

Haitian Creole – English Dictionary

with
Basic English – Haitian Creole Appendix

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and
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Introduction

A variety of glossaries of Haitian Creole have been published either as appendices to descriptions of Haitian Creole or as booklets. As far as full-fledged Haitian Creole-English dictionaries are concerned, only one has been published and it is now more than ten years old. It is the compilers' hope that this new dictionary will go a long way toward filling the vacuum existing in modern Creole lexicography.

Innovations

The following new features have been incorporated in this Haitian Creole-English dictionary.

1. The definite article that usually accompanies a noun is indicated. We urge the user to take note of the definite article singular (*a*, *la*, *an* or *lan*) which is shown for each noun. ***Lan*** has one variant: ***nan***.
2. Most English words that are of the same origin as Creole words are marked with an asterisk (*). This feature will help users to recognize more easily Creole words that are identical or close to their English counterparts.
3. An English translation is supplied for the numerous Creole sentences that serve as examples. In addition to the regular examples, selected literary illustrations are provided. These are sentences taken from eighteen selected works of Creole literature (novels, plays, poetry, religious writings, etc.).

The following is a list of the reference codes assigned to these works in this dictionary, followed by the names of the authors, the titles in italics, and the year of publication:

BEAUBRUN/A.....	Beaubrun, Théodore, <i>Anna</i> (1962)
BEAUBRUN/L.....	Beaubrun, Théodore, <i>La Haine au Service de l'Amour</i> (1963)
CELESTIN-MEGIE/1.....	Célestin-Mégie, Emile, <i>Lanmou pa gin Baryè, part I</i> (1984, Second Edition)
CELESTIN-MEGIE/2.....	Célestin-Mégie, Emile, <i>Lanmou pa gin Baryè, part II</i> (1977)
CELESTIN-MEGIE/3.....	Célestin-Mégie, Emile, <i>Lanmou pa gin Baryè, part III</i> (1981)

DEJEAN.....	Déjean, Yves & Paul, <i>Evangile Dimanche ac Fêtt</i> (1962)
FARDIN.....	Fardin, Dieudonné, <i>Sept Fleurs Soleil</i> (1963)
FRANKETIENNE/B.....	Franketienne, <i>Bobomasouri</i> (1984)
FRANKETIENNE/D.....	Franketienne, <i>Dézafi</i> (1975)
FRANKETIENNE/P.....	Franketienne, <i>Pèlin-Tèt</i> (1978)
FRANKETIENNE/T.....	Franketienne, <i>Troufoban</i> (1978)
MORISSEAU-LEROY/A.....	Morisseau-Leroy, Félix, <i>Antigone</i> (1953)
MORISSEAU-LEROY/D.....	Morisseau-Leroy, Félix, <i>Diacoute</i> (1953)
ONEC/N.....	Onc, <i>N'ap Li</i> (1964)
PARISOT.....	Parisot, Rév. J., <i>L'Evangile chaque Dimanche</i> (1960)
PAURIS.....	Jean-Baptiste, Pauris, <i>Nan Lonbray Inosans</i> (1985)
PRESSOIR.....	Pressoir, Charles Fernand, <i>Sèt Poèm ki sèt nan Mòn</i> (1954)
SYLVAIN.....	Sylvain, Georges, <i>Cric? Crac?</i> (1901)

Alphabetical Order

The alphabetical order for the Haitian Creole and the arrangement of the dictionary is:

A B Ch D E F G H I J K L M N O P R S T U V W Y Z

Headwords and Variants

Because the process of standardization of Haitian Creole is not complete, many headwords have several variants, and often the compilers have had to decide which ones to choose.

Superscript numbers (^{1 2 3}) placed next to certain successive headwords indicate that they are homonyms or simply the same word in different contexts or grammatical roles.

Parts of speech

Abbreviations used to indicate the parts of speech will be found in the list of abbreviations which immediately precedes the entries of the letter “A”. Only two observations are necessary.

a) French and Creole dictionaries designate some verbs as pronominal verbs (abbreviation: *vpr*). The user of this dictionary should remember that *vpr* stands for *vèb pronominal* (pronominal verb).

b) Creole uses as descriptive adjectives many of the French descriptive adjectives and has created others which are easily identifiable. But in Creole a great number of other words or groups of words are treated as descriptive adjectives by commonly being used with an attributive function. In the present state of research, one cannot always tell with absolute certainty those Creole words used as attributives, which are purely descriptive adjectives, and those which are not. For instance, Félix Morisseau-Leroy wrote in his play *Antigone*, *Gan chèf ki chèf pase chèf* (*There are chiefs who are more chief than other chiefs*). Evidently, while the word *chèf* in the middle is attributive, it is not a descriptive adjective but a noun. However, not all cases are as clear-cut as this one. More research on Creole’s descriptive adjectives is necessary. In the meantime, we borrow from a predecessor the designation *attrib* for both descriptive adjectives and closely related words used as attributives.

Single and compound words

While single words will be easy to find in any Creole dictionary, it is a different matter when it comes to compound words. The difficulty lies with the fact that some concepts which are expressed in French by compound words (*arc-en-ciel* = *rainbow*) or by groups of words (*mal de tête* = *headache*) become a single word in Creole (*lakansyèl*, *maltèt*). There is a general tendency for writers to put together as one word in Creole all of these groups of French words that form one single concept or one tightly connected expression, but the process is still on-going. What one author writes as one word, another still considers as two. Sometimes the same author connects or disconnects the parts of a compound word or of an expression according to the inspiration of the moment. For instance, the great innovator Franketienne wrote the following sentences. In his play, *Pèlin-Tèt*: *Ou konn gou dyòl ou. Ou pa tap janm ale lan you estasyon soulèzèl*. In his novel, *Dézafi*: *Sou lèzèl, nou ravitaye lan pousyè nan labou anba solèy anba lapli*. In the play, he wrote *soulèzèl* as one word; in the novel, as two. Until Creole becomes fully standardized, each lexicographer will have to make choices.

Other Features

- a) In the cases when we use the (') sign between single letter personal pronouns and the following or preceding word (e.g., *M'a wè'l* = *I'll see him*), other authors use a hyphen (-) or no sign at all.
- b) We have used the Creole spelling **Vodou** in the English definitions in place of the English word *voodoo*, because we are referring to the Vodou religion and not the hocus pocus of magic and witchcraft attached to the English word *voodoo*.
- c) The standard form of Haitian Creole is the one spoken in Port-au-Prince, the capital. A few colloquial words from other areas (the North, the city of Jérémie in the South) have been added.

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Any corrections or suggestions will be taken into account and gratefully acknowledged in a future edition.

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Abbreviations

<i>adj</i>	adjective
<i>adv</i>	adverb
<i>anat</i>	anatomy
<i>antiq</i>	antiquated
<i>attrib</i>	attributive
<i>aux v</i>	auxiliary verb
<i>cf</i>	compare
<i>conj</i>	conjunction
<i>culin</i>	culinary
<i>def art</i>	definite article
<i>demons adj</i>	demonstrative adjective
<i>demons pron</i>	demonstrative pronoun
<i>E.</i>	English
<i>esp</i>	especially
<i>euph</i>	euphemism
<i>fam</i>	familiar
<i>fem</i>	feminine
<i>fig</i>	figurative
<i>Fr.</i>	French
<i>gen</i>	generally
<i>geog</i>	geography
<i>indef adj</i>	indefinite adjective
<i>indef art</i>	indefinite article
<i>indef pron</i>	indefinite pronoun
<i>interj</i>	interjection
<i>interrog adj</i>	interrogative adjective
<i>interrog pro</i>	interrogative pronoun
<i>It.</i>	Italian
<i>Lat.</i>	Latin
<i>lit</i>	literally
<i>m</i>	masculine
<i>milit</i>	military
<i>Neap.</i>	Neapolitan
<i>n</i>	noun
<i>num</i>	numeral
<i>onom</i>	onomatopoeia
<i>pej</i>	pejorative
<i>pers pron</i>	personal pronoun
<i>phr</i>	phrase
<i>plur</i>	plural
<i>poss adj</i>	possessive adjective
<i>poss pron</i>	possessive pronoun
<i>prep</i>	preposition
<i>rel pron</i>	relative pronoun
<i>sing</i>	singular
<i>s.o.</i>	someone
<i>Sp.</i>	Spanish
<i>syn</i>	synonym
<i>tech</i>	technical
<i>usu</i>	usually
<i>V</i>	see
<i>v</i>	verb
<i>v marker</i>	verb marker

vi
vpr
vt

intransitive verb
pronominal verb
transitive verb

A

- a**¹ *v marker* Sign of the future tense. Use of this form or its variants *ava, av, va, v* is flexible in accordance with phonetic context. PRESSOIR-26: *Ou a kouri tout tan* You will run forever.
- a**² *def art* Postpositive determiner used after words ending in a non nasal vowel sound. V la, nan, an. MORISSEAU-LEROY/A-7: *Gan you gro de venn ki tonbe sou tout peyi a* There is a terrible misfortune that fell on the entire country.
- a**³ *prep* To, at, on. PRESSOIR-11: *A midi, lò solèy te cho* At noon, when the sun was hot.
- a**⁴ *prep* Of (used mostly in the North to show possession). *Liv a Toma* Tom's book.
- a**⁵ *prep* s. *A òm* Men's. *Rad a òm* Men's clothing.
- a**⁶ *conj* And, with. V ak, avèk. *Pen a bè* Bread and butter
- a**⁷ *interj* Ah! Oh!
- aba** *interj* Down with...!
- abajou a** *n* Lampshade.
- abako a** *n* Jeans, blue-jeans. Pants made from blue denim. HABACO company, manufacturers.
- abandonnen, bandonnen** *vt* To give up, to forsake, to abandon*.
- abat** *vt* To kill, to knock down. *Yo abat li kon chen* They killed him like a dog.
- abatwa a, labatwa a** *n* Slaughter-house, abattoir*.
- abc, abese** *n* 1. The alphabet. 2. First elements of a science or an art.
- abi a**¹ *n* Abuse*, injustice. *Fè abi* To abuse, to take advantage of.
- abi a**² *n* Formal attire, official costume.
- abil** *attrib* Skillful.
- abim nan, labim nan** *n* Misfortune, misery, bottomless hole, abyss*.
- abiman an** *n* Clothing (formal).
- abit la** *n* Umpire, referee; arbiter*.
- abitan an** *n* 1. Peasant, country folks, farmer. 2. Hick, uncouth person. (syn) **grosoulye**. *Abitan dekore* Pretentious hick.
- abitasyon an, labitasyon an, bitasyon an** *n* 1. Plantation, farm, habitation*. Rural farmhouse (dwelling) during colonial times including land around it. 2. Hamlet, courtyard with several 'kay' around it. *Isit la se abitasyon papa'm, sa lòt*

bò a pou tonton'm Here is my father's house; over on the other side is my uncle's home.

abite *vt* To inhabit*. *vi* To live, to stay.

abitid la, labitid la *n* Habit*, custom.

abitue, abitwe, abitye *vt* To get s.o. accustomed (*ak to*). *vi* To get accustomed with, to be in the habit of, to be used to.

abiye, biye *vt* To clothe, to dress. *M'pito biye ou pase m'nouri ou* I'd rather clothe you than feed you (said to someone who loves to eat). *vi* To get dressed. *M'pral abiye* I'm going to get dressed. *Pa antre, m'pa abiye* Don't come in, I am not decent.

abizan *attrib* Abusive* (person).

abize *vt* To abuse*, to take advantage of (excessively).

ablable V **blable**

abò *adv* Aboard*, on board*; in or on a boat. *Monte abò* To go aboard, on board.

abobo, ayibobo *interj* Exclamation used in Vodou ceremonies to express joy. Hallelujah! Amen!

abòde, bòde *vt* To come near, to approach.

abòdjò, bòdyò *n* Stupid, a stupid person.

aboli *vt* To suppress, to abolish*.

abondans la, labondans la, bondans la *n* Abundance*. *Li lan abondans* He is wealthy. *An abondans* Aplenty.

abònen, abòne *vi* To subscribe (*ak to*) (a newspaper, a magazine, etc.). Also used for any goods, merchandise, etc. *Mwen abòne ak machann lèt la depi twazan* The milkman has been delivering milk to me for three years.

abònman an *n* Subscription. It is used not only for newspapers but also for goods and merchandise that are delivered at regular intervals.

abonotcho, abonocho, abwenotcho *interj* Damn you! I renounce you, satan! FRANKETI-ENNE/P-33: *Yo voye ou. Abonotcho!* PAURIS-36: *Li bat abonotcho dèyè rèv galipòt.*

abou¹ *attrib* At the very end, at my wit's end. At the end of one's patience. *Mari'm tap fè'm soufri tròp, lè m'te abou, m'divòse avè'l* My husband was making me suffer too much; when I couldn't take it any more, I divorced him.

abou² *Pale an abou* To speak in parables.

aboupòtan *adv* At close range, point-blank. *Tire you moun aboupòtan* To shoot s.o. point-blank.

abouti, bouti *vi* 1. To result in. *Malgre tout efò'l, li pa abouti a anyen* In spite of all his efforts, he didn't get anywhere. 2. To succeed, to end (to ripen). *Abse a abouti* The boil is ready to pop. 3. To arrive at a destination.

abreje *vt* To help, to be of assistance (to s.o.).

abrejman an *n* Help, assistance. PAURIS-13: *Latè mande kanpo. Latè ap bouske abrejman.*

abri a *n* Shelter.

abriko *V* **zabriko**

absan, apsan *attrib* 1. Absent*, away. 2. Absent-minded.

abse a, apse a *n* Abscess*. *Mete klou sou abse* *To add insult to injury, to make matters worse.*

absent la, labsent la, lapsent la *n* 1. Absinthe*. Artemisia absinthium L. 2. Type of beverage.

absoliman, apsoliman *adv* Absolutely*.

absteni *vpr* To abstain*.

abwa a *n* Tip, pourboire*.

acha a *n* Buy, purchase. *M'ap fè acha* *I'm shopping.*

achevèk la *n* Archbishop*.

achitèk la *n* Architect*.

achitekti a *n* Architecture*.

achiv la *n* Archives*.

achtafè a, achte afè a *n* One who gets involved in everything, even when it doesn't concern him at all.

achte *vt* To buy. *Achte trò chè* *To overpay.* *Achte bon mache* *To buy cheap.* *Achte figi, achte dèyè* *To flatter.* *Achte chat nan makout (or) nan sak* *To buy a pig in a poke.*

achtè a *n* Buyer. *Achtèdfigi* *Flatterer.*

adapte *vt* To adapt*.

adefo, a defo *prep* In the absence of.

adezif la *n* Adhesive* tape.

adibitòm *V* **adlibitòm**

adiltè a *n* Adultery*.

adipopo *V* **adjipopo**

adisyon an *n* Addition*.

adisyonnen *vt* To add.

adjahountò a, adjountò a *n* Largest of the drums of the rada rite.

adjewidan *V* **adyewidan**

adjipopo a, adipopo a, azipopo a, djipopo a *n* Misfortune, magical trap, evil ways, something that forces you to lie and wait, something that you cannot get rid of. A problem without a solution.

adjo *V* **adyo**

adjwen an *n* Assistant, aid.

adlibitòm, adibitòm *adv* Lat. In great quantity, as much as you wish, to your heart's content.

admèt *vt* To admit*, to acknowledge, to concede, to tolerate.

admeton (ke) Let's assume (that), let's suppose (that).

administratè a *n* Administrator*.

administrer *vt* To administer*, to manage, to govern.

admirasyon an *n* Admiration*.

admire *vt* To admire*.

adokte *V* **adopte**

adonnen *vpr* To become addicted (a: to); to give one's self over completely (a: to). *Li adonnen'l sèlman a kouti* *All she does is sew.*

adopte, adokte *vt* To adopt*.

adorasyon an *n* Adoration* (in Christian churches).

adore *vt* To worship, to adore*.

adousi *V* **dousi**

adrès la ¹ *n* Address (of a house).

adrès ² *V* **ladrès**

adrese *vt* 1. To address*. *M'adrese'l laparòl* *I spoke to him, I addressed him.* 2. To turn (a: to). *Si m'gen yon problèm, m'pap adrese'l* *If I have a problem, I will not turn to him.*

advantis la *n* Adventist*.

adwat *adv* To the right, right. *Adwat agòch* *In all directions.*

adwatman *adv* With tact.

adwaz la *n* Slate. *Kreyon adwaz* *Slate pencil.*

adye ¹ *interj* Alas! My lord! For heaven's sake! *Adye bondye!* *Good gracious! What a pity!* *Adye manman!* *Adye frè!* (Expressive interjection) *Gee whiz! That's too bad!*

adye, adje ² *interj* Fairwell, adieu*. Greetings! In the villages, this word used to have (maybe still has) the general meaning of: Greetings!

adyewidan, adjewidan *interj* What a shame! Oh God!

adyo, adjo *interj* Fairwell!

adyovat, adjovat, adyova *interj* It's finished. That's the end of it. Good bye. PAURIS-89: *Depi janmpis rouke pou ou, adjovat, ou bannann lontan.*

afè a, zafè a *n* 1. Business, matter, affair*. *Bon afè* *Bargain.* *Yon pakèt afè* *A big deal, an important matter.* *Afè'm pa bon* *I'm broke.* *Fè tout yon afè ak* *To make a big fuss about.* 2. Baggage, belongings. 3. Genitals.

afeksyon an *n* Affection*. *Nonk pitit la gen anpil afeksyon pou li* *The child's uncle has a great deal of affection for him.*

afèmaj la, afèmaj la *n* Renting, leasing, letting by contract a house, a farm.

afese *attrib* Depressed, down.

afiba a *n* 1. Local food consisting of meat, (usu) small strips of pork. 2. Worthless person or thing.

afich la *n* Poster.

afiche *vt* 1. To post, to hang (up) in a public place. 2. To make a show of. *L'ap afiche richès li* He is showing off his wealth. 3. To speak evil of, to defame. 4. *Afiche avèk* To appear in public with. *Li afiche (afiche'l) ak fi a* He appears in public with the girl; he exposes his relations with the girl.

afliksyon *V lafliksyon*

afòs *conj* Because of, as a result of (by overdoing), by dint of.

afre *attrib* Ravenous, gluttonous; more specifically one who devours (eats, grabs) large amounts of food. *V aloufa, gouman, saf, voras.*

afreman an *n* Gluttony.

Afrik, Lafrik *n* Africa*. *Lafrik Ginen* West Africa. *Kwayans Lafrik* African beliefs.

afro a *n* 1. Popular dance. 2. Hairstyle.

afron an *n* Affront*, offense. *Li fè'm afron* He offended me.

afyo a, apio a *n* Net-grass, coco-grass. *Cyperus rotundus* L. A potato-like vegetable. It is placed on the skin to help heal burns.

aganman an, agranman an *n* Chameleon.

agante *vt* To seduce, to charm, to attract.

agasan *attrib* Irritating, annoying.

agase *vt* To needle; to incite, to get on s.o.'s nerves, to tease, to irritate.

agida a *n* Drumstick.

agiman an *n* Contention, argument*, thesis. PAURIS-124: *Li pral pouze yon agiman.*

ago *interj* Exclamation denoting joy, consent, approval.

agòch, agoch *adv* 1. To the left, on the left. 2. (*attrib*) Awkward, clumsy.

agogo *adv* Plentiful.

agoni¹ *vi* To be in the agonies* of death.

agoni an, agonni an² *n* Agony*. *Malad la an agoni, li san lè mourì* The sick person is in the death agony. He could die any minute.

agonyon an *n* Old bachelor or spinster.

agraf la *n* Hook, clamp, fastener, agraffe* (for garments).

agrandi *vt* To enlarge, to widen.

agrandisman an *n* Enlargement.

agranlijyèn, a gran liyèn, agrandlijèn *adv* In large quantity, in abundance.

agranman *V aganman*

aggrave, angrave *vt* To make worse, to aggravate*. *Sa'l fè la a agrave sitiasyon an* What he just did made things worse. *vi* To become more serious.

agresif *attrib* Aggressive.

agreyab *attrib* Agreeable*, nice, lovely, pleasing, pleasant.

agreye *vt* To polish, to adjust, to shape (wood).

agrikiltè a *n* Farmer.

agrikilti a, lagrikilti a *n* Farming, agriculture.

agrikòl *attrib* Agricultural*.

agronòm nan, agwonnòm nan *n* Agronomist*, agriculturalist.

agwe *n* Vodou deity.

ah *interj* Exclamation denoting admiration, approval, surprise, etc.

aha *V anhan*

ajan an¹ *n* Agent.

ajan an² *n* Silver. *V lajan.* *Rwa Kristòf tiye tèt li ak yon bal an ajan* King Christopher killed himself with a silver bullet. *Kiyè a an ajan* The spoon is made of silver.

ajans la *n* Agency*.

ajenou, a jenou *adv* Kneeling.

aji *vi* To act. *Agi ak* To treat, to handle. *Li byen aji* He acted well. *Li mal aji ak mwen* He didn't act right (properly) with me. *Aji sou* To affect. *Sa aji sou li plis pase li te panse* That affected him more than he thought.

ajil *attrib* Agile*.

ajisman an *n* Act, action, behavior, deed.

ajiste *vt* To adjust*, to fit.

ajitasyon an *n* Excitement, agitation*.

ajite *attrib* Restless.

ajou, a jou *attrib* 1. Up to date. 2. Ready. *M'poko ajou ak kouti a* I am not finished with the sewing (or) The sewing is not ready.

ajoupa a, joupa a *n* A country hut. A straw hut used since colonial days and made simply with some poles and palm or coconut leaves. (usu) They consist of one room only.

ajoute *vt* To add (on).

ak¹ *prep* 1. With, and. *V avèk.* *Vini ak mwen* Come with me. FARDIN-13: *Nwèl la va kòmanse sanble ak yon bagay ki fèt pou tout moun* Christmas