

AMERICAN INDIAN BULLETIN

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OGLALA SIOUX TRIBE



Learn more here - <https://www oglala gov/>

INTRODUCTION

The Oglala Lakota Nation, officially recognized as the Oglala Sioux Tribe, is primarily situated on the vast Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in southwestern South Dakota, a significant land base spanning approximately 2.2 to 3 million acres. As one of the seven bands of the Lakota people, they are an integral part of the larger Great Sioux Nation, also known as the Oceti Sakowin or Seven Council Fires, which includes the Dakota and Nakota. Operating as a federally recognized tribe, their governance is structured under a constitution in alignment with the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934, featuring an elected Executive Committee and Tribal Council with biennial elections.

RELATIVES

The Oglala Sioux Tribe is closely related to the other six bands of the Lakota people, including the Sicangu, Hunkpapa, and Mnicoujou. These Lakota bands are a major part of the broader Great Sioux Nation, also known as the Oceti Sakowin (Seven Council Fires), which also includes the Dakota and Nakota peoples, all sharing a common linguistic and cultural heritage. Within their society, the *tiyóšpaye*—extended family groups—are fundamental, emphasizing deep kinship and mutual responsibilities, embodied by the phrase "Mitákuye Oyás'i" ("All My Relatives").

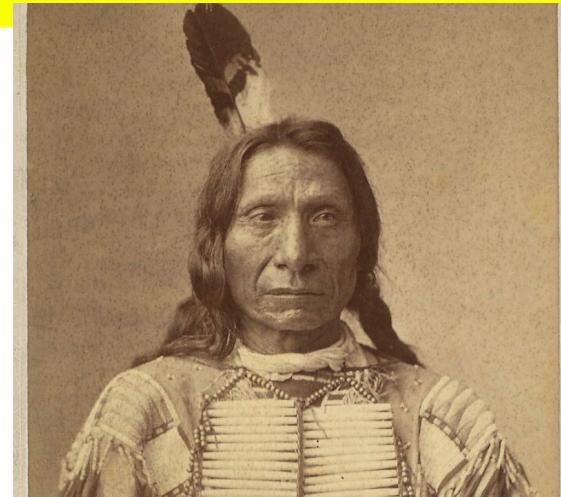


HISTORY

The Oglala Lakota, originally from the Great Lakes region, adapted to a nomadic buffalo-hunting life on the Great Plains after acquiring horses around 1730. Their history became dominated by conflicts with the expanding United States, particularly over their sacred Black Hills. The 1868 Treaty of Fort Laramie supposedly guaranteed them this land but was violated by gold prospectors. This led to the Great Sioux War of 1876–1877, including their victory at the Battle of Little Bighorn, though they ultimately lost much of their territory. Hardship continued, culminating in the tragic Wounded Knee Massacre of 1890, which largely ended armed resistance. In the 20th century, despite challenges like land allotment, the Oglala Lakota persevered, with events like the 1973 Wounded Knee Incident highlighting ongoing struggles for rights and sovereignty, which they continue to pursue on the Pine Ridge Reservation today.

Sources:

<https://www.nps.gov/media/video/view.htm?id=1A2F500E-C630-A335-01070F737BCD894C>.
<https://www.bia.gov/sites/default/files/dup/assets/as-ia/raca/pdf/70%20-%20Oglala%20Sioux%20Tribe.pdf>.
<https://www.britannica.com/event/Wounded-Knee-Massacre>.



Ma píya Lúta (Red Cloud)



Big Foot's village on reservation



Wačipi- Pow wow

LANGUAGE LEARNING

Introduction

The Oglala Sioux Tribe speaks Lak ótiyapi, or the Lakota language, which is one of the three main dialects of the larger Sioux language family. Once rich in oral tradition, Lakota faces critical endangerment due to historical assimilation policies, with only an estimated 1,000–2,000 fluent speakers remaining, mostly elders. However, extensive revitalization efforts are underway through immersion programs, curriculum development, technological resources, and tribal support, aiming to preserve this vital aspect of Oglala Lakota cultural identity for future generations.

Language learning resource

<https://lakhota.org/>

| | Lakȟótiya | Wašíčuiya |
|-----|---|--|
| (a) | Glí háŋl , ómakiye. | When he came back, he helped me |
| (b) | Glí k'uŋ héhan , ómakiye. | Last time he came back, he helped me. |
| (c) | Glí čhán , ómakiye. | When(ever) he comes back, he helps me. |
| (d) | Glí kiŋhán , ómakiyin kte . | When he comes back, he will help me. |

(a) past event, (b) past specific event, (c) habitual event, (d) future potential event. For more details and practice exercises, see the [Lakota Grammar Handbook](#).

Resources

I. Official & Academic:

Oglala Lakota College (OLC): <https://www.olc.edu/> (Tribal college, including Historical Center & Library Archives)
South Dakota Dept. of Tribal Relations – Oglala Sioux Tribe:
<https://sdtribalrelations.sd.gov/tribes/Oglala-Sioux-Tribe.aspx>

II. Language:

Lakota Language Consortium (LLC): <https://lakhota.org/> (Leading resource for learning Lakota language)

III. Cultural & Museums:

The Heritage Center at Red Cloud Indian School: <https://heritagecenter.mahpiyaluta.org/> (Art, culture, and history on Pine Ridge)
Oglala Lakota Living History Village (Badlands NP): Search for recent news/articles for details (e.g., "Oglala Lakota Living History Village opens")

IV. Books (Key Titles):

Black Elk Speaks by John G. Neihardt
A Pictographic History of the Oglala Sioux by Helen H. Blish (Amos Bad Heart Bull)

Lakota Woman by Mary Crow Dog

The Journey of Crazy Horse by Joseph M. Marshall III

V. Documentaries & Films:

Incident at Oglala (1992)
Skins (2002)
Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee (2007)
The Bears on Pine Ridge (PBS)

VI. Archival:

Library of Congress Digital Collections: (Search "Oglala," "Lakota," "Pine Ridge")
South Dakota State Historical Society (Indian Archives): <https://history.sd.gov/archives/data/archives/project.aspx>