) **new.**

Chapter 9: Special Constructions

9.1 Names

In Na'vi, you don't ask someone what their name is literally. Instead, you use the general pronoun **fko** *one, they*: **Fyape fko syaw nga-r** *How does one call you?*

You answer the question with: **Oeru syaw fko** _____. *They call me* _____.

Language Note #9.1: You *call to* someone, hence the use of the dative.

Tip: Use **Nga-ru tut?** to say *And you?/How about you?*

9.1.1 Ma

Ma is used to address someone specifically. It carries no literal translation, it's just used to single someone out: *Jake ma Jake*

It is placed before the noun and any words that modify the noun: *my friends ma oeyä eylan*.

If you have multiple people you wish to address, you still use it only once: *brothers and sisters ma smukan sì smuke*.

Tip: If it helps, think of (but do not necessarily translate) **ma** as O. *O my friends* above.

9.1.2 The Other “Ma”

With words that represent groups of people, e.g. **olo'** *clan*, **frapo** *everyone*, etc. you can address them with **ma** or with **-ya** used as a suffix:

Trr lefpom ma Amerika
Kaltxi frapo-ya

Good morning/day America
Hello everyone

It does not apply to plurals (e.g. never *ay+sute-ya*), and if you don't want to use it, **ma** works with everything.

9.2 There is

There is is achieved by using **lu** at the start of a sentence:

<i>There are trees in a forest</i>	Lu ay+utral mì+ na'ring
<i>There hasn't been a visitor</i>	Ke lu kea frrtu
<i>There will soon be a new day</i>	L<iy>u mip-a trr

You don't always need to explicitly translate "it" and "that" if they are implied from context. As examples, **tsat** in sections 9.6 and 9.11 below are not required.

9.3 I Love You

The word for *love*, **tìyawn** comes from the adjective **yawn(e)** *beloved*. But you cannot make an **si** verb construction for *to love*. Instead, to say *I love you* it's **Nga yawne lu oe-r** which translates literally as "You are beloved to me."

9.4 How Do You Say "x" in Na'vi?

Translated literally as "in-Na'vi x becomes what?" this phrase is **X niNa'vi (slu) peli'u?** The **slu** is frequently omitted in conversation.

9.5 To Have

There is no direct word for *to have* in Na'vi. Instead, we use a special construction involving **lu** at the start of the sentence: **Lu oe-ru ätxäle** *I have a request*. It behaves much like "there is" above: "There is a request to me."

9.6 Let's Ko!

Ko is a particle used to solicit agreement: *eh? don't you think? wouldn't you agree?* (compare with **kefyak** in LN#7.5) To say "let's verb," put it after the verb:

<i>Let's ride!</i>	Makto ko!
<i>Ok, let's use it.</i>	Tam, tsa-t sar ko.

9.7 Filled With Joy

This is more of an idiom than a special construction, but it's cool so I'm including it here. It's basically an **si** verb construction with the adjective **teya** *full*, with the implied meaning *with satisfaction/joy*:

Fwa sute a-txan fitxan ft<er>ia li'fya leNa'vi oe-ru teya si.
That people many so be studying language Na'vi fills me
(The fact) That so many people are studying the Na'vi language fills me with joy.

9.8 Comparisons

Na'vi does not have the traditional English forms to compare two things. There is no way to express the *-er* in *larger*, for example. Instead, we use **A to B lu adj**:

A toruk is larger than an ikran. **Toruk to ikran lu apxa.**

Language Note #9.2: In this formulation, **to** behaves like an adposition and can be used in the same way. So, **Toruk ikranto lu apxa** would mean the same thing as the sentence above. Just try not to create word orders which make the meaning unclear when spoken.

Superlatives (*largest* in the above example) are formed with **frato**:

This tree is the tallest. **Fi-utral frato tsawl lu.**

We also have words for *best* **swey** and *worst* **'e'al**.

9.9 Good Luck/Well Wishing

This is not so much a special construction, as it is an idiomatic use of a word. We begin with:

Good Luck! **Etripa syayvi ngaru!** or

If you want to wish someone good luck *with something*, then you use the topical suffix (section 4.3):

Good luck with it. **Tsa-ri nga-ru etripa syayvi.**
Good luck with your friend. **Ng-eyä 'eylan-iri etripa syayvi nga-r.**

Literally, "As for X smile to you."

And if you want to get really fancy: **X-ri/iri nga-ru lrrtok s<iv>i Nawma Sa'nok!**

Literally, "As for X, the Great Mother smiles to you!"

Finally, for celebrations and the like (Happy Birthday!):

Smiles to you on your celebration! **Ftxozä-ri aylrrtok nga-ru!**

9.10 Whether

In Na'vi you cannot say *whether* by itself, you must say *whether or not*. This is achieved with **ftxey...fuke**:

Ayoe-ru mi yawne l<ay>u nga ftxey nga flä fuke.
to us still beloved will be you whether you succeed or not
We will still love you whether you succeed or not.

Will you help us?

Will you help us or not?

Srake ngal ayoer srung s<ay>i?

Ftxey ayoeru srung s<ay>i ngal fuke?

We don't yet know if **fuke** can replace the function of **srak**, though in our only example it isn't there. Be careful not to confuse these statements with **txo** *if*. For example, if you were to say *I don't know if he is coming* what you're really saying is *I don't know whether or not he is coming*, so you would not use **txo**.

9.11 Negatives

All negatives (except commands, see 5.8.1) are formed with some version of the **ke** particle:

Particle	Usage	Example	Notes
ke	adverb	Oe ke lu 'eveng! <i>I am not a child!</i>	Placed before the verb it modifies
		Oe pamrel ke si. <i>I do not write.</i>	Placed before the si with si verbs.
kehe	interjection	Kehe! Ră'ä 'ampi tsat! <i>No! Don't touch it!</i>	

But when using “negative” words in Na'vi you must also place a **ke** before the corresponding verb:

Na'vi	English	Example
kaw'it	<i>not...at all</i>	Fayutral ke lu tsawl kaw'it. <i>Those trees aren't big at all.</i>
kawkr	<i>never</i>	Oe ke k<am>ä nga-hu kawkr. <i>I never went with you.</i>
kawtu	<i>no-one</i>	Ke lu kawtu a oe krrn<iv>ekx pohu. <i>There's no-one I'd rather spend time with.</i>
ke	<i>not X</i>	Ke frapo ke tslam. <i>Not everyone understood.</i>
kea	<i>no X</i>	Oel ke new kea tompati trray. <i>I want no rain tomorrow/I don't want rain tomorrow.</i>

ke'u	<i>nothing</i>	Oeru ke tsranten ke'u set. <i>Nothing matters to me now.</i>
ki	<i>but rather</i>	Oe ke lu 'evan ki fyeyntu. <i>I am not a boy but (rather) a man.</i>
vay set	<i>still/not yet</i>	Oe-l vay set ke tel kea ti'eyng-it. <i>I still haven't received an answer.</i>

If you know French, these constructions should be familiar: *ne...personne, ne...rien, etc.*

9.12 **Alu**

Alu is used to explain things further. It can mean *in other words, that is to say*, or to associate a person with another noun:

Oeyä tsmuke alu Neytiri lu kanu. *My sister (who is) Neytiri is smart.*

When two nouns are used with **alu**, only the noun preceding it takes a case ending:

Ngeyä 'eylanil alu Jake kolar oeti. *Your friend Jake taught me.*
Note that it's Jake, not Jake-l.

9.13 **Need To**

To say *X needs to Y* the form is **X-ru lu tikin a Y**. This concerns actions. If you need to say you need something then use the verb **kin**. Omitting X above makes the sentence impersonal:

Plants need light in order to live.
I need to leave.
There needs to be peace.

Ewill-il kin atan-it fte r<iv>ey.
Oe-ru lu tikin a hum.
Lu tikin a lu fpom.

9.14 **If, Then**

To form this type of statement use **txo...tsakrr**. The verb associated with the “if” part of the sentence takes the <iv> infix, the verb associated with the “then” part takes either <ay> or <iy>:

Txo nga k<iv>ä Zahatxum, tsakrr nga t<ay>erkup. *If you go to Z'ha'dum, you will die.*

9.15 **Feelings**

Use the expression **X-(i)l oeti sl<eyk>u** “feeling” to describe how something (X) makes you feel:

My friend makes me happy. **Oey 'eylan-il oeti sl<eyk>u nitram.**

9.16 As adj/adv as noun/pronoun

Use **nifxan...na** to create this comparison:

You are as smart as a rock!

I eat as quickly as you.

Nga lu nifxan kanu na tske!

Oe yom nifxan niwin na nga.

Chapter 10: Numbers

10.1 The Base Numbers

We begin with the numbers that form the foundation of the Na'vi numbering system:

Number	Na'vi	Remainder Form	Base Form
0	kew		
1	'aw	-aw	
2	<u>mune</u>	-mun	me-
3	pxey	-pey	pxe-
4	tsing	-sing	tsi-
5	mrr	-mrr	mrr-
6	<u>pukap</u>	-fu	pu-
7	<u>kinä</u>	-hin	ki-
8	vol		

Once you go higher than eight, you've run out of fingers so you reset your base number to **vol** and start using the combining forms:

<i>nine</i>	<u>volaw</u>	vol + aw	one 8 + 1
<i>twelve</i>	<u>vosing</u>	vol + sing	one 8 + 4

Tip: Drop the **l** on **vol** when the remainder begins with a consonant.

When you get to numbers bigger than *fifteen*, just give the number of bases and add the remainder, if there is one:

<i>sixteen</i>	<u>mevol</u>	me + vol	two 8s
47	<u>mrrvohin</u>	mrr + vol + hin	five 8s + 7

Language Note 10.1: The stress on these words is on the remainder form if there is one and on the base form otherwise. See above.

At this point I highly encourage you to write out the first 63 numbers and check them against the number chart in Taronyu's dictionary (See Epilogue).

Language Note 10.2: When using numbers as adjectives, the noun they describe does not get the plural prefix: **Mrr-a trr** *five days*, not *mrra (ay)srr*.

Language Note 10.3: For purely Terran things like phone numbers, we have **'eyt** *eight* and **nayn** *nine*. Never use these for normal counting.

10.2 Larger Numbers

This process basically repeats. So numbers up to 63 are done. Here are the other base numbers:

64	zam
512	vozam
4096	zazam

Examples:

$77 = 64 + 13 = 64 + 8 + 5 = 1 \text{ zam} + 1 \text{ vol} + 5 \rightarrow \text{zamvomrr}$

$777 = 512 + 4*64 + 8 + 1 = 1 \text{ vozam} + 4 \text{ zam} + 1 \text{ vol} + 1 \rightarrow \text{vozamtsizamvolaw}$

$10000 = 2 \text{ zazam} + 3 \text{ vozam} + 4 \text{ zam} + 2 \text{ vol} \rightarrow \text{mezazampxevozamtsizamevol}$

Tip: If you get a double m, delete one of them.

Going the other way is even easier, just break it up:

zamtsivosing = zam + tsivo + sing = $64 + 4*8 + 4 = 100$

By the way, if you want to say a number bigger than **kizazamkivozamkizamkivohin** you're currently out of luck.

10.3 Fractions

The fractions *(one) half* and *(one) third* have special words: **mawl** and **pan**, respectively. *Two thirds* can be obtained by combining **me+** with **pan** to form **mefan**. For other fractions, take the base form and combine it with **pxi** (keep the stress on **pxi**):

<i>one-fourth</i>	tsipxi
<i>one-eighth</i>	vopxi

For numerators that are not one, treat the fraction as a number and make the numerator an adjective:

<i>three-fifths</i>	pxey-a mrrpxi
---------------------	----------------------

10.4 Ordinal Numbers

In order to rank numbers (1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc) we have the ordinal suffix **-ve**. The forms are somewhat irregular:

Na'vi	Rank	Notes on Form	Na'vi	Rank	Notes on Form
'awve	<i>first</i>	long	vomuve	<i>tenth</i>	see 2 nd
muve	<i>second</i>	short	vopeyve	<i>eleventh</i>	remainder
pxeyve	<i>third</i>	long	vosive	<i>twelfth</i>	short remainder
tsive	<i>fourth</i>	base	vomrve	<i>thirteenth</i>	long
mrrve	<i>fifth</i>	long	vofuve	<i>fourteenth</i>	remainder
puve	<i>sixth</i>	base	vohive	<i>fifteenth</i>	short remainder
kive	<i>seventh</i>	base	mevolve	<i>sixteenth</i>	long
volve	<i>eighth</i>	long	mevolawve	<i>seventeenth</i>	see 9 th
volawve	<i>ninth</i>	remainder			

From this we can infer that the ordinal suffix cannot appear next to an n/ng (see short remainders). These are the confirmed ordinals, but the rules should extend to all numbers:

39th **tsivohive** (form like fifteenth)
 64th **zamve** (form like sixteenth)
 777th **vozamtsizamvolawve**

Language Note 10.4: To describe the number of times you do something, use the discrete time suffix **-lo** in conjunction with the number. So we have **'awlo** *once*, **melo** *twice*, and **pxelo** *thrice/three times*. To go higher, use the number as an adjective with the word **alo**: **alo amrr** *five times*, etc.

10.5 Pure Octal

Normal numbers (i.e. base 10) can be written in the octal system with the added script °. For writing purposes, we have the following conventions (compare with above):

<i>nine</i>	°11	39 th	°47ve
<i>twelve</i>	°14	64 th	°100ve
<i>sixteen</i>	°20	777 th <i>day</i>	°1411ve-a trr
27	°33	24 <i>days</i>	°30-a trr

This can also be used when writing clock times, just make sure when using ° that the number is always in octal, and that if you're using it as an adjective you still need the **-a-**.

10.5.1 Adding in Octal (Optional)

For those truly committed to the four-fingered counting system, here's a way to add numbers in octal without converting back and forth to base 10:

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
0	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	10
2	2	3	4	5	6	7	10	11
3	3	4	5	6	7	10	11	12
4	4	5	6	7	10	11	12	13
5	5	6	7	10	11	12	13	14
6	6	7	10	11	12	13	14	15
7	7	10	11	12	13	14	15	16

In order to add to numbers, find the first in the appropriate row and the second in the appropriate column (or vice versa as addition is commutative). Where they meet is the sum:

$${}^{\circ}5 + {}^{\circ}7 = {}^{\circ}14 \quad \text{column 5, row 7}$$

$${}^{\circ}24 + {}^{\circ}25 = {}^{\circ}51 \quad (\text{c5, r4}) \text{ to get } \underline{11}, \text{ carry the } \underline{1} \text{ over and add to } (\text{c2, r2}) \text{ to get } 5$$

$${}^{\circ}37 + {}^{\circ}63 = {}^{\circ}122 \quad (\text{c7, r2}) \text{ gives } \underline{12}, (\text{c6, r3}) \text{ gives } 11 \text{ plus carry over becomes } \underline{12}$$

If it helps, for the last two examples, write the numbers above each other and go about it like you do with regular addition, just use the table instead.

Epilogue

Learning a language is a journey, unique to each person. But if you are wondering where to go from here, I would suggest the following:

1. If you haven't done so already, become a learnnavi member, introduce yourself, and start exploring the posts in the forums.
2. Ftiafpi has audio clips of him pronouncing Na'vi words. I've tried to include as many of those words in this guide as I could. Download them and start listening: <http://forum.learnnavi.org/audio/spoken-na%27vi-words/>
3. Kaltxi Palulukan has created two fantastic activity books. They are available at <http://www.learnnavi.org/docs/Learn-Navi-Activity-Book.pdf> <http://www.learnnavi.org/docs/Navi%20Book%202--CPDF%20version.pdf>
4. Taronyu has created the most definitive dictionary, period. He updates it whenever we get new material, so check back every few days to make sure you have the current version: <http://forum.learnnavi.org/intermediate/my-dictionary/>. It's also on the main page.
5. Skawng has created several worksheets to practice Na'vi grammar. Many are in the activity book, but not all. Here's the link: <http://forum.learnnavi.org/intermediate/worksheets/>
6. Le'eylan has created many great lessons. Check them out at <http://forum.learnnavi.org/learning-resources/prezi-lessons/>
7. Dr. Frommer has a blog devoted to the language. Check it out at <http://naviteri.org/>
8. Here are the letter and accompanying audio from Dr. Frommer. Listen to the master speak: <http://forum.learnnavi.org/news-announcements/a-response-from-paul-frommer!/>
9. This guide may have been written by me, but the material is the result of thousands of posts and countless hours of debate and collaboration. The same goes for every project above and everything else you're likely to encounter that increases your knowledge of the language. We do these things for our love of Na'vi. So when you have a spare moment, give some karma to all the people who have worked to aid you in your journey.
10. Try to get others interested in the language. We all hope for the day when we can hear it walking down the street. 'Ivong Na'vi!

Kiyevame, ulte Eywa ngahu frakrr.

Appendix A: Stock Phrases

Na'vi	English
<u>Fitrr</u> lu <u>trrpeve</u> ?	<i>What day is it (today)?</i>
<u>Ftxozäri</u> aylrrtok <u>ngaru!</u>	<i>Happy Birthday! (or any celebration)</i>
<u>Fyape</u> fko syaw <u>ngar</u> ?	<i>What's your name?</i>
<u>Ngaru</u> lu <u>fpom</u> srak?	<i>How are you?</i>
<u>hìtxoa</u>	<i>pardon/excuse me</i>
<u>Hivahaw</u> <u>nimwey</u>	<i>Pleasant dreams</i>
<u>hrh</u>	<i>lol</i>
<u>Ke zene</u> win säpivi.	<i>Take your time.</i> In conversation, säpivi pronounced spivi .
<u>Ngaru</u> <u>tikxey</u>	<i>You're wrong</i>
<u>Ngaru</u> <u>tiyawr</u>	<i>You're right</i>
<u>Nga</u> <u>yawne</u> lu <u>oer</u>	<i>I love you</i>
<u>Ngari</u> solalew polpxaya zisit? <u>Solew</u> polpxay?	<i>How old are you?</i> Informal version
<u>ngaytxoa</u>	<i>sorry, my apologies</i>
<u>Ngenga</u> lu <u>tupe</u> ?	<i>Who are you?</i>
<u>Oeru</u> syaw fko <u>X</u>	<i>My name is X</i>
<u>Smon</u> <u>niprrte'</u>	<i>Nice to know you.</i>
<u>ti'efumì</u> <u>oeyä</u>	<i>in my opinion</i>
<u>ti'i'avay</u> <u>krä</u>	<i>forever, until the end of time</i>
<u>Tsali'uri</u> / <u>tsali'fyaviri</u> alu <u>X</u> , <u>ral</u> lu <u>'upe</u> ?	<i>What does the word/phrase X mean?</i>
<u>X-(i)ri</u> peral?	<i>What does X mean? (Informal)</i>
<u>X niNa'vi</u> (slu) <u>pele'u</u> ?	<i>What's X in Na'vi?</i>
<u>Xri</u> <u>nga-ru</u> <u>lrrtok</u>	<i>Good luck with X</i>
<u>Kea</u> <u>tikin</u>	<i>You're welcome (no need, no problem)</i>
<u>Niprrte'</u>	<i>You're welcome (gladly, with pleasure)</i>
<u>Oeru</u> <u>meuia</u>	<i>You're welcome (it was an honor)</i>
<u>Hayalo</u> <u>oeta</u>	<i>You're welcome (I'll reciprocate next time you help)</i>
<u>Pum</u> <u>ngeyä</u>	<i>You're welcome (I should really be thanking you)</i>
<u>Ke</u> <u>pxan</u>	<i>I don't deserve it, am not worthy (praise response)</i>
<u>Tstunwi</u>	<i>That's kind of you (praise response)</i>
<u>Ngaru</u> <u>tsulfä</u>	<i>When someone better at the activity praises you</i>
<u>Seykxel</u> si <u>nitram!</u>	<i>Congratulations!</i>