

- **Vowel length** is often unwritten; when written, long vowels have a macron, and short vowels a breve.
  - ātl **water**, ihui **thus**; or atl, ihui
  - tepetl > tepētl **mountain** or tepētl **someone's mat**
- Long **ō** is often written **u**, but this is rare for short **o**; **v** for **u** is common word-initially.
  - telpuchtli > telpōchtli **young man**
  - vmpa > ōmpa **yonder**
- Vowels **i, ĩ** could also be written **y** or **j** and vice versa for semivowel **y**.
  - yuh > iuh **like**, injc > in ic **so that**
  - yiollo > ĩyollo **his, her heart**
- Glottal stop **h** is usually only written between vowels; it can be indicated with a grave or a circumflex accent on the preceding vowel.
  - amo > ahmō **not**, ehecatl > ehēcatl **wind**
  - tlātoāni > tlahtoāni **king**
- Clusters **oa** and **ohua** are often confused, as are **ia** and **iya**.
  - cohuatl > coātl **snake**, pia > piya **hold**
- **hu, uh** may be written **o** or **u**.
  - iehoatl > yehhuatl **he, she, it**, eua > ēhua **depart**
- **cua** is written **qua**, **coa**; **uc** can be written **cuh, cu, uhc**.
  - tecuhtli > tēuctli **lord**; quavitl > cuahuitl **tree**
- **z** can be spelt **q**; **tz** can be spelt **ṭq**.
  - çoquitl > zoquitl **clay**; tçonquīca > tzonquiza **finish**
- **n** after vowels could be written with a tilde over the preceding vowel.
  - ipā > ĩpan **on it**;
  - ma tlaq̃cā > mā tlaquācān **let them eat**

- a<sup>o</sup>: ahmō
- -<sup>co</sup>: -tzinco
- j<sup>o</sup>: Juan
- q̃: que(h)
- q̣: qui(h)
- q̃: qua(h)
- tote<sup>o</sup>, tte<sup>o</sup>, etc.: totēcuiyō
- x̄po, x̄o, etc.: Cristo

tz	+ch >chch <sup>1</sup>	nimitz+chiya > nimichiya	I await you
ch	+y >chch <sup>1</sup>	oquich+yötl > oquichchötl	manliness
t	+# >h	mati, pret. mah	know
n, m+hu>hu		am+huälhuih > ahuälhuih	y'all come
l	+tl >ll	pil+tl > pilli	child
l	+y >ll	pil+yötl > pillötl	childhood
uh	+m >mm	cuauh+mäitl > cuammäitl	tree-branch
n	+m >mm	on+mati > ommati	she feels inside
n	+p >mp	non+pëhua > nompëhua	I go forth
m	+# >n	nemi, pret. nen	live
m	+c >nc	cem+cah > cencah	very
m	+ch >nch	quim+chihua > quinchihua	I do them
m	+cu >ncu	cem+cuemil > cuememil	one field
m	+n >nn	am+nemi > annemi	y'all live
m	+t >nt	cem+tetl > centetl	one stone
m	+tl >ntl	am+tlapiya > antlapiya	y'all keep stuff
m	+tz >ntz	cem+tzontli > centzontli	four hundred
uh	+p >pp	nāuh+pa > nāppa	four times
ch	+tz >tztz <sup>1</sup>	tōch+tzintli > tōtztintli	dear rabbit
tz	+y >tztz <sup>1</sup>	huitz+yoh > huitzoh	thorny
n, m+x	>xx <sup>1</sup>	quim+xōxa > quixxōxa	he hexes them
ch	+x >xx <sup>1</sup>	nēch+xōxa > nēxxōxa	he hexes me
x	+y >xx <sup>1</sup>	mix+yoh > mixxoh	cloudy
y	+# >x, z <sup>2</sup>	piya, pret. pix	do
h	+V >yV	ah+oc > ayoc	no longer
z	+y >zz <sup>1</sup>	ez+yoh > ezzoh	bloody
n, m+z	>zz <sup>1</sup>	zan+cē > zaccē	just one
ch	+z >zz <sup>1</sup>	amēch+zāloh > amēzzāloh	he held y'all

<sup>1</sup> Rarely written as geminates.

<sup>2</sup> z if it follows a z, e.g. celiya, pret. celiz blossom.

- -cauh, pl. -cahuān  
Vb-er<sup>1</sup>
- -huia to use N,  
provide N
- -(l)iztli Vb-ing
- -lli something  
Vb-ed
- -ni, pl. -nimeh  
Vb-er<sup>2</sup>
- -qui, pl. -queh  
Vb-er<sup>2</sup>
- -tia to provide  
with N, become N
- -yo inalienable  
possession
- -yoh thing full of  
N
- -yōtl N-ness,  
N-ship

<sup>1</sup> Only possessed nouns  
<sup>2</sup> Only absolutive nouns

- miqui **die**,  
miquiliztli **death**
- nonac **my meat**,  
nonacayo **my flesh**
- tlamati **he knows**  
**things**, tlamatini (he  
is a) **scholar**

Specific possessor		Indefinite possessor
1 sg.	pl.	tē- someone's
2 no-	to-	tla- something's
3 ī-	in-/im-	

- Absolute suffixes
 

sg.	pl.		
C-tli	-tin, -meh		
V-tl	-(me)h		
l-li	-tin		
-in	-meh, -tin		
- Possessive suffixes
 

sg.	pl.
C-hui	-huān
V-uh	
- Absolutive indicates non-possessed nouns.
- Possessive indicates nouns with a possessive prefix.
- Plurals in **-h** and **-tin** may have reduplication of the first syllable of the stem, whose vowel is lengthened, e.g. **conētl child**, pl. **cōcone**; **tōchtli rabbit**, pl. **tōtōchtin**.
- Only animate nouns are inflected for number, e.g. **cihuātl woman**, **cihuah women**; **tetl rock**, **rocks**.

-i(o)	in, at
-ca	by means of, through, with
-huān	(together) with, moreover, and
-icampa	behind
-ihtic	inside, within
-ixpan	in front of, facing
-nāhuac	next to, close to
-pampa	because of, concerning
-pan	on, in, at
-(t)icpac	on top of
-tech	next to, adhering to
-tlan	by, next to, below
-tzintlan	below, underneath

- Postpositions take a possessive prefix, e.g. **notech** next to me, **ihuan** with it, or a noun, e.g. **tlalticpac** on the earth.
- N-Postposition has a general indefinite meaning; **t/im**-Postposition **in** N has a specific definite meaning, cf. **tepan** on stone(s), **īpan** in **tel** on the stone(s)
- Postpositions may take the reverential suffix **-tzinco**

## Verb prefixes

Always in this order

- ➊ Imperative/optative marker  
mā if, let it be  
tlā if, let it be (please)  
māca[mō] mā + ahmō  
tlāca[mō] tlā + ahmō
- ➋ Negative marker  
ah not, un-  
ahmō not, no
- ➌ Antecessive prefix  
ō already
- ➍ Subject pronoun  
sg. pl.  
1 ni- ti-  
2 ti-<sup>1</sup> am-/an-<sup>1</sup>  
3 ø- ø-  
<sup>1</sup> xi- if optative
- ➎ Definitive object pronoun  
sg. pl.  
1 nēch- tēch-  
2 mitz- amēch-  
3 c-/qui- quim-/im-
- ➏ Directional marker  
huāl hither  
on thither
- ➐ Reflexive pronoun  
sg. pl.  
1 no- to-  
2 mo- } -self, -selves  
3 mo- }
- ➑ Indefinite object pronoun  
tē- someone, people  
tla- something, stuff

## Verb classes

- Cl 1 Vbs in -VCCV
- Cl 2 Vbs in -VCV
- Cl 3 Vbs in -VV
- Cl 4 One-syllable Vbs in -a
- Exceptions
  - Vbs in -Co, -tla, -ca: Cl 1
  - Intransitive Vbs in -hua: Cl 1
  - One-syllable Vbs in -i: Cl 1
  - Transitive Vbs in -hua: Cl 2
  - Vbs in -ya: Cl 1 or 2
  - tōna be warm, pāca wash: Cl 1 not 2
  - zōma become angry: Cl 4 not 2

## Verbal bases

B 1 is the dictionary form. Other bases are derived as follows:

	B 2	B 3
Cl 1	B 2 = B 1	B 3 = B 1
Cl 2	-V > -ø	B 3 = B 1
Cl 3	-V > -h	-V <sub>1</sub> V <sub>2</sub> > -V <sub>1</sub> :
Cl 4	-h	-V > -V:

## Example

	B 1	B 2	B 3
Cl 1	chōca-	chōca-	chōca- cry
Cl 2	yōli-	yōl-	yōli- live
Cl 3	āltia-	āltih-	ālti- bathe
Cl 4	cua-	cuah-	cuā- eat

## Tense/Mood endings

Tense/Mood	B	sg.	pl.
Present	1	-ø	-h
Habitual	1	-ni <sup>1</sup>	-nih <sup>1</sup>
Imperfect	1	-ya <sup>2</sup>	-yah
Preterite	2	-c <sup>3</sup>	-queh
Pluperfect	2	-ca	-cah
Admonitive	2	-h <sup>3</sup>	-(h)tin <sup>3</sup>
Future	3	-z	-zqueh
Optative	3	-ø	-cān
Conditional	3	-zquiya	-zquiyah

<sup>1</sup> Preceding V lengthened

<sup>2</sup> Preceding V lengthened except Cl 1

<sup>3</sup> Only Cl 1, otherwise -ø

## Irregular verbs

- ➊ cā/ye be
 

	sg.	pl.
Present	cah	cateh
Imperfect	yeya	yeyah
Preterite	catca	catcah
Future	yez	yezqueh
- ➋ huītza go
 

	sg.	pl.
Present	huītz	huītzeh
Imperfect	huītza	huītzah
- ➌ yā/huih come
 

	sg.	pl.
Present	yauh	huih
Imperfect	yāya	yāyah
Preterite	yah	yahqueh
Future	yāz	yāzqueh
- ➍ huāllā/huālhuih come
 

	sg.	pl.
Pres.	huāllauh	huālhuih
Impf.	huālhuiya	huālhuiyah
Pret.	huāllah	huāllahqueh
Fut.	huāllaz	huāllazqueh

## Auxiliary verbs

Auxiliary verbs specify physical position of the main verb, condition under which the main verb takes place and mark aspect, and are made as follows:

- ➊ The main verb in the preterite stem
- ➋ Ligature morpheme -t(i)-
- ➌ The auxiliary verb, bearing tense and number

Verb	Ind.	Aux.
cah	be	be Vb-ing
ēhua	rise	depart Vb-ing
huetzi	fall	Vb quickly
huītza	come	come Vb-ing
ihcac	stand	stand Vb-ing
mani	be, cover	be Vb-ing
nemi	live	go about Vb-ing
(on)oc	lie	lie Vb-ing
quiza	emerge	pass Vb-ing
yauh <sup>1</sup>	go	be Vb-ing

<sup>1</sup> ti+yauh > -tiuh

## Verbs of purposive motion

Purposive motion suffixes take the present stem

		Come	Go
Pres./Pret.	sg.	-co	-to
	pl.	-coh	-toh
Future	sg.	-quiuh	-tiuh
	pl.	-quihuih	-tihuih
Optative	sg.	-qui	-h, -ti
	pl.	-quih	-tih, tin

## Verb suffixes

- ➊ Causative  
-(l)tia cause to Vb
- ➋ Passive  
-(l)ø  
-(o)hua } be Vb'ed  
-hualø
- ➌ Applicative  
-i(l)ia do Vb for someone

A reflexive prefix combined with either a causative or an applicative suffix creates a reverential verb

## Example

niquittato I went to see it

## Literature consulted

- ➊ Andrews, J. Richard. *Introduction to Classical Nahuatl*. Rev. ed. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2003. 678 pp.
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- ➌ Lockhart, James. *Nahuatl as Written: Lessons in Older Written Nahuatl with Copious Examples and Texts*. Nahuatl Studies Series 6. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001. 251 pp.