

Foreword

First version of Chinese alphabet, also recognized as Bopomofo, was created in 1913 and released in 1918. It was repeatedly revised for perfection. In 1935, Ministry of Education had released *A Specimen of Bopomofo Printing Font next to Chinese Character*. Copper printing molds of Chinese character with Bopomofo on the side were made according to the released document, and were used to lower the difficulty on learning Chinese characters. Bopomofo had become the best tool to learn Chinese since then.

Bopomofo is created according to the principle of Chinese traditional phonology and poetic rhymes. It uses sound, rhyme, and tone as simplified alliteration and assonance method which was used in ancient time with Chinese characters. Therefore, using Bopomofo to spell Chinese is just like using characters to spell. This is the most accurate method to learn pronunciation. It is also easy to learn when there is only one sound for one character.

Bopomofo can not only be used as a tool to spell Chinese character and adjust pronunciation, but it can also be used on dictionary to edit word sequence and searching system. When it comes to elementary textbook or children's readers, it becomes the best method of learning and recognizing Chinese. Knowing Bopomofo is like obtaining a self-learning tool. It allows a person to access books and magazines with Bopomofo or operating computer with phonetic typing system.

Everything requires standardization since information technology is booming nowadays. Ministry of Education had released *Published Version of Standard Chinese Font* in 1994 as a standard for society. By now, most textbook, media, and IT industry have already applied the standard. However, even though Bopomofo had been released for years and used as the obligatory lesson in elementary school's Chinese courses, its stroke number, writing sequence, and position are sometimes with ambiguity. Furthermore, the Bopomofo created by IT industry is actually different from the released version. Unnecessary problems had occurred because of this discrepancy.

Ministry of Education had found out about this issue and had invited professional phonetic professors, Chang, Hsiao-yu, Lin, Kuo-liang, Chang, Wen-pin, Tseng, Jung-fen, Hu, Chien-hsiung, and Su, Mao-sheng, to build up a project team responsible by myself, while professor Hu, Chien-hsiung takes over the responsibility of design director, and Professor Su, Mao-sheng as the art director. Moreover, Mr. Wu, Yan-cheng was invited as the designer. The target of the team is to redesign and create *Bopomofo Manual* according to *A Specimen of Bopomofo Printing Font next to Chinese Character* released in 1935. The content was required to include reference graphics of *List of Bopomofo Alphabet*, *Ratio Reference between Chinese Character and Bopomofo*, *Specimen of Chinese Character with Bopomofo* (portrait/landscape), *Reference Table of Chinese Character with Bopomofo Syllables*, to fulfill actual need of education and application onto computer typesetting for printing industry.

In order to deliver correct usage of Bopomofo in simplicity and clearness, this manual is mainly composed by graphics. Since the manual is about to be published, I simply note down this foreword to express my thankfulness to all the professors in my team. I also like to extend my appreciation to inspector, Mr. Yang, Yung-chuan, and assistance, Ms. Yang, Yu-wen, from Chinese Popularizing Committee for all their supports and coordination on administration issues.

Li, Hsien
November, 2000

Reader's Guide

1. This manual is published and released for the actual need of education, IT industry, and printing industry.
2. In *List of Bopomofo Alphabet*, it lists out all Bopomofo characters.

(Sound characters, “万”, “兀”, “广”, are not used for pronunciation, while rhyme character, “𪛗”, and the mark of dark tone, “ㄣˊ”, will be left out on Bopomofo notes. Explanatory table of sound and rhyme characters is used to explain writing sequence and stroke number, while the explanatory table of intonation levels is used to explain category, nature, and position of notes.)
3. *Ratio Reference between Chinese Character and Bopomofo* and *Specimen of Chinese Character with Bopomofo* offered by this manual has included with two noting methods, which are portrait and landscape.
4. In *Ratio Reference between Chinese Character and Bopomofo*, length and width of a Chinese character is 30:30, while the space for Bopomofo is 30:15 for portrait and 15:30 for landscape. Furthermore, there are three different ratios for Bopomofo, which are 9:9, 9:8, and 8:9. The ratio will be used according to needs.
5. *Reference Table of Chinese Character with Bopomofo Syllables* has its order according to Four Hu, which are kaikou (open mouth), qichi (even teeth), hekou (closed mouth), and cuokou (round mouth). One character is raised for each syllable which can be written. The manual is using portrait version as example.
6. The *List of Bopomofo Alphabet* and *Ratio Reference between Chinese Character and Bopomofo* in this manual can be download from the homepage of Ministry of Education.

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1. List of Bopomofo Alphabet

a. Main list

Note:

(1) Sound characters, “万”, “兀”, “广”, are not used for pronunciation.

(2) Rhyme characters, “𪛗” is left out on Bopomofo notes.

(3) This manual is recreated according to *A Specimen of Bopomofo Printing Font next to Chinese Character*. In the list, the rhyme

character “一” is presented as “一” in portrait text and “丨” in

landscape text. However, in present time, for reasons, like the convenient of information exchange and using habit, rhyme character

“一” is normally presented as “一”, but is also possible to be noted as

“丨”.

b. Explanatory Table of Sound Characters

Bopomofo Note	Writing Sequence	Stroke Number	Description
		One stroke	
		Two strokes	The last stroke should not be pressed down at the end.
		Two strokes	There is no hook as the end of the last stroke.
		Two strokes	The second stroke should be connected with the starting point of the first stroke.
		Two strokes	
		Three strokes	The second stroke should slant all the way down.
		One stroke	
		Two strokes	
		Two strokes	
		Two strokes	
		Two strokes	The second stroke should be connected with the starting point of the first stroke.
		Two strokes	The first stroke should not go across the second stroke after rising.
		One stroke	
		Two strokes	
		Four strokes	It can also be simplified into three strokes. The simplified sequence

			would be
		Three strokes	
		Three strokes	The third stroke should be connected with the starting point of the second stroke.
		Four strokes	There is a dot in the middle. It can be simplified into three strokes. The simplified sequence would be
		Two strokes	
		Two strokes	There is no hook as the end of the last stroke.
		Two strokes	

c. Explanatory Table of Rhyme Characters

Bopomofo Note	Writing Sequence	Stroke Number	Description
		Three strokes	
		Two strokes	
		Two strokes	
		Three strokes	There is no hook as the end of the last stroke.
		Three strokes	The stroke at the bottom-right corner does not need a hook.
		One stroke	
		Three strokes	
		Two strokes	The last stroke should not be pressed down at the end. The corner at upper-left should be left open.
		Two strokes	There is no hook as the end of the last stroke.
		One stroke	
		Three strokes	There is no hook as the end of the last stroke.
		One stroke	
		Two strokes	There is no hook as the end of the last stroke.
		One stroke	It can also be noted as “ ” in portrait text.
		Two strokes	The second stroke should not be pressed down at the end.
		Two strokes	

d. Explanatory Table of Intonation Marks

Intonation Level	Bopomofo Note	Description	Position
Dark tone		This high and flat tone can be noted as a short dash mark and could be left out in Bopomofo note.	This tone should be noted at the upper-right corner of the last Bopomofo note.
Light tone		The note of this tone is marked from lower-left to upper-right to present its rising sound.	Same as above.
Rising tone		This hook-like note goes down first and rise afterward.	Same as above.
Departing tone		The note of this tone is marked from upper-left to lower-right to present its dropping sound.	Same as above.
Neutral tone		A dot is used to present a light and short tone.	It is marked on the top of Bopomofo note in portrait text and marked at the very front of the note in landscape text.

Example of intonation marks:

1. Marks of the four tones should be noted at the upper-right corner of a Bopomofo character in both portrait and landscape text.
2. The mark of neutral tone should be
 - a. Noted on the top of Bopomofo characters in portrait text.
For example:
 - b. Noted at the very front of Bopomofo characters in landscape text. For example:

2. Ratio Reference between Chinese Character and Bopomofo (Portrait)

Example 1: Ratio of Chinese character is 30:30, while ratio of the Bopomofo character on the side is 9:9.

One Bopomofo character with intonation mark.

Two Bopomofo characters with intonation mark.

Three Bopomofo characters with mark of four tones.

Three Bopomofo characters with neutral mark.

Example 2: Ratio of Chinese character is 30:30, while ratio of the Bopomofo character on the side is 9:8.

One Bopomofo character with intonation mark.

Two Bopomofo characters with intonation mark.

Three Bopomofo characters with mark of four tones.

Three Bopomofo characters with neutral mark.

Example 3: Ratio of Chinese character is 30:30, while ratio of the Bopomofo character on the side is 8:9.

One Bopomofo character with intonation mark.

Two Bopomofo characters with intonation mark.

Three Bopomofo characters with mark of four tones.

Three Bopomofo characters with neutral mark.

3. Specimen of Chinese Character with Bopomofo (Portrait)

One Bopomofo character with mark of four tones.

One Bopomofo character with neutral mark.

Two Bopomofo characters with mark of four tones.

Two Bopomofo characters with neutral mark.

Three Bopomofo characters with mark of four tones.

Three Bopomofo characters with neutral mark.

4. Ratio Reference between Chinese Character and Bopomofo (Landscape)

Example 1: Ratio of Chinese character is 30:30, while ratio of the Bopomofo character on the side is 9:9.

One Bopomofo character with intonation mark.

Two Bopomofo characters with intonation mark.

Three Bopomofo characters with mark of four tones.

Three Bopomofo characters with neutral mark.

Example 2: Ratio of Chinese character is 30:30, while ratio of the Bopomofo character on the side is 9:8.

One Bopomofo character with intonation mark.

Two Bopomofo characters with intonation mark.

Three Bopomofo characters with mark of four tones.

Three Bopomofo characters with neutral mark.

Example 3: Ratio of Chinese character is 30:30, while ratio of the Bopomofo character on the side is 8:9.

One Bopomofo character with intonation mark.

Two Bopomofo characters with intonation mark.

Three Bopomofo characters with mark of four tones.

Three Bopomofo characters with neutral mark.

5. Specimen of Chinese Character with Bopomofo (Landscape)

One Bopomofo character with mark of four tones.

One Bopomofo character with neutral mark.

Two Bopomofo characters with mark of four tones.

Two Bopomofo characters with neutral mark.

Three Bopomofo characters with mark of four tones.

Three Bopomofo characters with neutral mark.

6. Reference Table of Chinese Character with Bopomofo Syllables

a. Kaikou (open mouth)

① Sound character ② Rhyme character ③ Four tones ④ Example.

Character of neutral tone with changed rhyme is placed in [].

b. Qichi (even teeth)

c. Hekou (closed mouth)

d. Cuokou (round mouth)

Note:

1. The note, “○”, in the column of sound character means “no sound character is needed.”
2. Rhyme character “ㄞ” is also called empty rhyme. It will not be noted in the Bopomofo area.
3. The empty space in the table means there is no combination of the pronunciation.
4. The space with “○” in the table means there is no Chinese character for the pronunciation.
5. Characters of the example are from *Reedited Version of Chinese Dictionary Revised Edition*.

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