

How To Read

Below is a table of the symbols used in "Modified Baybayin" alphabet.

Baybayin Symbol	Latin Letter	Sound
ᜆ	A	/a/
ᜈ	E / I	/e/ /i/
ᜊ	O / U	/o/ /u/
ᜋ	Ca / Ka	/ca/ /ka/
ᜌ	Ba / Va	/ba/ /va/
ᜍ	Da	/da/
ᜎ	Fa / Pa / Pha	/fa/ /pa/
ᜏ	Ha	/ha/
ᜐ	Ga	/ga/
ᜑ	La	/la/
ᜒ	Ma	/ma/
ᜓ	Na	/na/
᜔	Nga	/ŋa/
᜕	Sa / Za	/sa/ /za/
᜖	Ta	/ta/
᜗	Wa	/wa/
᜘	Ya	/ja/
᜙	E / I	/e/ /i/
᜚	O / U	/o/ /u/
᜛	Consonant marker	

Examples

The first three symbols in the table represent vowels. Tagalog vowels originally only consisted of A, I and O. Then when borrowed words were introduced from Spanish and English, E and U were added and utilized the same symbol as I and O respectively. These are typically used when a word starts with a vowel, like “ama”, or when there are two consecutive vowels, like “maaari”. See examples below:

ᜆᜈ	ᜆ	ᜇ
ama	a	ma

ᜆᜆᜆᜈᜈ	ᜇ	ᜆ	ᜇ	ᜇᜈ
maaari	ma	a	a	ri

The next fourteen rows show the base symbols for consonants. By default all of the consonant symbols have an “a” after the associated consonant, making them “syllabic”. For example if you wanted to write the word “ba” or “ka” they would both be the symbol associated with the respective consonant without a mark above or below (more on that later). See example below:

ᜆᜈ	ᜆ	ᜇᜈ
baka	ba	ka

The next two symbols are called "kudlits". A kudlit is added either above or below a consonant symbol to modify which vowel follows. If a kudlit is added above the vowel that follows is either an "i" or an "e". If a kudlit is added below the vowel that follows is either an "o" or a "u".

In the word “filipino” the first three symbols will have kudlits above because they are followed by “i”. The last symbol will have a kudlit below because it is followed by an “o”. See example below:

ᜆᜆᜆᜈᜈᜈ	ᜆᜈ	ᜆᜈ	ᜆᜈ	ᜇᜈ
Filipino	fi	li	pi	no

The final symbol in the table is the "krus" kudlit. This cancels the vowel, leaving the consonant standing alone. In the word “aking” the symbol for “ng” has a krus kudlit below because it is not followed by a vowel. See example below:

ᐱᐢᐳᐢᐳᐢ	ᐱ	ᐳ	ᐳᐢ
aking	a	ki	ng

The First Rule of Baybayin

“Kung anong bigkas, siyang baybay.”

Baybayin is a phonetic alphabet meaning, words are written how they sound not necessarily as they are expressed in the Latin alphabet. The most common examples of this are "ng" and "mga". These two words are pronounced "nang" and "manga" and should be expressed as such when written in Baybayin.

ᐢᐳᐢ	ᐢ	ᐳᐢ
ng (nang)	na	ng

ᐢᐳᐢ	ᐢ	ᐳᐢ
mga (manga)	ma	nga

Borrowed words


There are many words in Tagalog that have been borrowed from other languages. Most notably from Spanish and English. This is why, when transliterating modern Tagalog into Baybayin, many symbols represent two or more letters from the Latin alphabet OR are a combination of symbols to produce a similar sound. Here is a table of the most notable borrowed sounds and how they are expressed in Baybayin:

Baybayin Symbol	Original Tagalog	Borrowed
ᜆ	I	E
ᜇ	O	U
ᜈ	K	C / Ch
ᜉ	B	V
ᜊ	F	P / Ph
ᜋ	S	Z
ᜌᜍ	Siy	Sh
ᜎᜍ	Tiy	Ch / Ci
ᜏᜍ ᜐᜍ	Diy / Dy	J (Eng)
ᜑ	H	J (Spa) / G (Spa)
ᜒᜓ	Kuw	Qu (Spa / Eng)
᜔	K	Qu (Spa)

Examples

Some are a combination of symbols used to mimic certain sounds like siy (sh) and f (ph). See examples below:

شامپو	شا	م	پو
shampoo	sha	m	poo

	ᜏ	ᜒ	ᜃ	ᜄ	ᜆ
Philippines	Phi	li	ppi	n(e)	s

Some letters are borrowed from both Spanish and English but make different sounds according to the context. These are mainly j and qu. See examples below:

ਭਾਵੰ ਪ੍ਰਣਾਲੀ	ਭਾਵੰ	ਪ੍ਰ	ਣ	ਭ	ਭ
question	que	s	ti	o	n

အိန္ဒိယ	အိ	ယ	ဂ
Quezon	Que (ke)	zo	n

ئەسلى	ئەس	يا	يا
ئىككىنچىسى	ئىككىنچىسى	يا	يا
Jesus (eng/spa)	Je (diye/he)	su	s

The letter C contributes to forming multiple different sounds in various borrowed words. It can be expressed having an 's', 'k' or 'ch' sound. See examples below:

ဗီၵ်ႈဢၼ်ႇ	ဗီၵ်ႈ	ဢၼ်ႇ	တီၵ်ႈ	ႁူၵ်ႈ
centro	ce	n	t	ro

ဗီၵ်ႈဢၼ်ႇ	ဗီၵ်ႈ	ႁူၵ်ႈ	ႁူၵ်ႈ	တီၵ်ႈ
secreto	se	c (k)	re	to

ဢၼ်ႇဢၼ်ႇဢၼ်ႇ	ဢၼ်ႇ	ဢၼ်ႇ	ဢၼ်ႇ	ဢၼ်ႇ	တီၵ်ႈ
ancient	a	n	cie	n	t

When Ch is used it commonly is expressed as 'ch' or 'k'. See examples below:

ဢၼ်ႇဢၼ်ႇ	ဢၼ်ႇ	ႁူၵ်ႈ	ဢၼ်ႇ
church	chu	r	ch

ဢၼ်ႇဢၼ်ႇ	ဢၼ်ႇ	ႁူၵ်ႈ	ဢၼ်ႇ	ႁူၵ်ႈ
mechanic	me	cha (ka)	ni	c (k)

E and O also originally didn't exist and are expressed in the same way as I and U respectively. See examples below:

ဢၼ်ႇဢၼ်ႇ	ဢၼ်ႇ	ဢၼ်ႇ	ဢၼ်ႇ
Jesus	Je	su	s

Ḥḥḥḥḥ	Ḥ	ḥ	ḥ	ḥ
Egipto	E	gi (hi)	p	to

ḥḥ	ḥ	ḥ
uso	u	so

The final borrowed consonants are V, Ph, P and Z. See examples below:

ḥḥ	ḥ	ḥ
vaka (baka)	va	ka

ḥḥḥḥḥḥḥ	ḥ	ḥ	ḥ	ḥ	ḥ
Philippines	Phi	li	pi	n(e)	s

ḥḥḥ	ḥ	ḥ	ḥ
plano	p	la	no

ḥḥḥ	ḥ	ḥ	ḥ
zebra	ze	b	ra