

A Karna Primer

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With a plethora of two syllable words, Karna is a rhythmic language whose beauty is often hidden by the guttural sounds of its consonant-laden vocabulary. Though it is more than a thousand years old, it is most certainly a living language—both word meaning and grammar undergo slight changes from one region to another, though the most drastic differences occur traveling across the Karnu-Dunkarga border.

Truncation

Most confusing to those who are not native speakers of Karna is the common Karnuan and Dunkargan tendency to shorten multiple-syllable words (in short, most of Karna) into single syllables. Sometimes this happens for grammatical reasons, but more often it is a result of the shared sensibility of both nations (stretching back to the days when they were one people) that the language shouldn't necessarily be accessible to those who don't know it intimately.

A common example of this truncation in practice is the name of towns and cities. For example, the Dunkargan town of Pequo 'Jah translates directly to "Pequo's Orchards", though the full word for "orchard" in Karna is *jah'to*.

Other examples will quickly become obvious to those studying Karna, and though in the sections below general suggestions are given there are no universally-followed rules to indicate in which situations words will be truncated; the best way to adapt is as native speakers do--to converse in the language with native speakers until the truncation becomes second-nature.

Numbers

il	One
dir	Two
yu	Three
nal	Four
hol	Five
yz	Six
lak	Seven
qidan	Eight
odal	Nine
wen	Ten

Ordinals: add "at" after number—"lakat" (seventh), "dirat" (second), etc. Exceptions are two syllable numbers, where only first syllable carries: "qidat" is 'eighth', "odat" 'ninth', etc.

Numbers above ten: These are constructed using the following constructions:

wen	Multiple of ten (e.g., "lak'wen" equals 70)
fal	hundred ("yz'fal" is 600)
ta	thousand ("dir'ta" is 2000)

The ones place is tacked on the end. Hence, *yz'ta, nal'fal, yu'wen 'lak* is 6,437.

Much larger numbers: The appropriate multiplier is tacked on the front. Thus *'Ta nal'fal yu'wen*, is 438, 000 (1,000 x 438)

Really large numbers: The few scholars who use numbers above 999,999 use a variety of methods that have yet to standardize.

Basic Grammar

Sample Pronouns

ni	I
jo	me
vo	you (singular)
elo	he
ahle	she
qu	it
no'ta	we
va	you (plural)
zal	they
qal	that
qul	this

Plurals are usually indicated by the letter i appended to the end of a noun:

<i>ahz'ma / ahz'mai</i>	(scholar / scholars)
<i>qer'el / qer'eli</i>	(brother / brothers)
<i>banog / banoqi</i>	(man / men)
<i>yul'me / yuli</i>	(river / rivers)

Verbs (with multiple-syllable verbs colloquially truncated to their first syllable) are attached directly to the subject of the sentence:

<i>Ni'go ahz'ma.</i>	(I am a scholar.)
<i>No'fyr vo.</i>	(We curse you.)

Adjectives proceed the noun they describe:

<i>Ni'ahz ul'Karnu Syr'ra .</i>	(I know the Karnuan King.)
<i>Terym'go war'na banoq.</i>	(Terym is a dangerous man.)

Possessives attach themselves to the noun being possessed:

<i>Ahl'go ba'qer'al.</i>	(She is your sister.)
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Sample Possessives

ba'	your
bal'	her
bel'	his
ro'	my

Negators directly follow the state they negate:

<i>Qal'go do ba'az'noq.</i>	(That is not your horse.)
<i>Ahl'jo do volan.</i>	(She has not heard the story.)

Prepositions follow direct objects (with the exception of *ul* ("of"), which in many cases is treated as an adjective):

Za'lan Dunkar re. (They travel to Dunkar.)
Na'wen hani'pyl Qok'Tol tanal. (Forty Spears march towards Qok 'Tol.)

Sample Prepositions

cal'	for
gan	in
ganzo	into
qa	on
re	to
tanal	toward

Indirect objects attach to prepositions; non-negator **adverbs** directly proceed the noun-verb combination they modify:

Di'hal vo'toq babyn'qo re'jo. (Now you give your money to me.)
Pa' ni'ko ul'Vinn balza'faz cal'va. (Tomorrow I will kill her Vinnengaelean swordmaster for you.)

Adjectives are made into adverbs by the addition of the 'ez suffix to their first syllable.

Sample Adverbs

dih'al	now
ma'	rather
lam'ez	sweetly
hyn'ez	quickly

A few sample phrases that might be used by those traveling through the Caliphate of Karnu and the Kingdom of Dunkarga:

Vo'qo ul'Dunk cek'at! (You are a Dunkargan pig!)
Ma ni'za'qoz so ul'Karn qo. (I would rather be dead than a Karnuan.)
Ro ulf'qer'al batav'yelz do. (Even my idiot brother would not pay that price.)
Qul'rul ro'aqor'qo. Ko'el do. (The dwarf is my slave. Do not kill him.)
Don'vo Vingrees? (Do you speak Elder Speak?)
Yal'ah bamahr'qo ba'faz weh. (Your wit is as sharp as your sword.)
Ni'qo ul'catoq qa. (I am on a diplomatic mission.)
Baqeri'don re'jo o pazz. (Tell me your secrets or die.)

Vocabulary

Word	Definition	Notes
ahzam	knowledge, education	
ahz'ma	scholar	
ahz'qua	librarian	

'al	familial relation (female)	
albei	children	(also alb'—“child of”, eg. alb'Moj, “child of Moj”)
ankha	sky	
aqor'az	slave	
'ar	connection, contact	(physical, as in the Ank'ar—“touches the sky” Mountains)
az'noq	horse	
bano'	male	(adjective)
banoq	man	
baq'za	soldier (formal)	
bez	arm	(body part— <i>bezi</i> for both arms)
bo'	opposite	(prefix, as in <i>bo'ten</i> —“enemy”)
bin'nal	mind, wisdom	
bo'ten	enemy	
byn'qo	money, currency	
ca'toz	noble	
cek'at	pig	
cor	road	
cor'tal	street	
daq'az	lake	
dal	officer	
dan	spirit, essence	
don'al	voice, spoken word	
don'qua	to speak	(verb)
e'ban	human	
'el	familial relation (male)	
elo	he	(pronoun)
ez'raq	gold	
fah'yo	prize, spoils	
faz'el	sword	
fehlos	north	(direction)
fi'no	to sleep	(verb)
fyr'te	to curse	(verb)
geh'	female	(adjective)
gehlan	woman	
gi	finger	
goz'ah	to break, to shatter	(verb)
gra	blood	
gymad	council	
gyral	tent or pavillion	
hanah	spear	
hol'dyr	night, darkness	
huzbin	supplies and equipment, esp. military	
il'qua	general (rank—“first leader”)	
jah'to	orchard/vineyard	
ji	blood	
jiho	land	
jo'la	to listen	
kalam	sky, air	
kal'dan	star (stellar object)	
kal'mot	sun	
ker'zaq	silver	
ko'naq	to kill	
kzo	spring, watering hole	
lam'ji	sweet	(adjective)
lanah	travel	
lenja	place, location	

lin	city	
loqaz	hammer	
lo'az	head (body part)	
maj'roh	gate	
mahr'yn	humor	
meh'ta	shore, coast	
meyr'yo	scribe	
mot	fire	
na'	best	(qualifier, as in <i>na'ten</i> —"best friend")
nar'am	mountain	(shortened to 'nar suffix in naming particular mountains)
nejo	iron	
nial	crossroads	
nyo	strength	
ohq'al	west (direction)	
oq'to	field	
pa'	tomorrow	
pah'len	marketplace	
paz'naq	death	
pek'at	fish (freshwater)	
pel'az	fish (ocean)	
po'tra	Tromek, elves	
pylat	to march	(verb)
qar'do	secret	
qeh'ji	plain, grassland	
qer'al	sister	
qer'ba	fellow soldier	
qer'el	brother	
qer'ul	family member	
qo	to be, is; to exist	(verb)
qol	are	(verb)
qua'lin	city commander (title)	
qua'ma	magic, sorcery	("control of nature")
qua'zen	control, leadership	
ramal	Master-at-arms (title)	
ren	fortress	
rhat'ma	business	
ryl'az	dwarf	
sa'zla	ork	
so	than	(conjunction)
sor'mua	tree	
syr'ra	king, ruler	
szo	encampment	
tal'dan	cold	(often shortened to 'tald')
tav'az	price, cost	
temlo	home, house	
tenya	friend	
ti	harbor, safety	
tol	riches, wealth	
toq'ua	to give	(verb)
tuul	extended family, clan	
'ul	from, of	
ul'cato	diplomat	
ulf'lo	idiot	
uti	shield (general), protection	
uzz	school, academy	
vak'ol	trash, garbage	

val	wheel	
val'na	chariot	
van'ra	god	
velos	south	
viroj	conquest, victory	
volan	story, tale	
war'na	dangerous	
war'naz	danger	
weh	like, similar, comparable	(adjective)
wol'nej	anvil	
wyl'yi	beauty	
yaz'oq	tooth	
yetra	border	
yul	water	
yul'me	river	
yul'oq	ocean	
yu'zam	end	
za	mastery	(often used as a prefix, ala <i>za faz</i> —"master of the sword")
zem'am	hill	
zol'ma	nature/the world	