

Animate Intransitive Verbs (VAI): Negation

Negating verbs in Ojibwe is fairly simple. The main forms of the verb as conjugated normally. The difference is a “gaawiin” is added before the verb and a negative suffix is added to the end of the word. Think of it as a sandwich: the gaawiin and the negative suffix are the two slices of bread, and the meat is the conjugated verb:

I	gaawiin nimaajaasiin
you (singular)	gaawiin gimaajaasiin
s/he	gaawiin maajaasiin
we (exclusive)	gaawiin nimaajaasiimin
we (inclusive)	gaawiin gimaajaasiimin
you (plural)	gaawiin gimaajaasiim
they	gaawiin maajaasiiwag

VAI ending in an -M

I	gaawiin niminwendanziin
you (singular)	gaawiin giminwendanziin
s/he	gaawiin minwendanziin
we (exclusive)	gaawiin niminwendanziimin
we (inclusive)	gaawiin giminwendanziimin
you (plural)	gaawiin giminwendanziim
they	gaawiin minwendanziiwag

VAI ending in an -N

gaawiin (n)indagoshinziin
gaawiin gidagoshinziin
gaawiin dagoshinziin
gaawiin (n)indagoshinziimin
gaawiin gidagoshinziimin
gaawiin gidagoshinziim
gaawiin dagoshinziiwag

Because of the negative suffix, the dropped vowel returns in first and second person singular on verbs that end in -A, -I, -O.

I	gaawiin niwiisinisiin
you (singular)	gaawiin giwiisinisiin
s/he	gaawiin wiisinisiin
we (exclusive)	gaawiin niwiisinisiimin
we (inclusive)	gaawiin giwiisinisiimin
you (plural)	gaawiin giwiisinisiim
they	gaawiin wiisinisiiwag

You can change “gaawiin” to “gaawiin wiikaa” to say “never” or “gaawiin mashi” to say “not yet.” However, remember when forming a question “ina” is always second:

Gaawiin ina gimaajaasiin?

You’re not leaving?

Gaawiin ina mashi gimaajaasiin?

You didn’t leave yet?