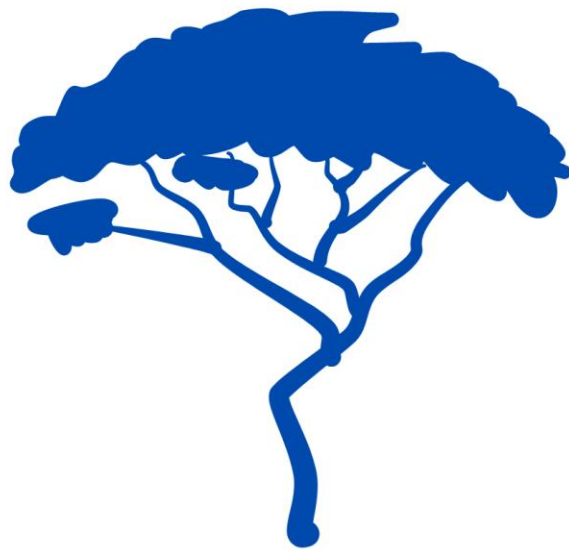


# Swahili Essentials



***Introduction and basics to get by***

*compiled by Santai Kimakeke*

## Introduction to Swahili Language

Swahili (also known as Kiswahili) is a language native to East Africa primarily Tanzania, Kenya and the neighboring countries. There are different dialects of Swahili with noticeable differences in spelling, grammar and phonetics between the different regions. Historically Swahili was born out of a need for a common language between the native local languages of the Bantu along the coast of East Africa and pioneering traders from Arabia, Middle East and some Portuguese, English as well as German. If you are familiar with Arabic then some Swahili words will sound very similar and have similar meaning. Presently it is estimated to be more than 100 million Swahili speakers in the world.

It is considered an easy language to learn and beautiful to speak and understand when spoken.

### Pronunciation

Swahili pronunciation is fairly easy. You'll learn in this lesson how syllables are constructed in Swahili and how to pronounce them. We'll start our lesson with vowels – the most important building blocks of most Swahili syllables.

Vowels are called “vokali ” in Swahili. They are, **a, e, i, o, u** - just as in English, but pronounced a little differently.

In every Swahili word the vowels make exactly the same sounds – no exception whatsoever! It's important to note that Swahili is a phonetic language, which means each letter is pronounced consistently and there are no silent letters. Therefore, once you know the vowel sounds, you can pronounce any word in Swahili by sounding out each letter. Here is the breakdown of the pronunciations;

### Vowels/ Vokali

Vowel		pronunciation	
a	–	<i>ah</i>	like the a in father
e	-	<i>eh</i>	like the e sound in yet
i	-	<i>ee</i>	like the i syllable in idiot
o	-	<i>oh</i>	like the o sound in go
u	-	<i>oo</i>	like the oo sound in good

## Body parts / Viungo vya mwili

Mouth: *mdomo*

Nose: *pua*

Tongue: *ulimi*

Teeth: *meno*

Ear: *Sikio*

Eye: *jicho*

Face: *uso*

Head: *kichwa*

Neck: *shingo*

Arm: *mkono*

Shoulder: *bega*

Chest: *kifua*

Back: *mgongo*

Fingers: *vidole*

Feet: *nyayo*

Hair: *nywele*

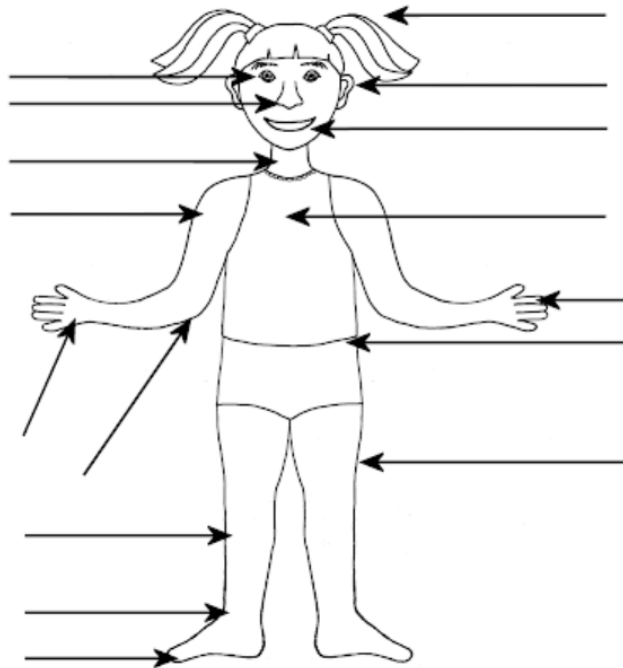
Hand: *mkono*

Heart: *moyo*

Leg: *mguu*


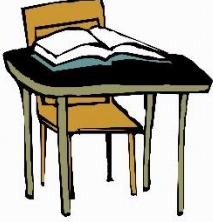

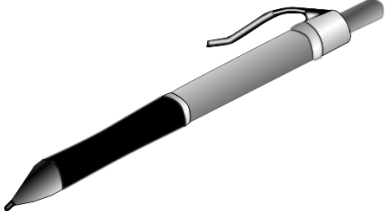
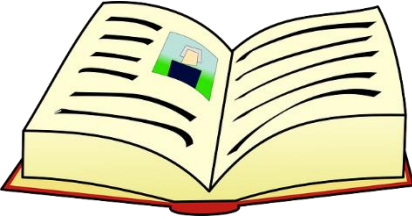
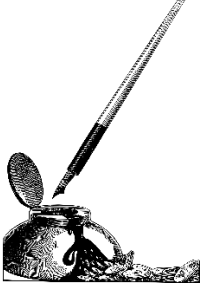
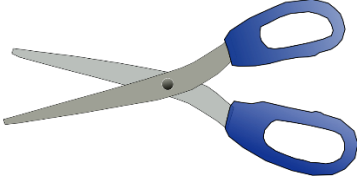

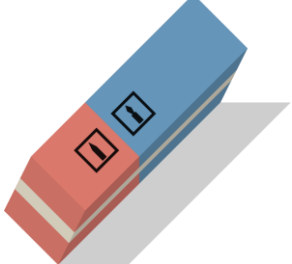
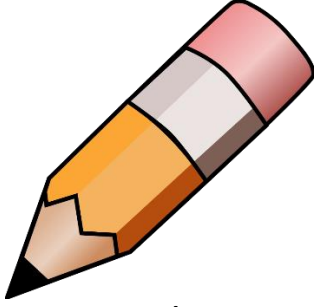


Stomach: *tumbo*

FILL IN THE BODY PARTS IN SWAHILI THEN READ  
OUT LOUD



SHULENI / SCHOOL

**FILL IN THE MISSING LETTERS IN EACH ITEM THEN READ OUT LOUD THE SWAHILI NAME**

 <p>___ / BASI</p>	 <p>___ / DAWATI</p>	 <p>T___R / MWALIMU</p>
 <p>___ / KALAMU</p>	 <p>___ / KITABU</p>	 <p>I___ / WINO</p>
 <p>SC__S_RS / MAKASI</p>	 <p>C___K / SAA</p>	 <p>E___E_ / KIFUTIO</p>
 <p>P__C__ / PENSELI</p>	 <p>___ / RAMANI</p>	 <p>SC___L B_G / MFUKO</p>

Examples in Sentences: School / Shuleni

Swahili	English
Basi letu la shule ni ya Manjano	Our school bus is yellow in color
Kila darasa ina dawati ishirini	Each class has twenty desks
Mwalimu wetu anaitwa Juma	Our teachers' name is Juma
Yeye hutumia kalamu nyeusi kuandika	She/he uses a black pen to write
Mamangu alininunulia kitabu kipya	My mom bought me a new book
Jana, wino ilimwagikia dawati langu	Yesterday, ink spilt on my desk
Mwalimu wetu alituambia tusikimbie tukiwa na makasi	Our teacher told us not to run while holding scissors
Kuna saa katika kila darasa	There is a clock in each classroom
Nikifanya makosa, mimi hutumia kifutio kufuta yale makosa	When I make a mistake, I use an eraser to clear the error
Niko na penseli tatu	I have three pencils
Sijui nchi yetu iko wapi kwenye ramani	I don't know where our country is on the map
Katika mfuko wangu kuna vitabu, penseli na kifutio	In my backpack there is are books, pencils and an eraser

## Common Swahili words when travelling

1. Where is...?	Wapi...?
2. I want...	Ninahitaji...
3. Excuse me, where is the bathroom?	Samahani, choo kiko wapi?
4. What is this?	Hii ni nini?
5. How do you say... in Swahili?	Unasemaje... kwa Kiswahili?
6. Do you speak English?	Je, unaelewa Kiingereza?
7. I don't speak Swahili	Sielewi Kiswahili
8. Where can I find a bank?	Ni wapi naweza kupata benki?
9. Do you accept credit cards?	Mnakubali kadi za benki?
10. Can I pay in cash?	Je, naweza kulipa kwa pesa taslimu?
11. What is the weather like?	Hali ya hewa ni vipi?
12. It's sunny	Kuna jua
13. It's rainy	Kunanyesha
14. It's cloudy	Kuna mawingu
15. It's hot	Kuna joto
16. It's cold	Kuna baridi
17. It's windy	Kuna upepo
18. It's snowing	Kuna theluji
19. It's foggy	Kuna ukungu
20. It's humid	Kuna unyevu
21. It's dry	Kuna ukavu
22. Can you recommend a good restaurant?	Ni mkahawa mgani utakayonipendekezea?
23. I would like to order...	Ningependa kuagiza...
24. Please bring the bill	Please bring the bill
25. This is very delicious	Hii ni tamu sana

If you have any specific questions regarding this resource, please email me at [santai@teachersandcoaches.com](mailto:santai@teachersandcoaches.com)

Asante sana – Thank you very much!