

Hawaiian Pronouns (Papani)

# of people	Us Inclusive (including the speaker and the person/people addressed)	Me, “Us Folks” Exclusive (not including the person/people addressed)	You, “You Folks” (the person/people addressed)	He / She or “Those Folks”
1		au/wau (I)	‘oe (you)	(‘o) ia (he/she)*
2	kāua (you and me)	māua (we/us 2, not you)	‘olua (you two)	lāua (those two)
3+	kākou (you 2+ and me)**	mākou (we/us 3+, not you)	‘oukou (you folks 3+)	lākou (those 3+)

* Hawaiian has no pronoun equivalent to “it.” Sometimes “ia mea” is used to convey the idea of “it.”

** Not necessarily “all of us.” For instance, kākou can be used to refer to a subgroup of people in a room – this depends on context.

Usage of Kāua and Kākou

Kāua and kākou are two inclusive pronouns that do not exist in English. These two pronouns are used all the time in Hawaiian conversation. In a way, they represent the inclusive and group-minded nature of Hawaiian culture and thinking. Below are a few common uses of kāua and kākou. These inclusive pronouns are also commonly used in correspondence.

Aloha kāua.

Warm greetings/love/friendship between you and me.

Aloha kāua e _____.

Warm greetings/love/friendship between you and me Addressee.

A common reply is, “Aloha nō kāua e _____” or simply, “Aloha nō kāua.”

E noho a a‘o pū kāua!

Let's (you and me) sit and learn together!

This common invitation used by kūpuna who have much knowledge and wisdom to offer reflects a spirit of humility, friendship, and aloha.

Aloha kākou.

Warm greetings/love/friendship between all of us.

Pehea kākou?

How are we? (all of us)

E ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i kākou!

Let's all speak Hawaiian!