

HaitiHub Presents the:

Haitian Creole Verb Tense Cheat Sheet

All the verb tenses together in one place: Cut it out, laminate it, and bring it with you! An easy way to help you put together those more complicated sentences, this is your go-to tense resource!

Haitian Creole Verb Tense Cheat Sheet

Verb: Manje

I verb.....Mwen manje
I am verbing.....M ap manje
Verb!.....Manje!

I verbed.....Mwen te manje
I was verbing.....M tap manje
I already verbed.....Mwen gen tan manje
I had already verbed.....Mwen te gen tan manje

I'm going to verb.....Mwen pral manje
I will verb (definite)..... Mwen pral manje
I will verb (conditional).....M a manje
I will have already verbed.....Mwen pral gen tan manje

I would verb.....Mwen ta manje
I would have verbed.....Mwen ta va manje

I should verb (imperative)..... Mwen dwe manje
I should verb (conditional).....Mwen ta dwe manje
I should have verbed.....Mwen te dwe manje

I can verb.....Mwen ka manje
I could verb.....Mwen ta ka manje
I could have verbed.....Mwen te ka manje

I was going to verb.....Mwen te pral manje

I do not verb.....Mwen pa manje.
I am not verbing.....Mwen pap manje.
Don't verb!Pa manje!

I did not verb.....Mwen pat manje
I wasn't verbing.....Mwen pa tap manje
I haven't verbed yet.....Mwen poko manje
I hadn't verbed yet.....Mwen potko manje

I'm not going to verb.....Mwen pa pral manje
I wont verb.....Mwen pap manje
I wont have verbed yet.....M poko pral manje

I wouldn't verb.....Mwen pa ta manje
I wouldn't have verbed.....M pa tap manje.

I shouldn't verb.....Mwen pa dwe manje
I shouldn't have verbed.....M pat dwe manje

I can't verb.....M pa ka manje
I couldn't verb.....M pat ka manje

I wasn't going to verb.....M pa ta pral manje



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Scroll down to find a more in-depth Creole verb-tense resource, complete with explanations, examples, rules for usage, and extras!

A More In-depth Look at Haitian Creole Verb Tenses & Moods

Verb forms do **not** change according to subject (*mwen, ou, li, nou, yo*) in Haitian Creole. There are **no conjugations***. Thus, all tables and examples will give tense structure using only *mwen*, which will give you the correct verb form for all other subjects.

Likewise there are no verb conjugations for tense. Instead, H.C. grammar relies on different indicator words or “markers” to place events in the correct temporal setting. These will appear in **bold** in the tables below.

Present Indicative Tenses & The Imperative (Giving Commands):

<p>Simple Present “I verb.”</p> <p><i>Subject + Verb →</i> Mwen manje. = I eat.</p> <p><i>Lè m an Ayiti, mwen manje griyo.</i></p> <p>Used for: Stating facts and describing habitual actions</p>	<p>Progressive Present: “I am verbing.”</p> <p><i>Subject + ap + verb →</i> M ap pale = I am speaking.</p> <p><i>Lè m ap pale, m vle tout moun koute mwen.</i></p> <p>Used for: Describing ongoing actions and actions not yet completed at the time of speech.</p>	<p>Imperative: “Verb!”</p> <p><i>Verb (directive) →</i> Ede l = Help him.</p> <p><i>Al* vizite manman w.</i> * This is a shortened form of the verb <i>ale</i>, it is not a conjugation.</p> <p>Used for: Giving commands.</p>
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Simple Past Tense, Imperfect, Use of *gen tan* as “already”, and the Past Perfect:

<p>Simple Past: “I verbed.”</p> <p><i>Subject + te + verb</i> M te kanpe. = I stood.</p> <p><i>M te kanpe pandan tout reyinyon an.</i></p> <p>Used for: Placing events / actions in the past.</p>	<p>Imperfect: “I was verbing.”</p> <p><i>Subject + tap + verb</i> M tap manje = I was eating.</p> <p><i>M tap ale lekòl lè lapli te kòmanse tonbe.</i></p> <p>Used for: Describing an on-going action in the past, or in a series of events where one event is interrupted by a 2nd event.</p>	<p>Gen tan: “I already verbed.”</p> <p><i>Subject + gen tan + verb.</i></p> <p>M gen tan manje = I already ate.</p> <p>Used for: Specifying an event as something that has <i>already</i> happened.</p>	<p>Past Perfect: “I had already verbed”</p> <p><i>Subject + te + gen tan + verb</i></p> <p>M te gen tan pati lè l te rive. = I had already left when he arrived.</p> <p><i>Nou te gen tan fin manje lè yo te rive lakay nou.</i></p> <p>Used for: Designating an action which has been completed before another past action.</p>
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Simple Future Tense Indicator Words, The Verb “to be” in the Future & Future Perfect:

<p>Ap – For the near / immediate future “I’m verbing!” <i>Subject + ap + verb</i></p> <p>M ap rive = I’m arriving (I’ll be there any second.)</p> <p>N ap manje ansanm aswè a = We are eating together tonight</p> <p>M ap ale nan mache a pita jodi a = I’m going to the market later today.</p> <p>Generally Used for: Events occurring in the near or immediate future.</p>	<p>Pral – “Going to” “I’m going to verb.” <i>Subject + pral + verb</i></p> <p>M pral achte kèk bagay nan mache a = I’m going to buy a few things in the market.</p> <p>M prale* legliz ak Marie. <i>* pral + ale are most commonly contracted to prale.</i></p> <p>Generally Used for: Events occurring in the near future. Similar to English’s “I’m going to ...”</p>	<p>A / Va / Ava – For the indefinite future “I will verb.” <i>Subject + a / va/ ava + verb</i></p> <p>N a wè. = We will see each other. N ava wè. Nou va wè.</p> <p>Y a enseye nou Kreyòl. Y ava enseye nou Kreyòl. Yo va enseye nou Kreyòl.</p> <p>Generally used for: Events that will occur sometime in the indefinite or non-immediate future, used for more general statements of future events.</p>
<p>“I will be + place + time.” <i>Subject + ap / ava + place + time.</i></p> <p>ap = certainty ava = conditional</p> <p>This rule is not as fast for ap as it is for ava. Ava is use almost, if not exclusively, with si. Ap can be used with or without si.</p> <p>M ap la demen. = I’ll be here tomorrow.</p> <p>M ava la demen si m pa malad. = I’ll be here tomorrow if I’m not sick.</p>	<p>“I will be + emotion.” <i>Subject + pral + emotion</i></p> <p>Li pral kontan = She’ll be happy. / She’s going to be happy.</p> <p>Yo pral fache = They’re going to be angry.</p>	<p>“I will have [already] verbed.” <i>Subject + pral + gen tan + verb</i></p> <p>Nou pral gen tan manje lè w rive = We will have already eaten when you arrive.</p> <p>Li pral gen tan dòmi lè w rive = She will have already gone to sleep when you arrive.</p>

Would, Should, & Could

<p>“I would verb.” <i>Subject + ta + verb.</i></p> <p>M ta naje, men m pa konn naje. = I would swim, but I don’t know how to swim.</p>	<p>“I should verb.” <i>Subject + dwe + verb.</i></p> <p>M dwe etidye. = I should study.</p>	<p>“I could verb.” <i>Subject + ta + ka + verb.</i></p> <p>M ta ka ale, men m pa vle. = I could go, but I don’t want to.</p>
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“Would have” & “Was going to”

<p>“I would have verbed.” <i>Subject + ta + verb.</i></p> <p>M ta naje, si m te konn naje. = I would have swum, if I had known how.</p>	<p>“I would have verbed.” <i>Subject + ta + va + verb.</i></p> <p>Si w te vin kote m, m ta va ede w. = If you had come to me, I would have helped.</p>	<p>“I was going to verb.” <i>Subject + te + pral + verb.</i></p> <p>M te pral vizite w, men m te twò okipe yè. = I was going to visit you, but I was too busy yesterday.</p>
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“Should have” & “Could have”

<p>“I should have verbed.” <i>Subject + te + dwe + verb.</i></p> <p>M te dwe ede w. = I should have helped you.</p> <p>M te dwe ale avè l. = I should have gone with him.</p>	<p>“I could have verbed.” <i>Subject + te + ka + verb.</i></p> <p>M te ka etidye plis. = I could have studied more.</p> <p>M te ka fè manje sa a. = I could have made that food.</p>
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A Few Notes on Negation: Pa, Contractions, & Poko

<p>To create a negative in Haitian Creole, Creole speakers use the word pa.</p> <p><i>Subject + pa + [other indicator word] + verb.</i></p> <p>Examples:</p> <p>M pa vle manje = I don't want to eat.</p> <p>Pa fè sa! = Don't do that!</p> <p>M pa ta vle ale avèk ou = I wouldn't want to go with you.</p>	<p>There are a few instances where pa + the tense indicator word are contracted to form one word:</p> <p>Pa + ap = pap Pa + pral (or any other future indicator word) = pap Pa + te = pat</p> <p><i>Subject + contracted form of pa + verb.</i></p> <p>M pap ale. = I'm not going. / I will not go.</p> <p>M pat ale. = I didn't go.</p>	<p>We already know that one of the Creole equivalents for “already” is gen tan. To negate this, we need the Creole equivalent of “yet”.</p> <p>To express that one has not yet done something, or that something has not yet happened, we would use the word poko.</p> <p>Example:</p> <p>M poko rive lakay. = I have not yet arrived home [I'm not home yet.]</p> <p>Bonus: To say “had not yet” Creole speakers use the word “potko”</p>
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