

# Creole Crash Course

## PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

Creole is written phonetically. Each letter is pronounced, and each word is spelled as it is pronounced. Creole has only been recognized as the official language of Haiti in the last few years. Therefore, there are many different ways in which the Haitians write and spell Creole words. There is an official standard that has been set, and this standard will be maintained in this publication. The following is a pronunciation guide using this standard; most of the sounds are French.

ch-share cache-to look for  
o-claw fo-strong  
e-aim ede-to aid, help  
ou-you ou-you  
e-leg mesi-thank you  
r-(not rolled) respire-to breathe  
g-go gen-to have  
I-see isit-here  
s-(always s) prese-in a hurry  
j-(avoid the d sound) jou-day  
y=yes pye-foot  
o-toe zo-bone

***Kouman ou ye?***  
**How are you?**

There are nasal sounds in Creole just as there are nasal sounds in French, which are pronounced partially through the nose, but without the "n" itself pronounced (a rare exception to the general pronunciation rule of pronouncing every letter). Some English equivalents which come close to the nasal sounds are as follows:

an-alms dan-tooth  
en-chopin pen-bread  
on-don't bon-good

- A. When a nasal sound is followed by another "n", or "m," the nasal sound is pronounced, then the "n" or "m" is pronounced separately.
  - B. If an accent is placed over the vowel, there is no nasal sound.
  - C. In never indicates a nasal sound.
- The letter c is only used in the ch combination.  
The letter k is used for the hard sound.  
The letter s is used for the soft sound.

**Bonjou!** - Good morning!  
**Bonswa!** - Good afternoon!/Evening! (used after 11 AM)  
**Kouman ou ye?** - How are you?  
**N'ap boule!** (most common greeting and response) - Good!  
**Wi** - Yes  
**yo** - they, them  
**Non** - No  
**Mesi** - Thanks  
**Anmwe!** - Help!  
**Non, mesi** - No, thanks  
**Souple** - Please  
**Merite** - You're welcome  
**Pa gen pwoblem** - No problem  
**Oke** - OK  
**Eskize mwen** - Excuse me  
**Mwen regret sa** - I'm sorry  
**Gen...** - There is/are...  
**Pa genyen!** - There is/are not any!  
**Mwen pa genyen!** - I don't have any!  
**Sekonsa!** - That's right!

**Piti piti** - A little bit  
**Anpil** - A lot  
**Gen anpil...** - There are a lot of...  
**Isit** - Here  
**La** - There  
**Tout bagay anfom?** - Is everything OK?  
**Pa kounye-a** - Not now  
**Toupatou** - Everywhere  
**Anyen** - Nothing  
**Preske** - Almost  
**Atansyon!** - Attention!/Watch out!  
**Prese prese!** - Hurry!  
**Dife!** - Fire!  
**Rete!** - Stop!  
**Kounye-a** - Now  
**Nou ap chache...** - We are looking for...  
**Souple, ban mwen...** - Please give me...  
**Separe sa ant nou** - Divide this among you  
**Ye** - Yesterday  
**Jodia** - Today

***Ki laj ou?***

How old are you?

***Kisa ou ap fè?***

What are you  
doing?

**Demen** - Tomorrow  
**Maten an** - This morning  
**Apremidi a** - This afternoon  
**Aswe a** - This evening  
**lendi** - Monday  
**madi** - Tuesday  
**mekredi** - Wednesday  
**jedi** - Thursday  
**vandredi** - Friday  
**samdi** - Saturday  
**dimanch** - Sunday  
**Ou byen?** - You OK?  
**Mwen pa two byen** - I'm not too well  
**Mwen malad** - I'm sick  
**Te gen yon aksidan** - There was an accident  
**Nou bezwen yon dokte/yon mis touswit** - We need a doctor/a nurse right now  
**Kote Iopital Ia?** - Where is the hospital?  
**Kote Ii ou fe mal?** - Where does it hurt you?  
**Li ansent** - She's pregnant  
**Mwen pa ka manje/domi** - I cannot eat/sleep

**Mwengendjare** - I have diarrhea  
**Mwen anvi vonmi** - I feel nauseated  
**Tout ko mwen cho** - My whole body is hot  
**Mwen toudi** - I'm dizzy  
**Nou bezwen pansman/koton** - We need bandages/cotton  
**Mwen bezwen yon bagay pi blese sa a** - I need something for this cut  
**Ou gen SIDA** - You have AIDS  
**Mwen grangou** - I'm hungry  
**Mwen swaf anpil** - I'm very thirsty  
**Nou ta vle manje** - We would like to eat  
**Konben** - How much?/How many?  
**Poukisa?** - Why?  
**Kote?** - Where?  
**Kisa?** - What?  
**Kile?** - When?  
**Ki moun?** - Who?  
**Kijan?** - How?  
**Kiles?** - Which?  
**Eske gen...?** - Is/Are there...?  
**Eske ou gen...?** - Do you have...?

***Mwen renmen sa!***

I like that!

***Mwen grangou.***

I'm hungry.

**Eske ou ka ede nou, souple?** - Can you help us please?

**Kote nou ka achte...?** - Where can we buy...?

**Eske ou ka di mwen...?** - Can you tell me...?

**montre** - show

**ban** - give

**Ki moun ki Ia?** - Who is there?

**Kisa ou vIe?** - What do you want?

**Kisa ou ta vIa?** - What would you like?

**Kisa ou ap fe Ia?** - What are you doing there?

**Kisa sa a ye?** - What is that?

**Sa k'genyen?** - What's the matter?

**Kisa pi nou fe?** - What must we do?

**Eske ou te we...?** - Have you seen...?

**Eske ou pale angle/franse?** - Do you speak English/French?

**Ki moun isit ki pale angle?** - Who speaks English here?

**Ou konprann?** - You understand?

**Kij an yo rele sa an kreyol?** - What do they call that in Creole?

**Kij an yo di...an kreyol?** - How do they say... in Creole?

**Kisa ou bezouen?** - What do you need?

**Kisa ki rive ou?** - What happened to you?

**Ki kote li ale?** - Where did he go?

**Kilaj ou?** - How old are you?

**Kote ou rete?** - Where do you live?

**Eske ou gen petit?** - Do you have any children?

**Kote nou ye?** - Where are we?

**genyen** - to have

**chita** - to sit

**manje** - to eat

**rete** - to stop

**kouri** - to run

**kouche** - to lie down

**vini** - to come

**ale/prale** - to go

**ban** - to give

**rete trankil** - to be quiet

**pran** - to get, receive

**leve** - to get up

**sede** - to give up

**touye** - to kill

**frape** - to hit

**kache** - to hide

**konnen** - to know

***Mwen swaf.***

**I'm thirsty.**

**manti** - to lie (not truth)  
**gade** - to look  
**koupe** - to cut  
**kwit-manje, fe-manje** - to cook  
**fimen** - to smoke  
**atake** - to attack  
**ban pemi** - to authorize  
**kri** - to shout, yell, scream  
**achte** - to buy  
**fe-apel** - to call, name  
**netwaye** - to clean  
**femen** - to close  
**fose** - to coerce, force  
**fini** - to finish

**obeyi** - to obey  
**fe** - konfyans - to trust  
**console** - to comfort  
**pati** - to leave, depart  
**mouri** - to die  
**fe-desen** - to draw, sketch  
**bwe** - to drink  
**tonbe** - to drop, fall  
**mete abo** - embark, load, board  
**atoure** - to surround  
**ranfose** - to enforce  
**ou** - you, your  
**mwen** - I, me, my, mine  
**nou** - us, our, you (plural)  
**Ii** - him, her, his, hers

***Ki kote twalèt la?***

Where is the  
bathroom?

***M ap aprann pale kreyol.***

*I am learning to speak Creole.*

***Bon travay avek kreyol ou.***

*Good job with your Creole.*