

Ariya Thamilj-Roman Alphabet

Consonant forms in modern Thamilj:

Labial	Dental	Alveolar	Retroflex	Sibilant	Palatal	Guttural
m (□)	n (□)		lj (□)	z, s (□)	nj (□)	ng (□)
b, p (□)	th[,δ] (□)	l (□)	ll (□)	sh (□)	y (□)	h (□)
		n (□)	nn (□)		j (□)	g, k (□)
w,v,f (□)			d (□)		ch (□)	
		r (□)	rr (□)			
		t (□□)	tt (□□)			

Consonant patterns in Thamilj:

Labial, Dental, Palatal and Guttural consonants tend to be at the front of words, while Alveolar, Retroflex and Sibilant consonants usually come at the end.

Stop-consonant marker: ' ()

A tiny pause is involved when giving stop consonants extra stress.

example: (□□□□□) pal'i (l is a stop consonant here - stressed)
- the word means a household lizard

compare: (□□□) pali (no stress on the l) - this word means a sacrifice

Vowels

Short and Long Vowel written forms:

Vowel Glides

a	a:	e	e:	i	i:	o	o:	u	u:	ai	au
(□) (□)	(□) (□)	(□) (□)	(□) (□)	(□) (□)	(□) (□)	(□) (□)	(□) (□)	(□) (□)	(□) (□)	(□)	(□)

Long vowel marker: :

Vowel Pronunciation symbols

(for second tier use - use in dictionary, and in written text where pronunciation of words needs to be illustrated.)

	short	long	short	long	short	long	short	long	short	long	vowel glides
narrow tone	/a/	/a:/	/è/	/è:/	/i/	/i:/	/o/	/o:/	/u/	/u:/	/ai/
wide tone	/A/	/A:/	/E/	/E:/	/I/	/I:/	/O/	/O:/	/U/	/U:/	/Ai/ /Au/

English Vowel Glides (used with English and other foreign words):

	/eE/	/ei/	/iE/	/uE/
/Ai/ /AE/	/EU/		/UE/	/AiE/

- /a/ as a in Eng. an, and, as, at, etc
 or as a in Thamilj anpu (love), al'a (not), pal (tooth), kal (stone), etc
- /a:/ as a in Eng. van, hand, ass, ant, etc
 or as a: in Thamilj ya:r (who), pa:r (see, look), va:rum (come), etc
- /A/ as u in Eng. fun, gun, cut, hut, etc
 or as a in Thamilj pall'i (school), kall (toddy), mann (sand), manni (bell), etc
- /A:/ as a in Eng. bath, pass, grass, etc
 or as a: in Thamilj a:du (goat), a:rru (six, river), pa:nn (bread), na:ll (day), etc

/e/	as e in Eng. or as e in Thamilj	men, pet, red, etc en (my), eli (mouse), keli (greed), eri (burn), etc
/e:/	as é in Eng. or as e: in Thamilj	café e:n (why), e:ri (pond), ve:lai (work), pe:nai (pen), etc
/E/	as short er in Eng. or as e in Thamilj	enter, gender, header, etc enn (count, number), ettu (eight), erri (throw), penn (female), etc
/E:/	as long er in Eng. or as e: in Thamilj	fern, pert, term, etc e:nni (ladder), e:rru (climb), ke:ll (listen), me:du (hill) etc
/i/	as i in Eng. or as i in Thamilj	in, is, it, pin, etc ithu (this), ilai (leaf), il'ai (no), ivar (this person), etc
/i:/	as ee in Eng. or as i: in Thamilj	bee, see, weed, etc i:ram (wet), ni:r (you, water), thi: (fire), mi:n (fish), etc
/I/	in Eng. or as i in Thamilj	somewhat like the sound of e in words like garden, happen, etc illainjar (youth), idai (waist), piljai (wrong), kinnarru (well), etc
/I:/	in Eng. as i: in Thamilj	no equivalent I:lj (beauty), I:ljam (resplendant isle), ki:lje: (below), mi:nndum (again), vi:nna:y (wastefully), vi:du (house), etc
/o/	in Eng. as o in Thamilj	no equivalent oli (sound), onpathu (nine), orumai (unity), olli (hide), etc
/o:/	in Eng. as o: in Thamilj	no equivalent (somewhat like /EU/) o:ram (edge), o:du (run), o:na:y (wolf), o:sai (sound), etc
/O/	as o in Eng. in Thamilj	of, on, pot, hot, nod, cot, etc no equivalent (somewhat between /o/ and /A/)
/O:/	as or in Eng. in Thamilj	or, norm, born, ford, morning, etc no equivalent (somewhat between /o:/ and /A:/)

/u/	as u in Eng. or as yu in Thamilj	unity, etc yuham (era), etc
/u:/	as u in Eng. or as yu: in Thamilj	union, tune, mule, etc yu:thar (Jews), etc
/U/	as short oo in Eng. or as u in Thamilj	book, cook, took, stood, shoot, etc thunni (cloth), kurri (target), kudi (drink), churra: (shark), etc
/U:/	as long oo in Eng. or as u: in Thamilj	cool, spoon, wool, shoot, etc u:r (town), pu:nai (cat), mu:lai (corner), nu:rru (hundred), etc

Vowel Glides:

/ai/	as final ai in Thamilj	ilai, etc
/Ai/	as initial ai in Thamilj	aiya:,

Vowel Tones

Vowels before Alveolar / Retroflex Consonants

- 1) In general: A short vowel before an Alveolar consonant takes the narrow tone.
and Any vowel before a Retroflex consonant takes the wide tone.

examples:

al – All A:l-A:ll, an – Ann, ir – irr, etc

2)

Pronunciation guides in dictionary entries:

- 1) normal written form in Thamilj comes first
(this distinguishes only between short and long vowel forms { a, a:}, not between narrow and wide tones {/a/, /A/}.)
- 2) Words of foreign origin are shown in their native written form within square brackets [].
- 3) pronunciation guide follows within forward strokes / /.

pal'i /pal'i/
pali /pali/
palli /pAlli/
pall'i /pAll'i/

pa:li /pA:li/
pa:lli /pA:lli/
pall'i /pAll'i/

Foreign derived words:

fo:ttō: [photo]	/fEUttEU:/
yurrep [Europe]	/yurrEp/
domini:k [Dominique(Fr)]	/dOmini:k/

Examples of Foreign Word Usage within Tamil text.

- Three forms are acceptable:

Native mode:

Uses just the foreign word in its native form in square brackets.

Avar antha [photo]vai [Europe]iliruk'um than nannparhalluk'u anup'i vaith'a:r.

English translation: He sent the photo to his friends in Europe.

Strict pronunciation mode:

Provides pronunciation guide for all foreign words presented.

Avar antha [photo]/fEUttEU:/vai [Europe]/yurrEp/iliruk'um than nannparhalluk'u anup'i vaith'a:r.

English translation: He sent the photo to his friends in Europe.

Flexi mode:

Here, pronunciation is shown only when it is desired - for commonly mispronounced, difficult or new words, while more familiar foreign words are just presented in their native form within square brackets without any pronunciation guide. When illustrating pronunciation of foreign words, the best native pronunciation should be given

[David]/deivid/in [car]ai eduth'uk'onndu [Kent]juk'u po:.

English translation: Take David's car and go to Kent.

Showing Thamilj pronunciation:

Thamilj word pronunciation is shown using the same format as for foreign words.

example:

"Kall'u" /kAl'lU/ is the Thamilj name for this delicious drink from the palmyra tree. The English call it 'toddy'..