

Vowel contraction and deletion with personal prefixes

☞ The Karuk language doesn't like two different vowels right next to each other. What happens instead?

Adding prefixes to beginning of words that start with consonants: no vowel changes

1. *nan_i + chishiih = nan_ich_ishiih* 'my dog'
2. *n_i + máahva = n_imáahva* 'I visit (him/her)'
3. *m_u + chishiih = m_uch_ishiih* 'his/her dog'
4. *n_u + máahva = n_umáahva* 'I visit you'
5. *n_a + máahva = n_amaahva* 'he/she visits me'
6. *n_a + xúriha = n_axúriha* 'I'm hungry'

Adding prefixes to beginning of words that start with vowels: vowel is deleted

7. *nan_i + ishpu_k = nan_ish_puk* 'my money'
8. *n_i + imúustih = n_imuustih* 'I'm looking at (it)'
9. *nan_i + ápsiih = nan_ip_siih* 'my leg'
10. *n_i + astúukha = n_ishtuukha* 'I sweat'
11. *m_u + ishpu_k = m_us_puk* 'his/her money'
12. *n_u + imúustih = n_umuustih* 'I'm looking at you'
13. *m_u + ápsiih = m_up_siih* 'his/her leg'
14. *u + astúukha = ústuukha* 'he/she sweats'

Adding prefixes to beginning of words that start with vowels: vowels are contracted

15. *n_a + imúustih = néemuustih* 'you're looking at me'
16. *n_a + ikvúrish = neekvúrish* 'I'm tired'

Guidelines to remember

- If prefix ends in *i* or *u*, delete the vowel on the word you're attaching the prefix to

$i + i = i$

$u + i = u$

$i + u = i$

$u + u = u$

$i + a = i$

$u + a = u$

- If prefix ends in *a*, the two vowels contract into one long vowel

$a + i = ee$

$a + u = oo$

$a + a = aa$

Practice A

1. *nani* + *táat* = _____ 'my mother'
2. *mi* + *yukúkuh* = _____ 'your shoe'
3. *nani* + *ishvaak* = _____ 'my chin'
4. *mu* + *ishvaak* = _____ 'his/her chin'
5. *mi* + *ithvuy* = _____ 'your name'
6. *nani* + *átraax* = _____ 'my arm'
7. *mu* + *átraax* = _____ 'his/her arm'
8. *mi* + *axvâah* = _____ 'your head'
9. *ni* + *ikrîish* = _____ 'I sit'
10. *u* + *ikrîish* = _____ 'he/she sits'
11. *mi* + *astúukha* = _____ 'you sweat'
12. *ni* + *ikrûuntih* = _____ 'I'm waiting (for him/her)'
13. *nu* + *ikrûuntih* = _____ 'I'm waiting for you'
14. *na* + *ikrûuntih* = _____ 'you're waiting for me'
15. *na* + *ixvíipha* = _____ 'I'm angry'

Answer key A

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|------------------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. <i>nani</i> + <i>táat</i> = | <i>nanítaat</i> | 'my mother' |
| 2. <i>mi</i> + <i>yukúkukuh</i> = | <i>miyukúkukuh</i> | 'your shoe' |
| 3. <i>nani</i> + <i>ishvaak</i> = | <i>naníshvaak</i> | 'my chin' |
| 4. <i>mu</i> + <i>ishvaak</i> = | <i>múshvaak</i> | 'his/her chin' |
| 5. <i>mi</i> + <i>ithvuy</i> = | <i>míthvuy</i> | 'your name' |
| 6. <i>nani</i> + <i>átraax</i> = | <i>nanítraax</i> | 'my arm' |
| 7. <i>mu</i> + <i>átraax</i> = | <i>mútraax</i> | 'his/her arm' |
| 8. <i>mi</i> + <i>axvâah</i> = | <i>mixvâah</i> | 'your head' |
| 9. <i>ni</i> + <i>ikrîish</i> = | <i>nigrîish</i> | 'I sit' |
| 10. <i>u</i> + <i>ikrîish</i> = | <i>ukrîish</i> | 'he/she sits' |
| 11. <i>mi</i> + <i>astúukha</i> = | <i>místuukha</i> | 'you sweat' |
| 12. <i>ni</i> + <i>ikrûuntih</i> = | <i>nigrûuntih</i> | 'I'm waiting (for him/her)' |
| 13. <i>nu</i> + <i>ikrûuntih</i> = | <i>nukrûuntih</i> | 'I'm waiting for you' |
| 14. <i>na</i> + <i>ikrûuntih</i> = | <i>neekrûuntih</i> | 'you're waiting for me' |
| 15. <i>na</i> + <i>ixvíipha</i> = | <i>néexvíipha</i> | 'I'm angry' |

- Note: Compounds in which two vowels come together work exactly the same as the prefixes shown here. *ta=* and *pa=* work similarly but have some complications so are not included here.

Words that don't contract

☞ **Some words that start with a vowel don't contract or lose their vowel when a prefix that ends with a vowel is attached. Why not?**

- All words that start with vowels are pronounced with a glottal stop at the beginning when nothing comes before them
- Some of these words keep the glottal stop when prefixes are added

Adding prefixes to beginning of words that keep a glottal stop: no vowel changes

1. *nani* + *ákah* = *nani'ákah* 'my father'
2. *ni* + *ish* = *ni'ish* 'I am drinking'
3. *ni* + *uum* = *ni'uum* 'I arrived (there)'
4. *mu* + *ákah* = *nani'ákah* 'his/her father'
5. *u* + *ish* = *u'ish* 'he's drinking'
6. *u* + *uum* = *u'uum* 'he/she arrived (there)'
7. *na* + *áathva* = *na'aathva* 'I'm scared'

Some more words that keep the glottal stop

- *áhoo* 'go, walk, arrive'
- *áhup* 'stick, wood'
- *áama* 'salmon'
- *áv* 'eat'
- *ávan* 'husband'
- *áxaska* 'be thin, get thin'
- *áy* 'be afraid of'
- *ípaha* 'tree'

☞ **Words that keep the glottal stop are not written any differently. How can you tell if a word that starts with a vowel keeps the glottal stop or not?**

- See how an elder pronounces it
- Check in William Bright's *Karok Language* for how the word was pronounced in the past

Practice B

Note: In this practice set, there are both words that keep the glottal stop and words that don't.

1. *ni* + *áy* = _____ 'I'm afraid (of it)'
2. *nu* + *ikrîish* = _____ 'we sit'
3. *ni* + *áhoo* = _____ 'I arrived'
4. *nani* + *ithvuy* = _____ 'my name'
5. *nani* + *axvâah* = _____ 'my head'
6. *mu* + *áama* = _____ 'his/her salmon'
7. *mi* + *ishvaak* = _____ 'your chin'
8. *mu* + *ípaha* = _____ 'his/her tree'
9. *mi* + *áhup* = _____ 'your wood'
10. *mi* + *átraax* = _____ 'your arm'
11. *nu* + *astúukha* = _____ 'we sweat'
12. *nu* + *áv* = _____ 'we eat'
13. *na* + *áxaska* = _____ 'I'm getting thin'
14. *na* + *ikrûuntih* = _____ 'he/she is waiting for me'
15. *u* + *áathva* = _____ 'he/she is scared'

Answer key B

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|-----------------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. <i>ni + áy =</i> | <i>ni'áy</i> | 'I'm afraid (of it)' |
| 2. <i>nu + ikrûish =</i> | <i>nukrûish</i> | 'we sit' |
| 3. <i>ni + áhoo =</i> | <i>ni'áhoo</i> | 'I arrived' |
| 4. <i>nani + ithvuy =</i> | <i>naníthvuy</i> | 'my name' |
| 5. <i>nani + axvâah =</i> | <i>nanixvâah</i> | 'my head' |
| 6. <i>mu + áama =</i> | <i>mú'aama</i> | 'his/her salmon' |
| 7. <i>mi + ishvaak =</i> | <i>míshvaak</i> | 'your chin' |
| 8. <i>mu + ípaha =</i> | <i>mu'ípaha</i> | 'his/her tree' |
| 9. <i>mi + áhup =</i> | <i>mi'áhup</i> | 'your wood' |
| 10. <i>mi + átraax =</i> | <i>mítraax</i> | 'your arm' |
| 11. <i>nu + astúukha =</i> | <i>nústuukha</i> | 'we sweat' |
| 12. <i>nu + áv =</i> | <i>nu'áv</i> | 'we eat' |
| 13. <i>na + áxaska =</i> | <i>na'áxaska</i> | 'I'm getting thin' |
| 14. <i>na + ikrûuntih =</i> | <i>neekrûuntih</i> | 'he/she is waiting for me' |
| 15. <i>u + áathva =</i> | <i>u'áathva</i> | 'he/she is scared' |