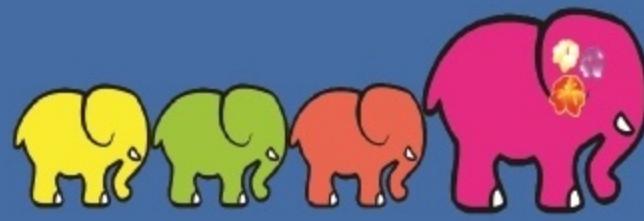


# We Learn Thai



Chiang Mai



Reading and Writing  
Level 1

[www.welearnthai.ac.th](http://www.welearnthai.ac.th)

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## Lesson 1: The Thai Writing System

Thai uses an alphabet of 44 consonants, 32 vowels, 4 tone marks and various other symbols for punctuation, numbers etc. Although there are irregular pronunciations, Thai is generally phonetic. It is pronounced the way it is written.

Learning to read and write Thai from the beginning has many advantages. Due to the fact that it is phonetic, you will be reinforcing your listening and speaking skills while learning to read and write. In fact, most people find that their pronunciation is more accurate when reading Thai script. Unlike many transliteration systems, it incorporates all the elements of pronunciation, including tones and vowel length.

The longer you rely on transliteration, the more time you waste reinforcing a writing system that will be virtually useless in Thailand. Furthermore, transliteration is a confusing hodgepodge with almost as many systems as there are books about Thailand. Put a little extra effort into learning the alphabet now! Then you can use Thai script while studying conversation, reinforcing reading and writing skills that will be invaluable to you in Thailand.



ກ ແ ຕ  
ກ ແ ຕ

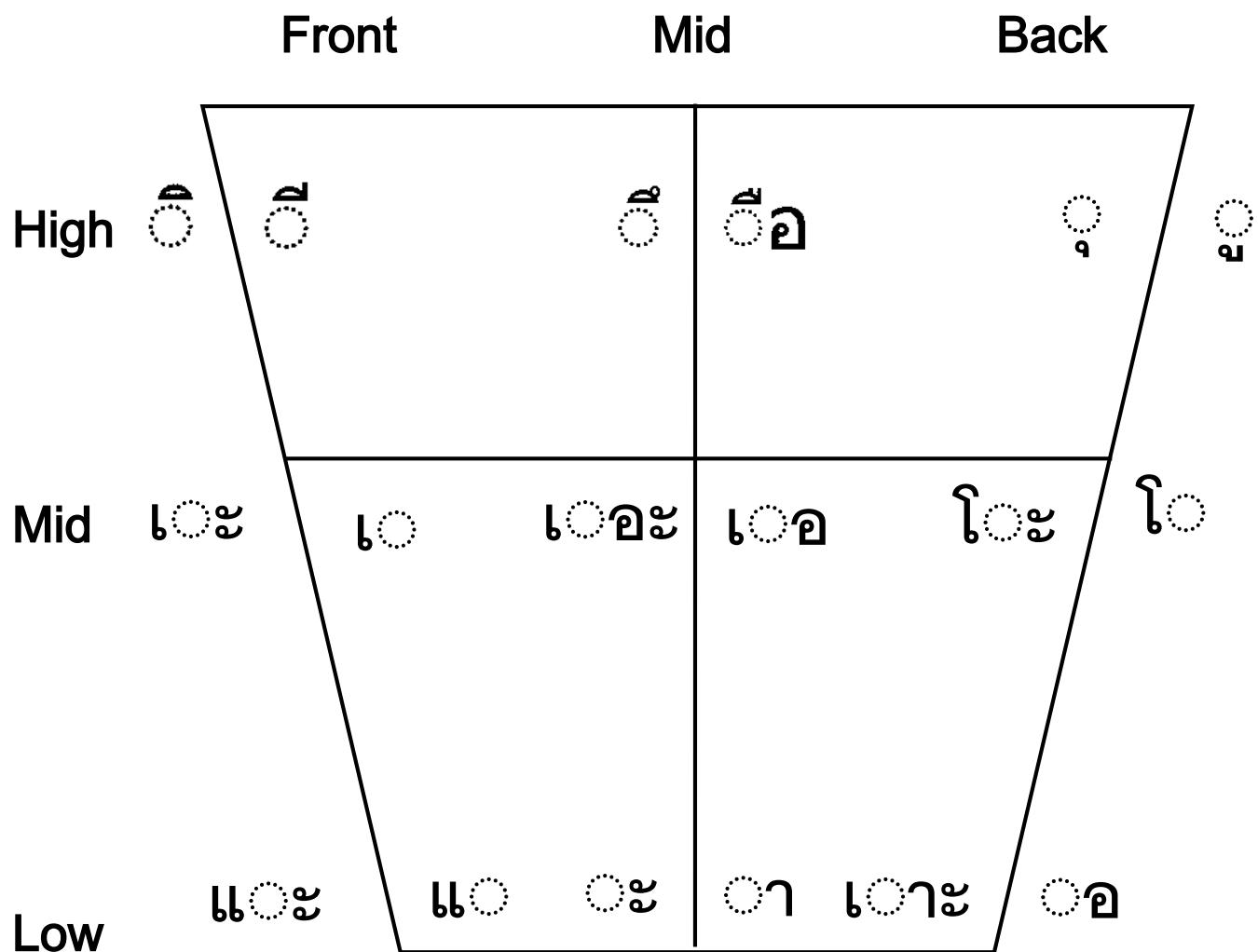
## Thai Consonants

ກ	ຂ	ງ	ຈ	ຈ	ຕ
ຂ	ງ	ຈ	ຈ	ຈ	ຊ
ງ	ມ	ນ	ນ	ນ	ມ
ຈ	ກ	ມ	ນ	ນ	ດ
ຈ	ກ	ທ	ທ	ທ	ດ
ຕ	ຄ	ຄ	ຄ	ຄ	ນ
ປ	ປ	ຜ	ຜ	ຜ	ພ
ພ	ກ	ມ	ຢ	ຢ	ຮ
ລ	ວ	ສ	ຊ	ຊ	ສ
ໜ	ົ	ອ	ສ	ສ	





Structure of tongue position will help to pronounce correctly





## Lesson 2: Vowels

Thai has two kinds of vowels: short and long. Every Thai syllable starts with a consonant even if the consonant is a silent ə /-/ . Although the consonant sound comes first, vowels may be written before, above, below, after or around the consonant depending on the vowel. Each has a corresponding short vowel form. The difference between a short and long vowel is an important one – it can change a word's meaning by itself. Also, the tone rules for short and long vowels are different.





SINGLE VOWELS									
LONG	ං	ඉ	ඇ	ඇ	ං	ඉ	ඇ	ඉ	ඇ
SHORT	ං	ඉ	ඇ	ඇ	ං	ඉ	ඇ	ඉ	ඇ



MIXED VOWELS			
LONG	ඇ	ඇ	ං
SHORT	ඇ	ඇ	ං



SPECIAL VOWELS				
SHORT	ං	ං	ං	ං

## Thai Vowels Exercise



ອ	ອ	ອ	ອ	ອ	ອ	ອ	ອ	ອ
ອ	ອ	ອ	ແອ	ແອ	ແອ	ເອ	ອ	ອ
ໂ	ໂ	ໂ	ໂ	ໂ	ໂ	ໂ	ໂ	ໂ
ເ	ເ	ເ	້ວ	້ວ	້ວ	ແ	ເ	ເ
ໂ	ໂ	ໂ	ເີຍ	ເີຍ	ເີຍ	ເເຈ	ເເຈ	ເເຈ
ອ	ອ	ອ	ເອ	ເອ	ເອ	້ວ	້ວ	້ວ
ເີຍ	ເີຍ	ເີຍ	ໃ	ໃ	ໃ	ເີວ	ເີວ	ເີວ
ເີວ	ເີວ	ເີວ	ກ	ກ	ກ	ເອ	ເອ	ເອ
້ວ	້ວ	້ວ	ກ	ກ	ກ	້ວ	້ວ	້ວ
ເ	ເ	ເ				ກ	ກ	ກ
ກ	ກ	ກ						



## Common Vowels

## Long Vowels Exercise

## Short Vowels Exercise



### Mixed vowels

Mixed vowels			
Long	ເີຍ	ເີວ	ັງ
Short	ເີຍະ	ເີວະ	ັງະ

ເ-ີຍ

Mix Sound From →

ີ + ຍ

ເ-ີວ

Mix Sound From →

ີ + ວ

ັງ

Mix Sound From →

ູ + ນ

ເ-ີຍະ

Mix Sound From →

ີ + ອ

ເ-ີວະ

Mix Sound From →

ີ + ວ

ັງະ

Mix Sound From →

ູ + ອ



### Special Vowels

Special Vowels			
ເອງ	ົງ	ິໂງ	ິ້ງ



# Mix Vowels Exercise



## Special Vowels Exercise

ଇ	ୟ	ବୀ	ମୀ





## Lesson 3: Consonant



### Mid-Class Consonants

There are nine “Mid-Class” consonants in Thai as follows:

Consonant	Consonant Name	Sound
ກ ໄກ	ກ່າວ gài (chicken)	/g/
ຈ ຈານ	ຈ່າວ jaan (plate)	/j/
ໝ ຂ່າວ	ດ່າວ chá daa (a kind of crown)	/d/
ໝ ປ່ັກ	ດ່ວຍ bpà dtàk (a kind of spear)	/dt/
ດ ເດີກ	ດ່ວຍ dèk (child)	/d/
ຕ ເຕ່າ	ດ່ວຍ dtào(turtle)	/dt/
ບ ໃບໄມ້	ບ່າວ bai máai (leaf)	/b/
ປ ເປລາ	ບປ່າວ bplaa (fish)	/bp/
ວ ອ່າງ	ວ່າວ aàng (basin)	/silent/



*Note: ໝ and ໝ are rare.*

ກ \_\_\_\_\_ ບ \_\_\_\_\_

ຈ \_\_\_\_\_ ປ \_\_\_\_\_

ດ \_\_\_\_\_ ວ \_\_\_\_\_

ຕ \_\_\_\_\_





## Mid-Class Consonants Exercise

ກ	ຈ	ଡ	ჲ	ჳ	ჵ	ປ	ປ	ଓ
ກ	ຈ	ଡ	ჲ	ჳ	ჵ	ປ	ປ	ଓ
ກ	ຈ	ଡ	ჲ	ჳ	ჵ	ປ	ປ	ଓ
ກ	ຈ	ଡ	ჲ	ჳ	ჵ	ປ	ປ	ଓ
ກ	ຈ	ଡ	ჲ	ჳ	ჵ	ປ	ປ	ଓ
ກ	ຈ	ଡ	ჲ	ჳ	ჵ	ປ	ປ	ଓ



## Mid-Class Consonants + Long Vowels Exercise



## Mid-Class Consonants + Short Vowels Exercise

## Mid-Class Consonants + Long Vowels = Mid Tone

ກາ	ຕາ	ອາ	ດີ
ຕີ	ປີ	ດຸ	ປູ
ເຈ	ໂຕ	ເຈອ	

## Mid-Class Consonants + Short Vowels = Low Tone

ຈະ	ອີ	ດຸ	ເຕະ
ແກະ	ແຕະ	ເກາະ	ເບາະ



### Tone Rules for Mid-Class Consonants

Mid-Class Consonants + Long Vowels = Mid Tone (-)

Mid-Class Consonants + Short Vowels = Low Tone (\)





## Reading and Writing Exercise

### Mid-Class Consonants + Mixed Vowels

Mid-Class Consonants	ເຣີຍ	ເຣີອ	ໝ່າ
ກ			
ຈ			
ດ			
ຕ			
ບ			
ປ			
ອ			

Mid-Class Consonants + Mixed Vowels

Mid-Class Consonants	ເຣີຍະ	ເຣີວະ	ໜັກ
ກ			
ຈ			
ດ			
ຕ			
ປ			
ປ			
ຈ			

Mid-Class Consonants + Special Vowels

Mid-Class Consonants	ເຕ	ໝ	ີ	ິ
ກ				
ຈ				
ດ				
ຕ				
ບ				
ປ				
ອ				



## Lesson 4: Final consonants

There are eight final consonant sounds which can end a syllable. They are divided into two categories. Non-stop final consonants are voiced – if you touch your larynx (voice box) while pronouncing them, you will feel a vibration. Stop finals are unvoiced. The five sonorant and three stop finals are most commonly written as follow:



### Non-Stop Final Consonants

ງ	ງ ງွှု	ngcc nguu	(snake)	/ng/
န	န ဟန္တု	ncc hññ	(mouse)	/n/
မ	မ မာ	mcc máa	(horse)	/m/
ယ	ယ ယာ	ycc yák	(giant)	/y, i/
ေ	ေ ဟေ	wcc ph̥ɛn	(ring)	/w, o/



### Stop Finals

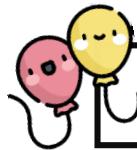
က	က ໄက	gcc gài	(chicken)	/k/
ဋ	ဋ တော်	dcc dèk	(child)	/t/
ပ	ပ ပါမာ	bcc bai-máai	(leaf)	/p/

**Notes:**

1. When ນ, ດ, ບ and ຍ are initial consonants, they are transcribed as /g-/, /d-/, /b-/ and /y-/ respectively.

However, when they are final consonants, they are transcribed as /-k/, /-t/, /-p/ and /-i/.

2. ນ forms part of the vowels ໂ້າະ and ໂ້າ, which are transcribed as /ùa/ and /ua/, respectively. ໂ້າ is transcribed as /iu/ and ເື່ອາ is transcribed as /iao/.



### Tone Rules for Mid-Class Consonants

Mid-Class Consonants + Vowels + Non-Stop Final

Consonants = Mid Tone

Mid-Class Consonants + Vowels + Stop Final

Consonants = Low Tone



## Mid-Class Consonants + Vowels + Non-Stop

Final consonants = Mid Tone

กิน ตาม จุ่ง โคน

บาง อาย ปืน ตอน

ตาย บิน ajan แกง



## Mid-Class Consonants + Vowels + Stop

Final consonants = Low Tone

ปาก ออ ก อึก ติด

กอด ปิด จีบ บูด

อาบ จอด บاد ดีบ





## High-Class Consonants Exercise

ຂ	ຂ	ຜ	ຜ	ສ	ສ	ຜ	ສ	ຫ	ຫ
									
ຂ	ຂ	ຜ	ຜ	ສ	ສ	ຜ	ສ	ຫ	ຫ
ຂ	ຂ	ຜ	ຜ	ສ	ສ	ຜ	ສ	ຫ	ຫ
ຂ	ຂ	ຜ	ຜ	ສ	ສ	ຜ	ສ	ຫ	ຫ



## Tone Marks with High-Class Consonants

With high consonant syllables, there are three possible tones and two tone marks which may be used.

Tone Mark	Tone Name	Tone	Examples
៥	maái èek	low	៥າ (kàa)
៥	maái too	falling	៥າ (kâa)

 When there is no tone mark, a high consonant syllable has either rising tone or low tone depending on whether it is a live or dead syllable.

### Summary of Tone Rule

You can't make mid-tone (-) or high tone (/) with high-class consonant if they want to use "k" sound in mid tone or high tone you have to use another "k" sound in Low pair class.



High-Class Consonants + Long Vowels + maái eèk

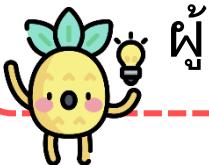
(tone mark 1) = Low Tone

ຂ່າ ຢ່າ ໜ່າ ຫ່ວ

High-Class Consonants + Long Vowels + maái too

(tone mark 2) = Falling Tone

ຄ່າ ເລື້ອ ພ່າ ຄ່າ



ໜ້າ ເລື້ອພ່າ ສ່ວນ