

WHAT TO KNOW BEFORE YOU START

The Filipino alphabet “Baybayin” has 20 letters. This language has both traditional letters (17) and added letters from the Spanish conquistadores.

- *5 vowels*: a, e, i, o, u
- *14 consonants*: b, k, d, s, h, l, m, n, ng, p, r, s, t, w, y

**NOTE*: Some native words will have “free alteration”, meaning that the spelling of the word might change but the meaning of the word does not change. This will only apply to native words.

- Example: Gabi and Gabe both mean “night” but the last letter can be an i or e

These letters make specific sounds, which are represented by specific symbols or *phonemes*. This is like how musicians use IPA for songs in other languages. There are 22 of these Filipino phonemes in Tagalog, with some borrowed ones.

- *5 vowels*: [a, e, i, o, u]
- *16 consonants*: [p, b, t, d, k, g, s, m, n, ŋ, l, r, w, j, h ?]
- *Borrowed*: [f, v, ʃ, z, tʃ]
- *1 length*: [:]

[?] The glottal stop is also considered a phoneme. It can change words that are homonyms, or words that have the same sound and spelling, but different meaning.

- Example: the following word “upo” can mean different with the glottal
 - [upu ?] means sit
 - [u:poh] means a kind of gourd vegetable

These phonemes, though existing on their own, can be found in combinations, like [ng].

Syllabic stress (indicated by ‘) generally falls on the end or penultimate (second to last) syllable. The stress is important as wrong stress can change the word (as seen with the glottal stop and “upo”). **Syllabic structure** is usually CV or CVC. Clusters can occur when there is a consonant glide (“buwan” is [bwan]). Words may also use **reduplication** to augment or diminish the strength of the word. You may see duplication of a full word or just a syllable, such as in “bulaklak” (flower), which comes from *bulak* but repeats the last syllable. There are also affixes in the language, which I will include in the tables below.

TAGALOG IPA SYMBOLS

Vowel Sounds				
Closed high front	[i]	bit, deposit	[írog] (loved one) [ʔ'írog]	words in other languages
Close-mid front	[ɛ]	net, lesson	mésa (table) ['mɛsə]	
Closed high back	[u]	Food, blue	Gunitâ (memory) [gu 'nita ʔ]	
Closed-mid back	[o]	obey, protect *Spanish <i>mole</i>	iyó (yours) [i 'jo]	
Open low central vowel	[a] [ɑ] (*interchange)	father, honor	gábi (night) [gə'bi] *never sounds [ə]	
Diphthong	[ai]*	high, night	búhay (life) ['buhai]	
“	[oi]	toy, loyal	baboy (pig) ['baboi]	
“	[au]*	how, loud	bughaw (blue) [bug'hau]	
“	[ɛi]		réyna (queen) ['reina]	
“	[iu]		maliw [less intense] ['maliu]	
Consonant Sounds				
Semi consonant glide	[j] [y]	year, view (glide in i form)	Yákap (embrace) ['jakap]	Joo,
“	[w]	winter, weather	Waray (Philippine dialect) [wa 'rai]	
Plosive (voiced)	[b]	beautiful, bright	bibíg (lips) [bi 'big]	
“ (unvoiced)	[p]	puppy, peace	peso (Philippine currency) ['peso]	

“ (voiced)	[g]	grace, garden	ligáya (joy) [li ‘gaja]	
“ (unvoiced)	[k]	candle, kill	lákad (walk) [‘la kad]	
“ (voiced)	[d]	deer, under	dibdíb (chest) [dib ‘dib]	
“ (unvoiced)	[t]	Tear, tundra	tuwá (delight) [tu ‘wa]	
“ (voiced)	[dʒ]	joke, jazz	Dyáket (jacket) [‘dʒa ket]	
“ (unvoiced)	[tʃ] *borrowed	teacher, chart	kotse (car) [ko :tʃɛ]	
Fricative (voiced)	[v] *borrowed	violin, vent	Villa (common last name) [‘vil ja]	
“ (unvoiced)	[f] *borrowed	flower, fun	Filipino [fili ‘pino]	
“ (glottal)	[h]	happy, holy *English <i>h</i> , not Spanish	lahát (all) [la ‘hat]	
Dental spirant (voiced)	[z] *borrowed	zebra, xylophone	Zambales (Ph province) [zam ‘ba les]	
“ (unvoiced)	[s]	sing, solid	púsò [heart] [‘pu ‘so]	
Nasal consonants	[m]	mango, money	damdámin (feeling) [dam ‘damin]	
“ (dental)	[n]	note, name	Nánay (mother) [‘nanai]	
“	[ŋ]	walking, ring *only when <i>n</i> followed by <i>g</i>	Ngayón (now) [nga ‘jon]	
Lateral dental consonant	[l]	lips, lilac	balík (return) [ba ‘lik]	

Single trill (or flip)	[r]	receive, run	regálo (gift) [re 'galo]	
Affixes				
Infix Infinitive/preterite marker	-um	sulat (write) → sumulat (to write)		*always after initial C (consonant) of the root)
“ Preterite or present passive marker	-in	sulat → sinulat (written)		
Prefix Person associated w/ nominal root	Ka- + nominal root	kuwarto (room) + ka- → kakwarto (roommate)		*sometimes, first syllable of nominal root is reduplicated
“ causative	Pa- + verb root	tago (keep) + tago → patago (something caused to be kept)		
“ Emphasizing or adjective marking particle	Ma- + nominal/adj root	laki (big) + ma → Malaki (very big)		*from “may” meaning “there is/are”
“ Partial reduplication	CV + root	Magkáno (how much) + repetition of ka → magkakano (how much a piece)		* can be for plurality, distribution, restrictive, verbs
“ Full reduplication				

Sa Ugoy ng Duyan (The Sway of the Cradle) (*Keinun Heiluminen*)
By Lucio San Pedro (1913-2002)

Sana'y di nagmaliw ang dati kong araw

Nang muntipang bata sa piling ni Nanay

Nais kong maulit ang awit niinang mahal

Awiting pagibig habang akoy' nasa duyan

Sa aking pagtulog na labis ang himbing

Ang bantay ko'y tala ang tanod ko'y bit'win.

Sa piling ni Nanay, langit ang buhay.

puso kong may dusa sabik sa ugoy ng duyan.

Saan Ka man Naroroon (Wherever you are) (Missä tahansa oletkin)
By Levi Celerio (1910-2002)

Saan ka man naroroon sinta

Pag-ibig kong wagas, ang iyong madarama.

Kailan pa man sa iyo'y di lilimot

Pusong uhaw sa iyong pag-irog.

Saan ka man naroroon sinta

Pangarap Ko'y ikaw pagkat mahal kita.

Asahan mong sa habang panahon.

Alaala kita, saan ka man naroroon.

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