

Hawaiian Language

The Hawaiian language is a beautiful gentle and melodic language that flows smoothly off the tongue. Most Polynesian languages share the same roots, and many have common words. Today, Hawaiian is spoken as an every day language only on the Island of Ni'ihau.

The Hawaiian Language has only twelve letters. Five vowels: **A, E, I, O, U** as well as seven consonants: **H, K, L, M, N, P** and **W**. The consonants are pronounced the same as in the English language with the exception of the **W**. It is pronounced as a **V** if it is in the middle of a word and comes after **E** or **I**.

A feature you will encounter in the Hawaiian words are diphthongs where two letters glide together. They are ae, ai, ao, au, ei, eu, oi, and ou. Unlike many English diphthongs, the second vowel is always pronounced. Example: heiau (hey-ee-ow). Heiau means Hawaiian temple.

Here are some popular words that you would probably hear on a trip to the Islands:

Ali'i (ah-LEE-ee): A Hawaiian Chief
Aloha (ah-LOW-ha): Hello, goodbye, or a feeling or spirit of love, affection, or kindness
Hale (HAH-leh): House or building
Hano Hou (ha-nah-HO): To do it again.
Haole (HOW-leh): Originally foreigner, now means Caucasian
Hula (HOO-lah): The story-telling dance of Hawaii
Imu (EE-moo): An underground oven
Kai (kigh): The sea
Kama'aina (kah-ma-EYE-na): Long time Hawaii resident
Kane (KAH-neh): Boy or man
Keiki (KAY-key): Child or children
Kona (KOH-nah): Leeward side of the island; wind blowing from the south, southwest direction
Lanai (lah-NIGH): Porch, veranda, patio
Lei (lay): Necklace of flowers, shells, or feathers. The lehua blossom lei is the lei of the Big Island
Lomi (LOW-mee): To rub or massage
Lu'au (LOO-ow): Hawaiian feast; literally means taro leaves
Mahalo (mah-HAH-low): Thank you
Makai (mah-KIGH): Toward the sea
Malihini (mah-lee-HEE-nee): Newcomer, guest, visitor
Mauka (MOW-ka): Toward the mountain
Nui (NEW-ee): Big, important, great
Ohana (oh-HAH-nah): Family
Okole (oh-KOH-leh): Derriere, rear-end
Ono (OH-no): Delicious, the best
Poi (poy): Pounded taro root that forms a paste
Pupu (poo-POO): Appetizer, snack, or finger food
Wahine (vah-HEE-neh): Woman
Wikiwiki (wee-kee-wee-kee): To hurry up, very quick

More:

<http://www.alohafriendsluau.com/words.html>

Pomaika`i
Good Luck!