

Volapük Grammatical Forms

Collated from "An Introduction to Volapük" by Ed Robertson,
the ten-lesson postal course by Ralph Midgley,
and Volapük and English dictionaries.

Material applies to modern Volapük as revised by Arie de Jong.

This reference is not intended to be a complete description of Volapük grammar.

Please send any corrections or additions to bartlett at panix.com.

CASES

- (S) Nominative
- A(S) Genitive
- E(S) Dative
- I(S) Accusative
- U(S) Predicative
- O Vocative particle

PERSONAL PRONOUNS

- ob / obs** I / we
- ol / ols** you (1 person) / you (more than 1 person)
- om / oms** he / they (all males)
- of / ofs** she / they (all females)
- on / ons** it / they (neuter or mixed gender)
- ok / oks** (reflexive)
- od / ods** (reciprocativ)
- oy** "one"
- os** (impersonal {null subject})

- or / ors** "polite" forms of *ol* and *ols*
(hardly ever used except poetically)

Part of Arie de Jong's official modern grammar, but never used are **og** (you or me) and **ogs** (you and me / you and us).

Some other pronouns are: **atos** (this), **etos** (that), **it** (itself), **ot** (the same thing), **ut** (whoever), **kel**, **kelos** (who/which: relative, not question), **kin** (who?), **kif** (who? female), **kim** (who? male), **kis**

(what?), **ek** (somebody), **nek** (nobody), **bos** (something), **nos** (nothing), **valikos** (all, everything), **öm** (several, some), **öman** (someone, such a one, such person), **al** (each, every).

VERB FORMS

- P()**- Passive (PA- for present tense)
- E-** Present Perfect
- Ä-** Imperfect
- I-** Pluperfect
- O-** Future
- U-** Future Perfect
- Ö-** Future in the Past
- Ü-** Future in the Past Perfect
- ÖN** Infinitive
- ÖD** Imperative (added after personal ending)
- ÖS** Optative (added after personal ending)
- ÖV** Conditional (added after personal ending)
- ÖL** Participle (verbal adjective)
- LA** Subjunctive (appended with hyphen)

Whether a verb is naturally transitive or intransitive varies from one word to the next. Transitive verbs can be made intransitive by inserting the affix **-ik**, and intransitive verbs made transitive by the use of the affix **-ük**.

The affix **-ik** can be used with intransitive verbs, and **-ük** with verbs that are normally transitive. In these cases, they provide a kind of medial voice or causative voice respectively.

AFFIXES

- | | |
|---|---|
| BE- (make indirect object the direct object) | -AF names of animals |
| DÄ- broken into pieces | -AG abundance |
| DEI- until death | -AM verbal noun |
| DO- downward motion | -AN someone who is or does something |
| DU- movement through | -AT amount of |
| FA- absence | -AV science |
| FE- complete consumption | -ÄB recipient of, victim |
| FI- to the end; completion | -ÄD generalisation of effect |
| FÄI- shut | -ÄN country |

HI- male	-ÄT abstraction
JI- female	-ED particularisation
LA- raising up	-EF group of people
KE- together	-EL maker of
LÄX- ex-; emeritus	-EM group of things
LE- size (physical or abstract); ancestry (e.g., grandparent)	-EP plant
LU- disparagement; step relationship	-ER content(s)
LÜ- in-law	-ET consequential or concrete example
NE- opposite	-IÄL tendency, inclination
NI- interior object	-IÄR container
NÜ- movement into	-IL diminutive
PLÖ- exterior object	-IM philosophy
RU- primitive, ancient	-OD softer or less serious example
SÄ- remission	-OT harder or more serious example
	-OV possibility
	-ÖF quality
	-ÖP place
	-ÖM equipment
	-ÜD compass point
	-ÜL young of; endearment
	--LI (with hyphen) interrogative, appended to verb

ADJECTIVES

The comparative and superlative of adjectives is formed by adding **-um** or **-ün** respectively after the **-ik** and before any case or number agreement. The prepositions used with the comparative and superlative degrees are **ka** and **se** respectively.

INTERJECTIONS

The other parts of speech are prepositions, conjunctions, and interjections. These can exist as roots in themselves, with no particular ending.

Ag! Ooh!	Fi! Nonsense!	Yöbö! Ha!
Ha! Aha!	He! Hey!	Adyö! Bye!
O! O!	Ö! Wow!	Yö! Hurrah!

Nö! O no! **Si!** O yes! **Ekö!** Look!, Here is/are
Sö! I say!

Any other suitable words can also be made into interjections simply by adding the final vowel **-ö**. For example:

Danö! Thanks! **Seilö!** Shut up!
Fümö! Of course! **Spidö!** Get a move on!
Liedö! Dear me! **Stopö!** Halt!
Prüdö! Look out! **Zedö!** Make way!

CONJUNCTIONS

Ab but	Asa, Asä as, as well as	Zu, Zuo moreover
Bi because	Ibä for, because	Üf even if, in case of, insofar as
Do though	Das that	U(d){...u(d)} {either...}or
Du while	Toä yet (despite)	Ni{..Ni} neither {...nor}
E(d) and	Too yet (however), nevertheless	Klu so
If if	Va whether	Ka than
Ü(d) or (Latin <i>sive</i>)	Ven when	Dat so that
Äsi such as	Ä and*	

(*This conjunction is sometimes used with multiple adjectives modifying the same substantive.)

Any other suitable words can also be made into conjunctions simply by adding the final vowel **-ä**. For example:

Bisä provided that **Kodä** by reason of which
Büä before **Pasä** only when
Güä on the other hand **Toä** despite, in spite of

PREPOSITIONS

Da through **Me** by means of **Ma** according to **Pro** for

De of/from/off	Nen without	Nen without	Ad for, to, in order to
Dis under	Ko with	Po behind (place)	Za, Zao about
Fa by (person)	Bü before (time); ago	Vü between, among	Pos after
Fo in front of	Su on	In in	Se out (of), from
Ini into	Sus above	Ta against	As, Äs as
Tö at, in	Lä by (position), with	Du during	Len at, on
Pö at	Bevü between, among	Binü (made) of	Ve along
Sis since	To in spite of	Sa together with	Plas instead (of)
Ünü within (a time)	Dö about, in	Lü to (= direction)	Tü at, on (= time)
Jü up to	Gü contrary to	Ün at, in, on (time)	Love over
Pla besides	Bai according to		

Some prepositions can take an ending **-i** to show motion.

Any other suitable words can also be made prepositions by the simple addition of **-ü**. For example:

Demü with regard to	Nilü near to	Donü below
Domü at the house of	Binü made of	Travärü across
Gönü in favour of	Labü comprising	Vätälü (+ noun) considering
Nemü in the name of	Kodü because of	Vegü on the way to
Tefü concerning, with regard to		

VARIOUS ADVERBS (derived adverbs ordinarily end in **-o**)

Ai always	Us there	Vio how (relative)	Tu too (excessively)
Ba perhaps	Ya already	Löpo above	Anu at this moment, now
I(d) also	Ye however	Ti almost	Go quite, very
Is here	Nu now	Nog yet (still)	Ga certainly, indeed

Mu extremely	Kö where (relative)	Neai never	Jünü up to now
Plu more	Kü when (relative)	Sevabo namely, that is	Igo even
Te only	Lio how (question)	Täno then	Igo no not even
Enu recently	Zu in addition, moreover	Ebo just	Sosus as soon as
Suno soon	Alna each time	Ömna sometimes	

The questions *where?* and *when?* are **kiöpo?** and **kiüpo?** respectively. These are formed from **ki-** then the affix of place or time respectively (**-öp-** or **-üp-**), then the adverb ending.

As for the *whence?* (= from where?) and the *whither?* (= to where?), these two adverbs are expressed in Volapük simply and logically by the endings **-AO** = from where? and **-IO** = to where? as in: **domao** = from the house, and **domio** = to the house

NUMERICS

Numbers follow their noun.

bal 1	degbal 11	teldegbal 21	foldeg 40
tel 2	degtel 12	teldegtel 22	luldeg 50
kil 3	degkil 13	teldegkil 23	mäldeg 60
fol 4		teldegfol 24	veldeg 70
lul 5		teldeglul 25	jöldeg 80
mäl 6		teldegmäl 26	züldeg 90
vel 7		teldegvel 27	tum 100
jöl 8		teldegjöl 28	mil 1000
zül 9		teldegzül 29	balion 1 000 000 (10 ⁶)
deg 10	teldeg 20	kildeg 30	telion 10 ¹²
			kilion 10 ¹⁸
			etc.

teltumkildegfolmil lultummäldegvel

234 567

folbalion jöltumveldegmälmil kiltumteldegzül

4 876 329

dim	0,1
zim	0,01
mim	0,001
dimmim	0,0001
zimmim	0,00001
balyim	0,000001

The fractional part should be read as if an integer number, followed by the decimal fraction word to give the order of magnitude. Thus:

0,345 = **kiltumfoldeglul mim**

0,123456 = **tumteldegkilmil foltumluldegmäl balyim**

For smaller magnitudes **telyim** (10^{-12}), **kilyim** (10^{-18}) etc. are formed in the same way as their high magnitude counterparts *telion*, *kilion*, etc.

Ordinal numerals are formed by the suffix **-id**;

Fractional numerals are formed by the suffix **-dil**;

Repetition or multiplication is expressed by the suffix **-na**.

CALENDAR

Monday	mudel	January	janul	August	gustul
Tuesday	tudel	February	febul	September	setul
Wednesday	vedel	March	mäzul	October	tobul
Thursday	dödel	April	prilul	November	novul
Friday	fridel	May	mayul	December	dekul
Saturday	zädel	June	yunul		
Sunday	sudel	July	yulul		

TIME

binos minuts deg pos düp balid = It's 1.10

binos foldil pos düp balid = It's 1.15

binos düpalaf pos bal = It's 1.30

binos minuts teldeg bü düp telid = It's 1.40

binos foldil bü tel = It's 1.45

binos sekuns kildeg bü düp tel = It's thirty seconds to two o' clock

As you will see, the system is very flexible. There's a long way round (**pos/bü düp balid**) or a short

way round (**pos/bü bal**) depending on your preference. To express *a.m.* simply say **göda** = of the morning; to express *p.m.* say **poszedelo** = after the middle of the day. The continental system works just as well, and saves a word or two. Thus *15.35* is **Binos minuts teldeglul bü düp degmäl**. Again, use whatever suits you best!

Question: DÜP KINID BINOS-LI?

[END]