

White Hmong Grammar Cheat Sheet

There are exceptions to every rule. This is a general guideline.

Noun Phrase Structure

| (Pronoun) | (Quantity) | (Classifier) | Noun | (Adjective) | (Adverb) | (Demonstrative) |
|-----------|------------|--------------|-------|-------------|----------|-----------------|
| Kuv | ib | lub | tsev | loj | heev | no |
| I (my) | one | [class] | house | big | very | here |

Rough Translation: My one very big house here

Basic Sentence Structure

| (Time) | (Subject) | (Verb) | (Object) |
|-----------|-----------|--------|----------|
| Nag hmo | kuv | noj | mov. |
| Yesterday | I | ate | rice. |

Common Classifier Chart

| | |
|---------------|---|
| Daim | Flat objects |
| Lub | Round/Solid |
| Phau | Books or volumes |
| Rab | Straight objects/Tools |
| Tus/g | People, animals, things long & cylindrical. |
| Tsob | Plants, bushes, foliage |
| Txoj | String-like |
| Leej/g | Human |

Questions

Puas before verb in question = Yes or no question.

Koj puas nyiam zaub = Do you like vegetables?

Answer: [verb] or tsis [verb].

Lossis in between two options for a/b question.

Muaj zaub lossis muaj mov? = [You] have vegetables or rice?

Answer: Repeat correct option w/ verb (eg. *Muaj mov*).

Reporter Questions

Placed where the answer would come in the sentence.

dabtsi? What?

Koj xav noj dabtsi?/ Kuv xav noj mov.

vim/ua li cas? Why?/ How come?

Vim li cas nyiam nws?/ Vim nws zoo nraug.

pes tsawg? How much/many?

Muaj pes tsawg leej?/ Muaj xya leej.

li cas? How?

Koj tsav tshab li cas?/ Kuv tsav tshab li ib tug neeg vwm

Twg means *which*. Placed after nouns/classifiers.

leej twg? Who?

Leejtwg xav nrog kuv mus?/ Kuv xav nrog koj mus.

qhov twg? Where?

Peb mus qhovtwg?/ Peb mus tom tab laj

thaum twg? When?

Peb mus thaumtwg?/ Peb mus thaum yim moos.

rab twg? Which tool?

Koj siv rab twg?/ Kuv siv rab taus.

Have/ Can

Tau+[verb]= Achieved verb, verbed
(*Kuv tau sim= I have tried*)

[verb]+Tau= Can verb.
(*Kuv sim tau= I can try*)




Aspect

Perfect: *Kuv sim lawm* = I tried *already*.

Progressive: *Kuv tabtom sim* = I *just started* to try.

Future: *Kuv yuav sim* = I'm *going to* try.
Kuv mam li sim = I *will* try.

Pronoun Chart

| |  |  |  |
|----------------------------|---|---|---|
| 1 st Prsn (Me) | Kuv | Wb | Peb |
| 2 nd Prsn (You) | Koj | Neb | Nej |
| 3 rd Prsn (He) | Nws | Nkawv | Lawv |

Tone Change Chart

After a 'b' or 'j' tone the following will happen.

Original:

Changes to:

| j, s, m, | g |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| v | - (no tone, monotone) |
| - (no tone, monotone) | s |

NO Classifier (or noun used as a classifier) regardless of its own tone, affects a tone change in a following word.