

## LESSON 1

## PRESENT TENSE

1	<b>Mu-nthu</b>	man, person	Pl. <b>A-nthu</b>	-ona	see, look
2	<b>M-tengo</b>	tree	<b>Mi-tengo</b>	-li	be
3	<b>Ch-ingwe</b>	string	<b>Zi-ngwe</b>	-funa	want, look for
4	<b>Nyumba</b>	house, hut	<b>Nyumba</b>	-peza	find
5	<b>Khasu</b>	hoe	<b>Ma-kasu</b>	-siya	leave
6	<b>Uta</b>	bow	<b>Ma-uta</b>	-tenga	take
				-ika	put
	<b>Pano</b>	here, on this spot		-chotsa	take off, remove
	<b>Uko</b>	there, over there			
	<b>Umo</b>	in there, inside			
	<b>Bwino</b>	well, all-right, carefully			

**Bwanji? How?**  
**Chiyani? What?**

THE NOUN consists of a stem and usually a prefix which changes from singular to plural. Nouns are divided into six classes.

Nouns of the 4th class have no prefix, neither in singular nor in plural; they don't change: **Nyumba** Pl. **Nyumba**.

Nouns of the two last classes have no prefix in singular but only in plural: **Uta** Pl. **Mauta**; **Khasu** Pl. **Makasu** (the h is dropped):

In Chicheŵa there is no article in front of nouns: **Chingwe** means "a" or "the" string. **Mitengo** means "some" or "the" trees.

THE VERB also consists of a stem which normally does not change, and a pronoun-prefix which varies with the subject.

Present:

1	<b>Ndi-ona</b>	I see	<b>Ndiona bwino nyumba:</b>	I see the house well.
2	<b>U-ona</b>	You.	<b>Upeza chingwe umo:</b>	You find a string in there.
3	<b>A-ona</b>	He, she.	<b>Asiya khasu pano:</b>	He leaves the hoe here.
1	<b>Ti-ona</b>	We.	<b>T.tenga uta:</b>	We take the bow.
2	<b>Mu-ona</b>	You.	<b>Muli bwanji?</b>	How are you?
3	<b>A-ona</b>	They.	<b>Aona mtengo uko:</b>	They see a tree there.

Infinitive: Note the prefix **ku-**:

**Ku-ona** to see

**Afuna kuona nyumba. Ndifuna kutenga khasu.**

Imperative: No prefix. Note the suffix **-ni** in the plural form.

S.	<b>Ona! Look</b>	<b>Ona mtengo uko!</b>	<b>Siya khasu pano!</b>
Pl.	<b>Ona-ni!</b>	<b>Ikanj uta umo!</b>	<b>Tengani chingwe!</b>

"you": It is always preferable to use the plural form **Mu-** instead of **U-** out of politeness, unless we address a child:

**Muli bwanji? (Uli bwanji?). Tengani khasu! (Tenga khasu).**

Greetings: It is up to the person approached to greet the visitor.

—**Moni** Hello! (common word in salutation)  
—**Zikomo!** Thanks!  
—**Muli bwanji!**  
—**Ndili bwino.**

Interrogation: usually starts with the word **Kodi...**? unless another interrogative is employed in the sentence. Intonation.

**Kodi muli bwino? Kodi uona mtengo? Kodi mufuna kuchotsa mtengo?**

**Bwanji? How? Ali bwanji? Uchotsa hwanji chingwe? (follows the verb)**

**Chiyani? What? Muona chiyani uko? Afuna kutenga chiyani? (follows verb)**

Answer: **Inde! Yes Inde, ndili bwino. Also: Eya! Ee!**

**Iyayi! No! Iyayi, sindili bwino (see next lesson)**

**Zikomo!** This exclamation has various meanings: context, intonation

"Thanks!" —**Moni** —**Zikomo!...**

"Please!" **Zikomo** **chotsani chingwe**

"Excuse-me" **Zikomo, ndifuna kutenga uta.**

**Bwino** well, all-right: —**Kodi ali bwino? —Inde, ali bwino.**

carefully **Ikani bwino makasu umo? (follows the verb)**

- How is she? — She is all-right.
- Look over there! You see some trees.
- What do they want to take? — The bows.
- Take off the strings! Thanks!
- Look in there! You (will) find some hoes.
- What do you see over there? — We see some houses.
- I am here. Excuse-me, I want to leave the hoes here.
- How (will) you remove the tree?
- Leave the bow in there! Do you see the house well?
- What do you want to put in there?
- I want to see the people. How are they?
- Take the string! Leave the bow here!
- They want to leave the trees over there.
- You want a string? (Have a) look in there!
- What do you find there? They are all-right.