

HOW TO WRITE IN LAO

WRITING PRACTICE WORKBOOK

CONSONANTS, VOWELS, WORDS,
AND SENTENCE BUILDERS

ກ

ໄກ່

g໋ວ



gai

ຂ

ໄຂ່

k໋ວ



kai



LaoLessons

Find audio & video of the
Lao Alphabet Chart at
<https://laolessons.com>

For vocabulary and sentences audio,
go to
<https://laolessons.com/audio>

How to Write in Lao Writing Practice Workbook

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Lao Consonants

There are 27 consonants (with an extra 6 compound consonants) divided into three tone classes: middle, low, high. However, the name of these classes are arbitrary. They may be helpful when you want to determine how to pronounce the tone of a Lao syllable.

Each of the consonants in this workbook contains an animal or object to help learn the pronunciation and word association.

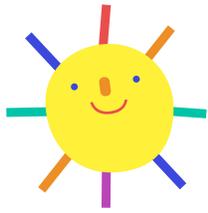
The Lao consonant and associated words in this workbook are also written in its native script along with its IPA and transliteration based on the Paiboon system.

Note: The ງ sounds *similar* to /aw/ as in crawl.

You may notice that although certain consonants have the same English alphabet transliteration, they do differ in the consonant class (i.e. low vs high).

In addition, we included two different ways to recognize and write the Lao script.

The first is mainly used in writing (i.e. ນ) while the other (i.e. ᨶ) is use in print or online media content.



Consonants

These are the consonants categorized by different classes

ກາງ (middle)

There are 8 "middle" class consonants

ກ ຈ ດ ຕ ບ ປ
ຢ ອ

ຕໍ່າ (low)

There are 13 "low" class consonants

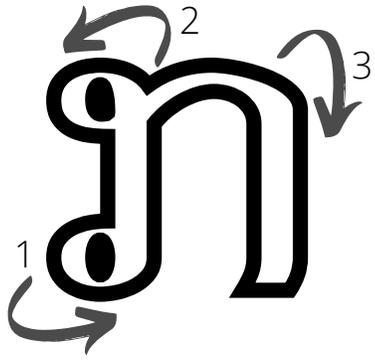
ຄ ງ ຊ ຍ ທ ນ
ພ ຟ ມ *ຮ ລ ວ
ຮ

ສູງ (high)

There are 12 "high" class consonants

ຂ ສ ຖ ຜ ຝ ຫ
ຫງ ຫຍ ຫນ/ຫນ ຫມ/ຫມ
ຫລ/ຫຼ ຫວ

* The ຮ consonant is not often used much, but you may encounter it in classic Lao literature.



ก / ไก่
gò / gai
Chicken

Consonant class: middle

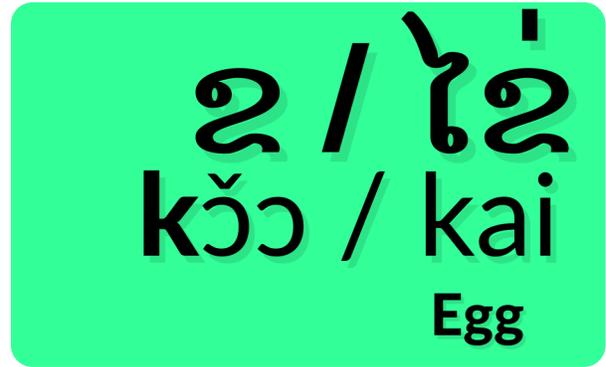
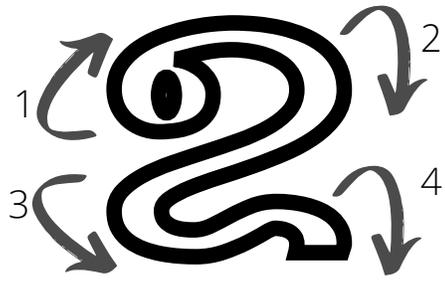
Sound at start of word: /g/ (as in give)

Transliteration at end of word: /k/

A diagram showing the Thai character 'ไก่' (gai) with color coding. The first part 'ไ' is blue, the second part 'ก' is orange, and the tone mark '่' is green. A legend to the right shows: an orange square for 'Consonant', a blue square for 'Vowel', and a green square for 'Tone mark'.

ກ ກ ກ ກ ກ ກ ກ

ກ ກ ກ ກ ກ ກ ກ



Consonant class: high

Sound at start of word: /k/ (as in kind)

Transliteration at end of word: -



2 2 2 2 2 2 2

2 2 2 2 2 2 2



က / ကဝ္ဘာယ
k'ó / kwáai
Buffalo

Consonant class: low

Sound at start of word: /k/ (as in kind)

Transliteration at end of word: -



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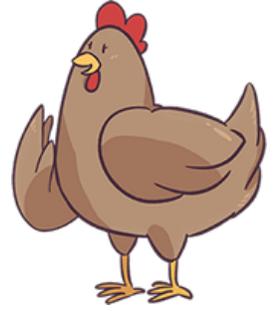
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REVIEW EXERCISE



Write the Lao character for each English letter and the English letter for each Lao character.

Letter to Lao

Lao to letter

1) k _____(low)

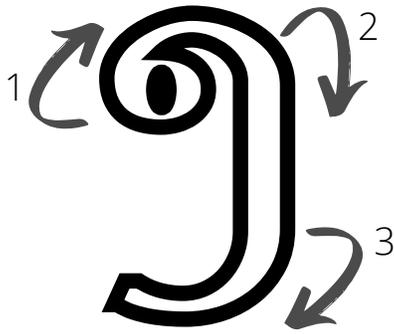
4) ນ _____

2) ງ _____

5) ຂ _____

3) ກ _____(high)

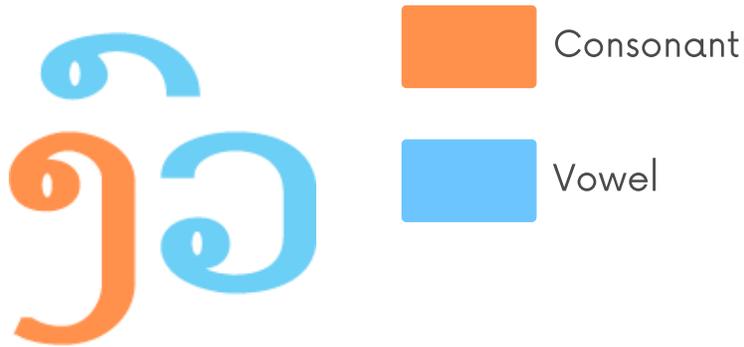
6) ຄ _____



Consonant class: low

Sound at start of word: /ng/ (IPA: ŋ) (as in ring)

Sound at end of word: /ng/

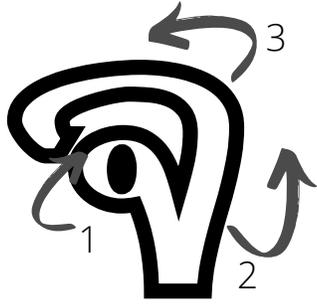


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၅ ၅ ၅ ၅ ၅ ၅



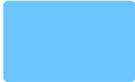
Consonant class: middle

Sound at start of word: /j/ (as in jump)

Transliteration at end of word: -



Consonant



Vowel



Final (consonant)

ה

ה

ה

ה

ה

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ה

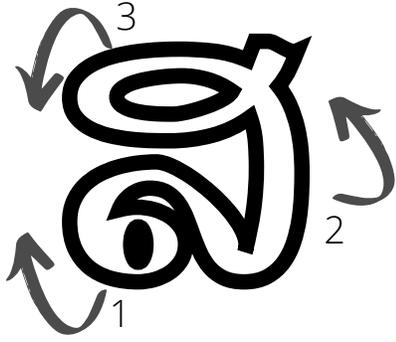
ה

ה

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ה

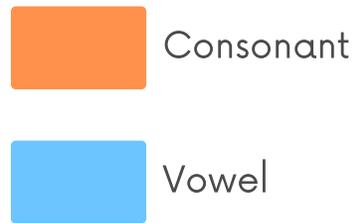
ה



Consonant class: high

Sound at start of word: /s/ (as in saw)

Transliteration at end of word: -



न न न न न न न

न न न न न न न

REVIEW EXERCISE



Write the Lao character for each English letter and the English letter for each Lao character.

Letter to Lao

Lao to letter

1) s _____(high)

6) ຂ _____

2) j _____

7) ງ _____

3) k _____(low)

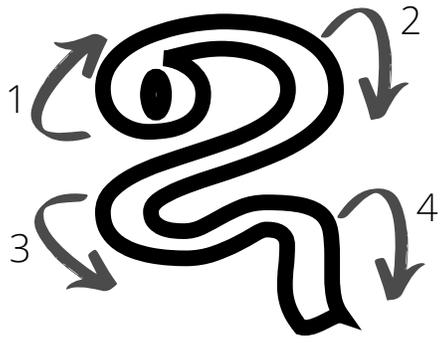
8) ຄ _____

4) k _____(high)

9) ນ _____

5) ng _____(low)

10) ຈ _____



ຊ / ຊ້າງ
sáv / sâang
Elephant

Consonant class: low

Sound at start of word: /s/ (as in saw)

Transliteration at end of word: -



-  Consonant
-  Vowel
-  Tone mark
-  Final (consonant)

2

2

2

2

2

2

2

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2

2

2

2

2



ຍ / ຍ្យ
nyóv / nyúng
Mosquito

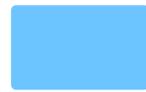
Consonant class: low

Sound at start of word: /ny/ or /ñ/ (as in manual)

Transliteration at end of word: /i/ or /y/



Consonant



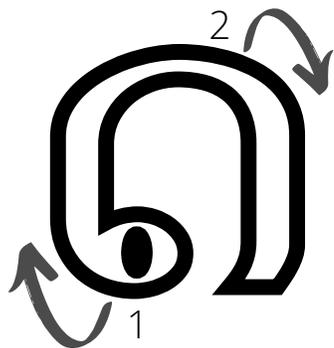
Vowel



Final (consonant)

Ե Ե Ե Ե Ե Ե Ե

Ե Ե Ե Ե Ե Ե Ե



ด / เด็ก
dòw / dĕk
Kid

Consonant class: middle
Sound at start of word: /d/ (as in door)
Transliteration at end of word: /t/

Consonant
Vowel
Final (consonant)

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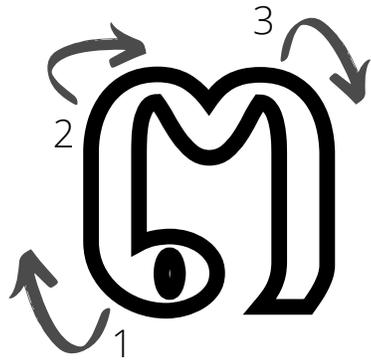
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ព / ព្យ
dtòv / dtàa
Eye

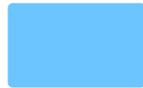
Consonant class: middle

Sound at start of word: /dt/ (as in stamp)

Transliteration at end of word: -



Consonant



Vowel

М

М

М

М

М

М

М

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М

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М

REVIEW EXERCISE

Write the Lao character for each English letter
and the English letter for each Lao character.



Letter to Lao

Lao to letter

1) k _____(low)

9) ຂ _____

2) ny _____

10) ສ _____

3) d _____

11) ອ _____

4) s _____(low)

12) ນ _____

5) j _____

13) ຕ _____

6) dt _____

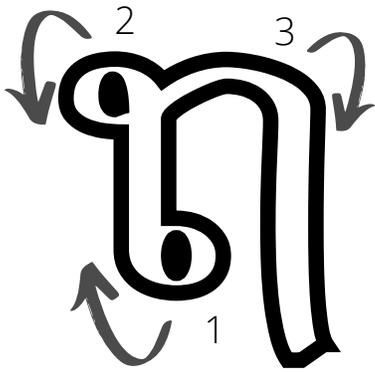
14) ດ _____

7) ng _____(low)

15) ຈ _____

8) g _____

16) ຊ _____



Consonant class: high

Sound at start of word: /t/ (as in tell)

Transliteration at end of word: -



Consonant



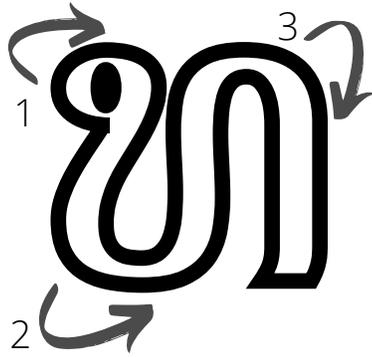
Vowel



Final (consonant)

က က က က က က က

က က က က က က က



Consonant class: low

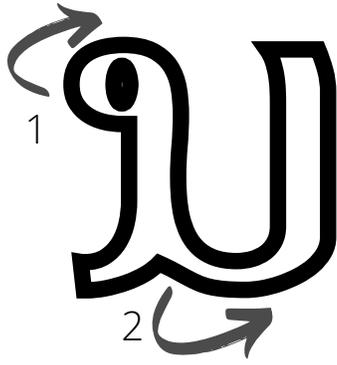
Sound at start of word: /t/ (as in tell)

Transliteration at end of word: -



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ທ ທ ທ ທ ທ ທ ທ



ນ / ນົກ
nok / nok
Bird

Consonant class: low

Sound at start of word: /n/ (as in need)

Transliteration at end of word: /n/



Consonant



Vowel



Final (consonant)

n n n n n n n

n n n n n n n

REVIEW EXERCISE



Write the Lao character for each English letter and the English letter for each Lao character.

Letter to Lao

Lao to letter

1) s _____(low)

9) ນ _____

2) ng _____

10) ສ _____

3) n _____(low)

11) ຈ _____

4) k _____(high)

12) ທ _____

5) t _____(high)

13) ຕ _____

6) ny _____

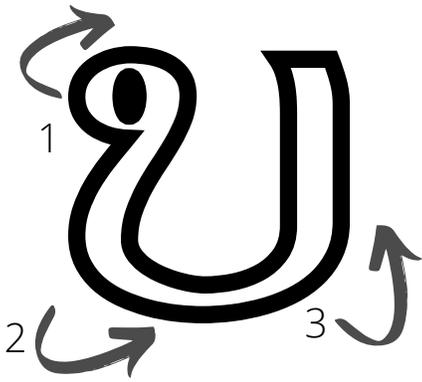
14) ດ _____

7) t _____(low)

15) ຂ _____

8) dt _____

16) ຫ _____



ပ / ပဲ
bòc / bêe
Goat

Consonant class: middle

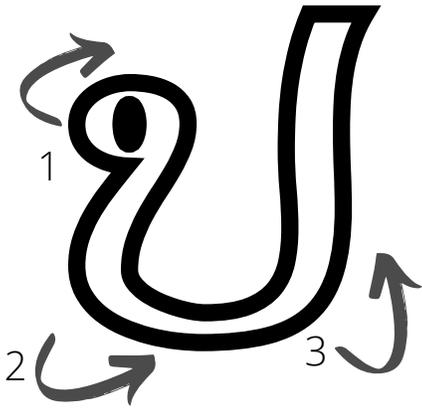
Sound at start of word: /b/ (as in bake)

Transliteration at end of word: /p/

Consonant
Vowel
Tone mark

ບ ບ ບ ບ ບ ບ ບ

u u u u u u u



ป / ปา
bpàw / bpàa
Fish

Consonant class: middle

Sound at start of word: /bp/ (as in spot)

Transliteration at end of word: -



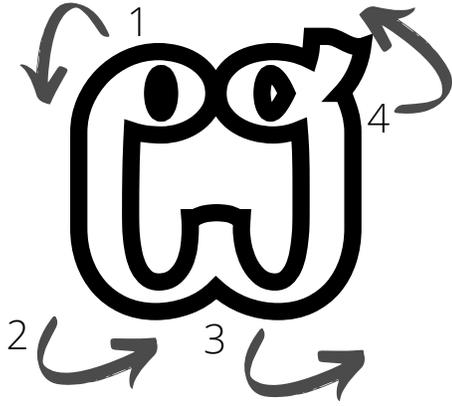
Consonant



Vowel

ປ ປ ປ ປ ປ ປ ປ

ຸ ຸ ຸ ຸ ຸ ຸ ຸ



Consonant class: high

Sound at start of word: /p/ (as in pen)

Transliteration at end of word: -



Consonant



Vowel



Tone mark



Final (consonant)

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REVIEW EXERCISE



Write the Lao character for each English letter and the English letter for each Lao character.

Letter to Lao

Lao to letter

1) g _____

9) ຸ _____

2) b _____

10) ັ _____

3) n _____(low)

11) ູ _____

4) k _____(low)

12) ື _____

5) p _____(high)

13) ຸ _____

6) j _____

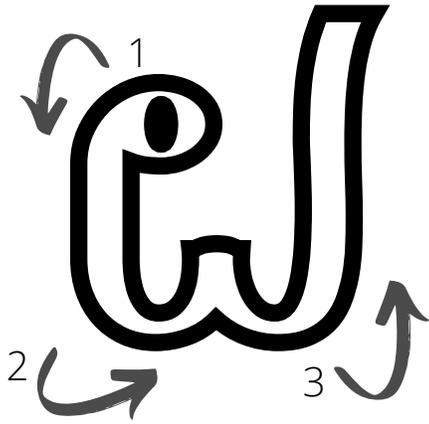
14) ຸ _____

7) t _____(low)

15) ັ _____

8) bp _____

16) ົ _____



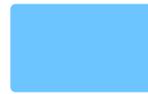
Consonant class: high

Sound at start of word: /f/ (as in fun)

Transliteration at end of word: -



Consonant



Vowel



Final (consonant)

၎ ဎ ဎ ဎ ဎ ဎ ဎ

၎ ဎ ဎ ဎ ဎ ဎ ဎ



ပ / ပျ
ပဝ် / ပျံ
Mountain

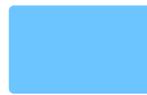
Consonant class: low

Sound at start of word: /p/ (as in pen)

Transliteration at end of word: -



Consonant



Vowel

W

W

W

W

W

W

W

W

W

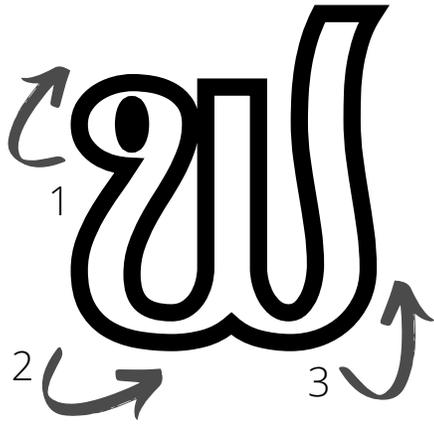
W

W

W

W

W



Consonant class: low

Sound at start of word: /f/ (as in fun)

Transliteration at end of word: -



w w w w w w w

w w w w w w w

REVIEW EXERCISE



Write the Lao character for each English letter and the English letter for each Lao character.

Letter to Lao

Lao to letter

1) f _____(high)

9) ບ _____

2) ຟ _____(low)

10) ບ _____

3) ກ _____(low)

11) ວ _____

4) ກ _____(high)

12) ວ _____

5) ປ _____(high)

13) ຕ _____

6) ປ _____(low)

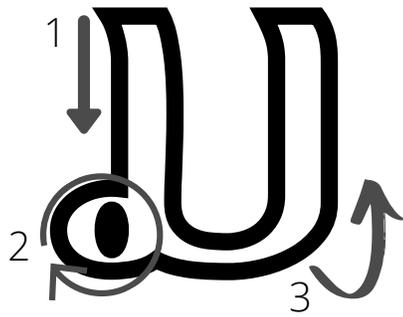
14) ຕ _____

7) ຕ _____(low)

15) ຈ _____

8) ຕ _____(high)

16) ຈ _____



Consonant class: low

Sound at start of word: /m/ (as in mouse)

Transliteration at end of word: /m/



u

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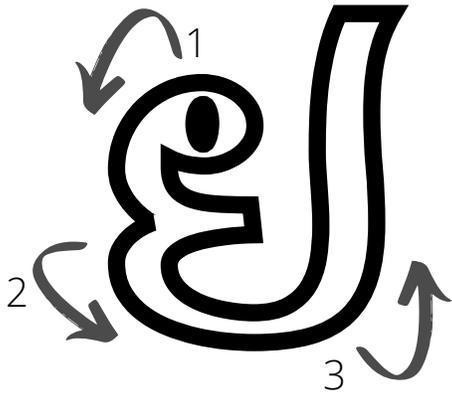
u

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u



ယ / ယာ
yà / yàa
Medicine

Consonant class: middle

Sound at start of word: /y/ (as in you)

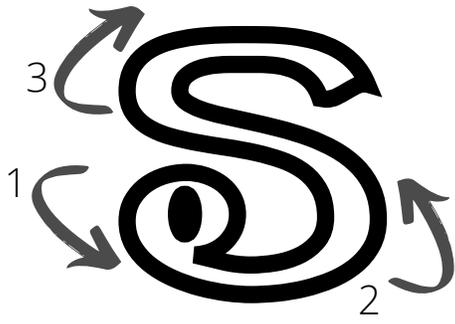
Transliteration at end of word: -

Consonant

Vowel

Ե Ե Ե Ե Ե Ե Ե

Ե Ե Ե Ե Ե Ե Ե



រ / រកង
róo / ra-káng
Bell

Consonant class: low

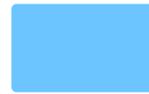
Sound at start of word: /r/ (as in run)

Transliteration at end of word: -

រកង



Consonant



Vowel



Final (consonant)

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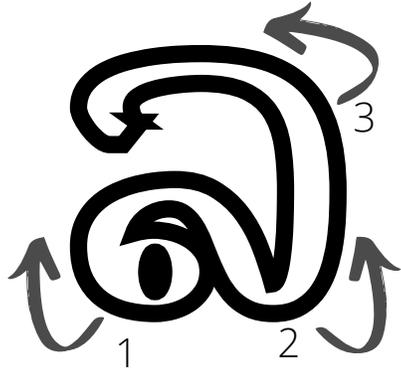
8

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8



လ / လိၵ်ႈ
လံဝ် / líng
Monkey

Consonant class: low

Sound at start of word: /l/ (as in love)

Transliteration at end of word: -



 Consonant
 Vowel
 Final (consonant)

လ လ လ လ လ လ လ

လ လ လ လ လ လ လ

REVIEW EXERCISE



Write the Lao character for each English letter and the English letter for each Lao character.

Letter to Lao

Lao to letter

1) s _____(high)

9) ຄ _____

2) m _____(low)

10) ບ _____

3) g _____

11) າ _____

4) t _____(low)

12) ສ _____

5) y _____

13) ອ _____

6) k _____(high)

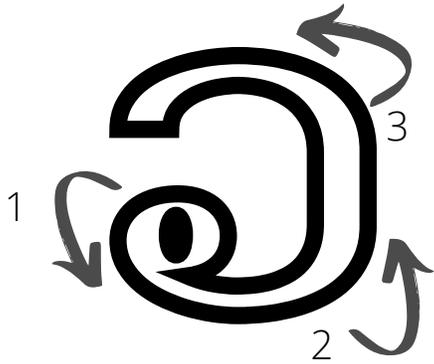
14) ຫ _____

7) ny _____(low)

15) ບ _____

8) r _____(low)

16) ວ _____

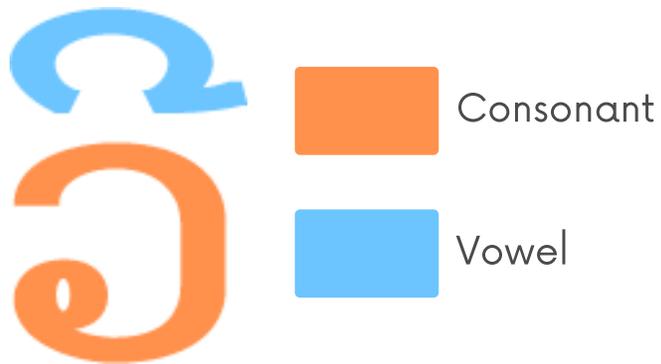


อ / อี
wǎw / wíi
Fan

Consonant class: low

Sound at start of word: /w/ (as in woman)

Transliteration at end of word: /w/ or /o/



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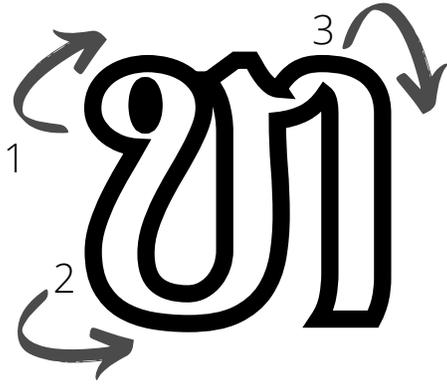
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ຫ / ຫ້າມ
hăw / haan
Goose

Consonant class: high

Sound at start of word: /h/ (as in honey)

Transliteration at end of word: -

ຫ້າມ



Consonant



Vowel



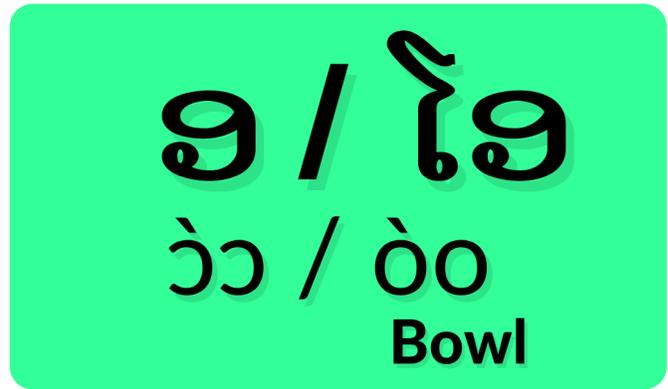
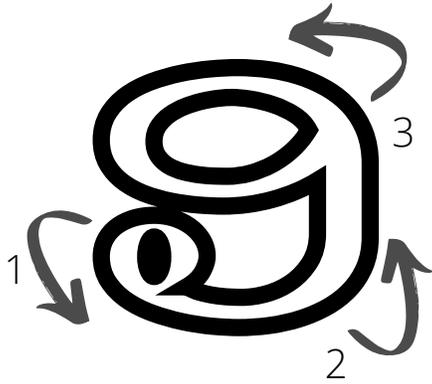
Tone mark



Final (consonant)

ຫ ຫ ຫ ຫ ຫ ຫ ຫ

ກ ກ ກ ກ ກ ກ ກ



Consonant class: high

Sound at start of word: /ɔ̌/ (as in awe)

Transliteration at end of word: -



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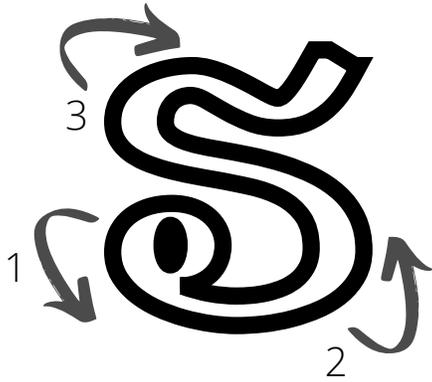
9

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9



អ / អោម

hóv / hán

House

Consonant class: low

Sound at start of word: /h/ (as in honey)

Transliteration at end of word: -

អោម



Consonant



Vowel



Final (consonant)

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REVIEW EXERCISE



Write the Lao character for each English letter and the English letter for each Lao character.

Letter to Lao

Lao to letter

1) s _____(high)

9) ຢ _____

2) m _____(low)

10) ບ _____

3) g _____

11) າ _____

4) t _____(low)

12) ສ _____

5) y _____

13) ຄ _____

6) k _____(high)

14) ຫ _____

7) ny _____(low)

15) ບ _____

8) r _____(low)

16) ວ _____

Compound Consonants

There are 6 high class consonants. In addition to being written as its own form, they can also be combined with the **ຫ** consonant. This gives us 12 high class consonants total. These consonant clusters have a low class consonant equivalent.

The compound consonants are shown in bold.

ສູງ (high)

There are 12 "high" class consonants

ຂ ສ ຖ ຜ ຝ ຫ

ຫາງ ຫາຍ ຫານ/ຫນ ຫາມ/ຫໝ
ຫລ/ຫຼ ຫວ

Example ຫຍ vs ຍ

ຫຍ້າງ

nyǎng

What

(pronoun)

ǎ in nyǎng has a "rising" tone

ຍ້າງ

nyáng

Still/Yet

(adverb)

á in nyáng has a "high" tone

ຫາງ ຫາງ ຫາງ ຫາງ

ຫາງ ຫາງ ຫາງ ຫາງ

ຫາຍ ຫາຍ ຫາຍ ຫາຍ

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ຊາມ ຊາມ ຊາມ ຊາມ

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ຫາລ ຫາລ ຫາລ ຫາລ

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ຫາລ ຫາລ ຫາລ ຫາລ

ຫຼາ ຫຼາ ຫຼາ ຫຼາ

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Tone Marks

Lao language is tonal -- words with the same phonetic transliteration can have different pronunciation. In Lao script, they are also spelled differently and mean a different word altogether.

There are 4 tonal marks in Lao written script, with two that are commonly used. You may have seen them already from words like: ໄກ່ and ຊ້າງ

໋

ໄມ້ເອກ

/mai aek/

This tone mark looks like a lowercase (L) "l" or "1". It causes a word to be pronounced with a middle/flat pitch.

໌

ໄມ້ໂທ

/mai too/

This tone mark causes a word to be pronounced with a different tone depending on the consonant/vowel syllable structure in the word.

There are tone charts and rules to help you determine the pronunciation of a word. However, we will not be focusing on tone rules as this workbook is mainly for writing practice.

Vowels

There are 28 main vowels. They are divided into short, long, and "special" vowels. Special vowels are considered an additional vowel and take on a different form.

For example, some vowels change form when there's a final consonant.

ອະ becomes ອັx where "x" represents the presence of a final consonant.

Some vowel sounds may be a combination of a consonant and vowel to represent a "long" version of that vowel sound.

ເອົາ is a short vowel while ອາວ has a long vowel sound. The latter is a combination of the long vowel າ and a semi-vowel ວ which acts as a final consonant.

"ອ" as you learned acts as a consonant when placed in the initial position of a word. When combined with a vowel, it also takes on that vowel sound. Thus, it can be referred to as a "semi-vowel."

We will use this semi-vowel as our placeholder for the consonant going forward to help depict different vowels.



Lao Vowels

These are the vowels categorized by its length or special case.

Short

ອະ ອິ ອີ ອຸ ເອະ ເເອະ
ໄອະ ເອາະ ອິວ ເອີ ເອ້ຍ ເອີອ
ອົວະ ເອ້ວ

Long

ອາ ອີ ອີ ອູ ເອ ເເອ
ໄອ ອໍ ອິວ ເອີ ເເອຍ ເອີອ
ອົວ ເເອວ

Special

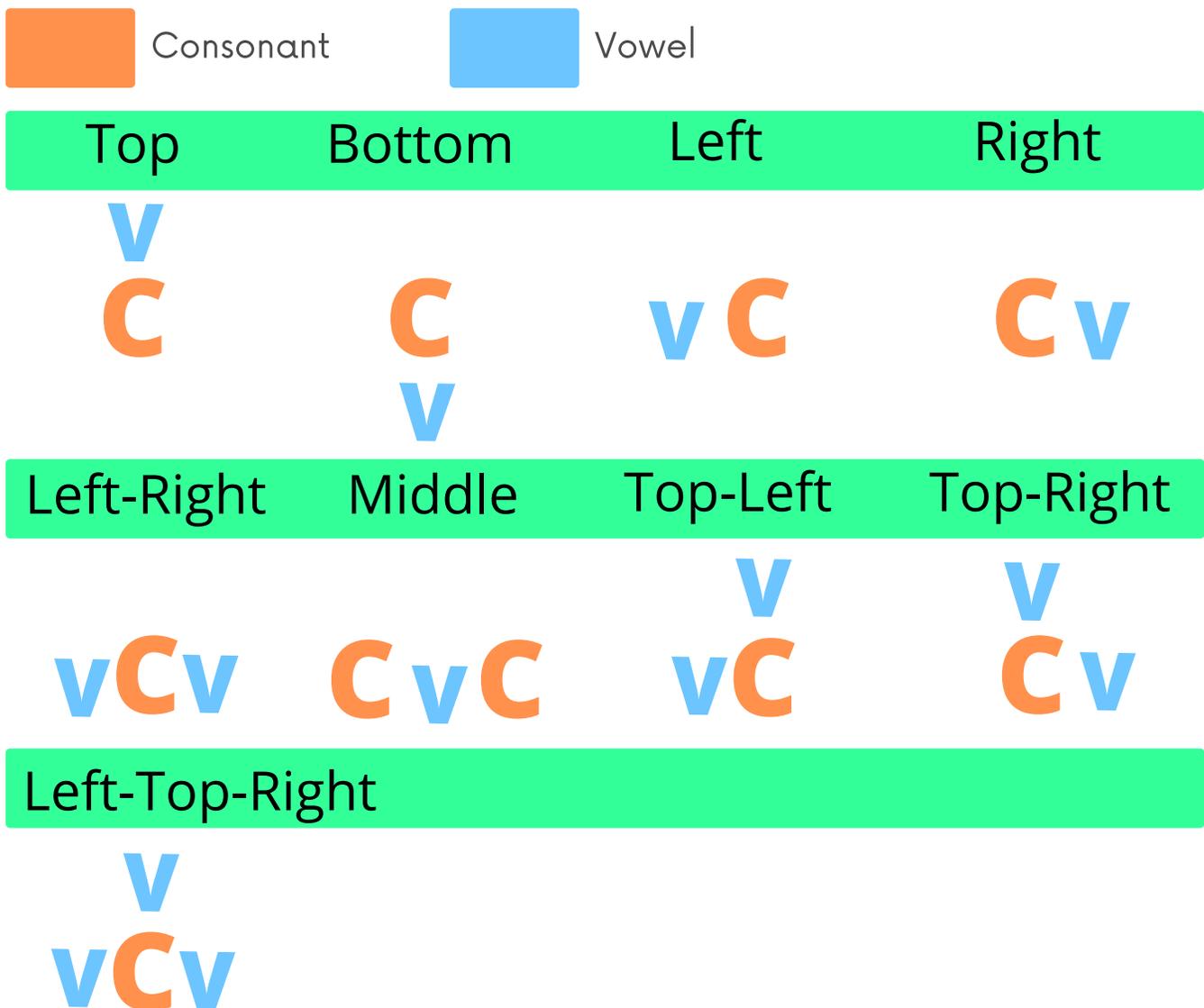
ໄອ / ໃອ ເອົາ ອໍາ

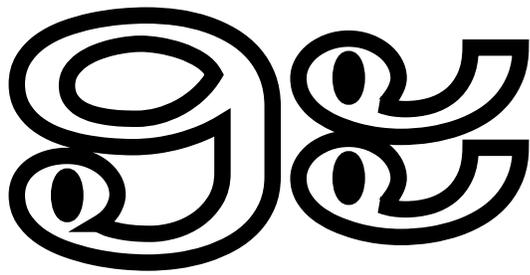
Syllable Structure

A word in Lao is made up of syllables, or unit of sound. A syllable is composed of a consonant, vowel, and/or tone marks. Most Lao words have one or two syllables.

Vowel Placement

As you may noticed from the word breakdowns, a vowel can be placed in various positions of a consonant -- top, bottom, left, right, or a combination.





Sound: ă

Letter: /a/ (as in cut)

Length: Short

Placement: Right

Example Words

ခဃ

jă

Will/Shall

(verb)

ခဃလဲ/ခဃဃ

sa-lă

Vowel

(noun)



Sound: ă

Letter: /a/ (as in cut)

Length: Short

Placement: Top

Example Words

မံာ်

mak

Like

(verb)

ဟံာ်

hak

Love

(verb)

ဂံာ်

găp

With

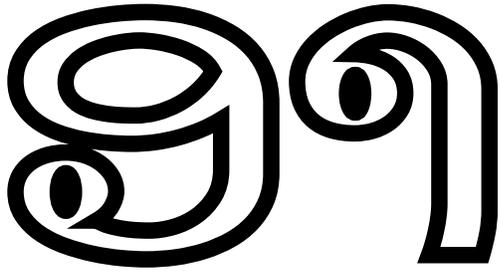
(conjunction)

ယံာ်

nyáng

Still/Yet

(adverb)



Sound: àa

Letter: /aa/ (as in far)

Length: Long

Placement: Right

Example Words

ပါ ယာက တံာံာံ ခံာံာံ ပာံာံာံ

bpàa

Fish

(noun)

yàak

Want

(verb)

nàa

Face

(noun)

sâang

Elephant

(noun)

páa-sǎa

Language

(noun)



Fish

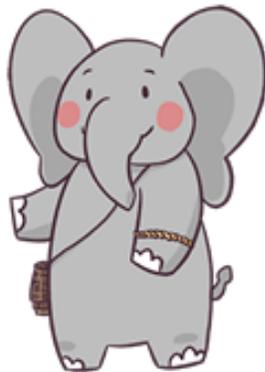
ပါ
bpàa



Consonant



Vowel



Elephant

ံာံာံ
ခံာံာံ
sâang



Consonant



Vowel



Tone mark



Final (consonant)

WORDS WRITING PRACTICE

Trace the words then write them in the space next to it.

Will/Shall

jǎ

ຈະ

Vowel

sa-lǎ

ສະຫຼະ

Like

mak

ມັກ

Love

hak

ຮັກ

With

gǎp

ກັບ

Still/Yet

nyáng

ຍັງ

WORDS WRITING PRACTICE

Trace the words then write them in the space next to it.

Fish
bpàa

ປາ

Want
yàak

ຢາກ

Face
nàa

ໜ້າ

Elephant
sâang

ຊ້າງ

Language
páa-sǎa

ພາສາ

PICTURE/WORD WRITING

Look at the pictures or English words below.
Write them in Lao on the line below.



Will



1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

Want



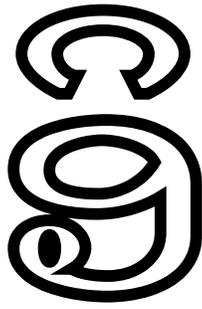
Face

4 _____

5 _____

6 _____

1. ຮັກ 2. ຈະ 3. ຊ້າງ 4. ຢາກ 5. ປາ 6. ຫນ້າ



Sound: í
 Letter: /i/ (as in eat)
 Length: Short
 Placement: Top

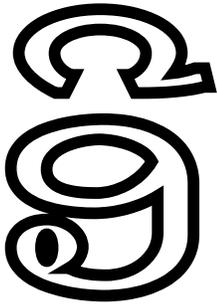
Example Words

រីន

gin
Eat
 (verb)

រីប

dìp
Raw/Uncooked
 (adjective)



Sound: ìi
 Letter: /ii/ (as in knee)
 Length: Long
 Placement: Top

Example Words

នី

míi
Have
 (verb)

នី

dìi
Good
 (adjective)

នី

nîi
This
 (pronoun)

នីន

sîin
Meat
 (noun)

WORDS WRITING PRACTICE

Trace the words then write them in the space next to it.

Eat
gin

ກິນ

Raw/Uncooked
dip

ດິບ

Good
dii

ດີ

Have
mii

ມີ

This
nii

ນີ້

Meat
sin

ສິນ

PICTURE/WORD WRITING

Look at the pictures or English words below.
Write them in Lao on the line below.

Have



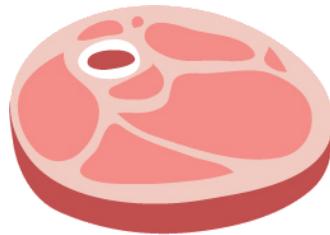
Good

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

This



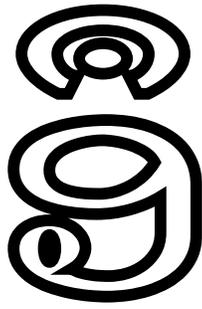
Raw/Uncooked

4 _____

5 _____

6 _____

1. ມີ 2. ກິນ 3. ດີ 4. ນີ້ 5. ຊີ້ນ 6. ດິບ



Sound: ǎ

Letter: /eu/ (as in oop)

Length: Short

Placement: Top

Example Words

ໝາກອໍ

màak-ǎ

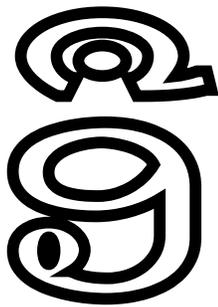
Pumpkin
(noun)

ໝາກ /màak/ is often use as a prefix for vegetables/fruits.

ຂຶ້ນ

kɯn

Up/Rise
(adverb)



Sound: ɛɯ

Letter: /euu/ (as in oop)

Length: Long

Placement: Top

Example Words

ມື້

mɯɯ

Day
(noun)

ຈື່

jɯɯ

Remember
(verb)

ຄື

kɯɯ

Like/Similar
(preposition)

ລືມ

lɯɯm

Forget
(verb)

WORDS WRITING PRACTICE

Trace the words then write them in the space next to it.

Pumpkin

màak-ǎ

ໝາກອື່

Up/Rise

kun

ຂຶ້ນ

Remember

juu

ຈື່

Like/Similar

kúu

ຄື

Day

mâu

ມື້

Forget

lâu

ລື້ມ

PICTURE/WORD WRITING

Look at the pictures or English words below.
Write them in Lao on the line below.



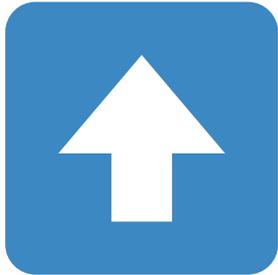
Remember

Forget

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____



Day

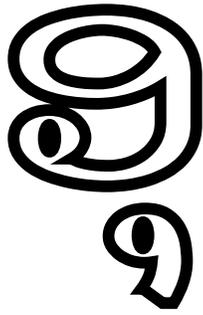
Like/Similar

4 _____

5 _____

6 _____

1. ໝາກອຶ 2. ຈີ້ 3. ລິມ 4. ຂຶ້ນ 5. ມື້ 6. ຄື



Sound: ǔ

Letter: /u/ (as in blue)

Length: Short

Placement: Bottom

Example Words

ຢຸດ

yǔt
Stop
(verb)

ໝາກໜຶ່ງ

màak-hung
Papaya
(noun)



Sound: ùu

Letter: /uu/ (as in food)

Length: Long

Placement: Bottom

Example Words

ຄູ

kúu
Teacher
(noun)

ພູ

púu
Mountain
(noun)

ຢູ່

yuu
Location/Stay
(verb)

ໝູ

mǔu
Pig
(noun)

WORDS WRITING PRACTICE

Trace the words then write them in the space next to it.

Stop
yŭt

ຢຸດ

Papaya
màak-hung

ໝາກໜັງ

Teacher
kúu

ຄູ

Mountain
púu

ພູ

Location
yuu

ຢູ

Pig
mǎu

ໝູ

PICTURE/WORD WRITING

Look at the pictures or English words below.

Write them in Lao on the line below.

Teacher



Stay

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____



4 _____

5 _____

6 _____

1. ຄູ 2. ພູ 3. ຢູ່ 4. ພູ 5. ພາກທ່ຽງ 6. ຢຸດ

ទេខ

Sound: ê

Letter: /ea/ (as in end)

Length: Short

Placement: Left-Right

Example Words

ពេខ

dtê

Kick

(verb)

ទេខ

Sound: ê

Letter: /ea/ (as in end)

Length: Short

Placement: Left-Top

Example Words

ប៉េន

bpèn

Be

(verb)

ទេប

jěp

Hurt, Pain

(adjective)

អេត

het

Do

(verb)

ដេត

pět

Spicy

(adjective)

Sound: èe

Letter: /eaa/ (as in day)

Length: Long

Placement: Left

Example Words

dêe

Polite ending particle
(conjunction)

gàa-fée

Coffee
(noun)

WORDS WRITING PRACTICE

Trace the words then write them in the space next to it.

Kick

dtê

កែង

Be

bpèn

បែន

Pain

jěp

ទើប

Do

het

ទើត

Spicy

pět

ផើត

Polite particle

pée

ទើ

Coffee

gàa-fée

កាហ្វេ

PICTURE/WORD WRITING

Look at the pictures or English words below.
Write them in Lao on the line below.



Do



1 _____

2 _____

3 _____



Be



4 _____

5 _____

6 _____

1. ກາເຟ 2. ເຮັດ 3. ເຜັດ 4. ເຈັບ 5. ເປັນ 6. ເຕະ

၆၅၆

Sound: ě

Letter: /ae/ (as in deck)

Length: Short

Placement: Left-Right

Example Words

၆၅

lɛ

And

(conjunction)

၆၅၇

Sound: ě

Letter: /ae/ (as in at)

Length: Short

Placement: Left-Top

Example Words

၆၅၈

ěp

App, Female name

(noun)

WORDS WRITING PRACTICE

Trace the words then write them in the space next to it.

And

lɛ

ແລະ

App, A name

ɛp

ແອບ

Goat

bêɛ

ແບ້

Mother

mɛɛ

ແມ່

Is, Am/Yes

mɛn

ແມ່ນ

Delicious

sêɛp

ແຂບ

WORDS WRITING PRACTICE

Trace the words then write them in the space next to it.

What
mɛn-nyǎng

ແມ່ນຍັງ

Authentic/Really
têɛ

ແທ້

PICTURE/WORD WRITING

Look at the pictures or English words below.
Write them in Lao on the line below.



What

Is, Am/Yes

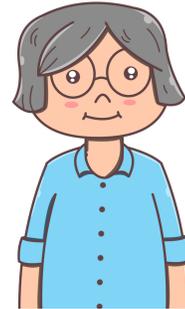
1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

Delicious

And



4 _____

5 _____

6 _____

1. ແບ້ 2. ແມ່ນຫຍັງ 3. ແມ່ນ 4. ແຊບ 5. ແລະ 6. ແມ່

Sound: ǒ

Letter: /o/ (as in oat)

Length: Short

Placement: Left-Right

Example Words

ǒ

Oh

(exclamation)

dto

Table

(noun)

Sound: ǒ

Letter: /o/ (as in oat)

Length: Short

Placement: Top

Example Words

kón

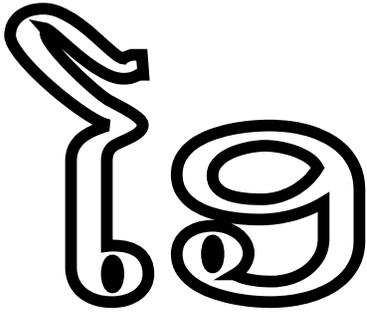
Person/People

(noun)

mök

Baked/Steamed

(verb)



Sound: òo

Letter: /oo/ (as in coal)

Length: Long

Placement: Left

Example Words

ໂທລະສັບ

tóo-la-sǎp

Telephone

(noun)

ໂຊກ

sôok

Luck

(noun)

WORDS WRITING PRACTICE

Trace the words then write them in the space next to it.

Oh
ố

ໄອະ

Table
dto

ໄຕະ

People/Person
kón

ຄົນ

Baked/Steamed
môk

ໝັກ

Telephone
tóo-la-săp

ໂທລະສັບ

Luck
sôok

ໄຊກ

PICTURE/WORD WRITING

Look at the pictures or English words below.
Write them in Lao on the line below.

Oh



1 _____

2 _____

3 _____



Luck



4 _____

5 _____

6 _____

1. ໂອະ 2. ໄຕະ 3. ໝັກ 4. ໄທລະສັບ 5. ໂຊກ 6. ຄົນ

ເອາະ

Sound: ǎ

Letter: /aw/ (as in caught)

Length: Short

Placement: Left-Right

Example Words

ເນາະ

ນວ

Isn't it, right?

(noun/particle)

ເພາະ

ປວ

Because, for

(conjunction)

ເນາະ acts as a polite ending article in the form of a confirmation. It's similar to saying, "isn't it?" at the end of a statement. A way to remember this particle is to remember that **ເນາະ** sounds like "nodding" your head, "right?", "isn't it?"



Sound: ៉ວ

Letter: /aaw/ (as in law)

Length: Long

Placement: Top

Example Words

ບໍ່

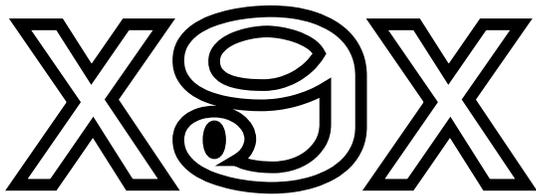
bɔɔ

Not/Question particle
(adverb)

ຂໍໂທດ

kɔɔ-tôot

Sorry/Excuse me
(adjective)



Sound: ៉ວ

Letter: /aaw/ (as in law)

Length: Long

Placement: Middle

Example Words

ຂອງ

kɔɔng

Of/Belong
(preposition)

ຟ້ວນ

fɔɔn

Dance
(verb)

ຂ້ອຍ

kɔɔi

I/Me
(pronoun)

ທ້ອງ

tɔɔng

Stomach
(noun)

WORDS WRITING PRACTICE

Trace the words then write them in the space next to it.

Isn't it, right?

ນວ

ເນື້ອ

Because, for

ປວ

ເພື່ອ

Not

ບວ

ບໍ່

Sorry

kǎw-tôot

ຂໍໂທດ

Of/Belong

kǎwng

ຂອງ

Dance

fôn

ຟ້ອນ

WORDS WRITING PRACTICE

Trace the words then write them in the space next to it.

I/Me

kòi

ຂ້ອຍ

Stomach

tông

ທ້ອງ

PICTURE/WORD WRITING

Look at the pictures or English words below.
Write them in Lao on the line below.

I/Me

Sorry

Of/Belong

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____



Not



4 _____

5 _____

6 _____

1. ຂ້ອຍ 2. ຂໍໂທດ 3. ຂອງ 4. ທ້ອງ 5. ບໍ່ 6. ຟ້ອນ

Sound: îu

Letter: /io/ (as in ew)

Length: Short

Placement: Top-Right

Example Words

pìu

Skin
(noun)

kîu

Acrid/Strong Smell
(adjective)

kìu

Eyebrow
(noun)

Sound: ìu

Letter: /iio/ (as in eew)

Length: Long

Placement: Top-Right

Example Words

jìiu

Name (female)
(noun)

The **อี** vowel is not commonly used. However, it can be used in the form of a person's name.

WORDS WRITING PRACTICE

Trace the words then write them in the space next to it.

Skin

pìu



Acrid/Strong Smell

kìu



Eyebrow

kìu



Name (female)

jìu



PICTURE/WORD WRITING

Look at the pictures or English words below.
Write them in Lao on the line below.

Eyebrown

Jio (name)

Strong smell

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

Skin

4 _____

1. ຄີ້ວ 2. ຈິວ 3. ຂິວ 4. ຜິວ

Sound: ă

Letter: /er/ (as in sir)

Length: Short

Placement: Top-Left

Example Words

ngán

Money

(noun)

bəng

Look/Watch

(verb)

pən

He/She

(pronoun)

Sound: èə

Letter: /err/ (as in sir)

Length: Long

Placement: Top-Left

Example Words

fəə

Noodle (Pho)

(noun)

dêə

Polite particle

(adverb)

əə

Call/Refer

(verb)

WORDS WRITING PRACTICE

Trace the words then write them in the space next to it.

Money
ngón

ເງິນ

Look/Watch
bəng

ເບິ່ງ

He/She
pən

ເພິ່ນ

Noodle (Pho)
fəə

ເຜີ

Polite ending
dêə

ເດີ

Call
âən

ເອີ້ນ

PICTURE/WORD WRITING

Look at the pictures or English words below.
Write them in Lao on the line below.



He/She

Polite particle

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

Call



Look/Watch

4 _____

5 _____

6 _____

1. ເຝີ 2. ເພິ່ນ 3. ເດີ້ 4. ເອີ້ນ 5. ເງິນ 6. ເບິ່ງ

ឆើយ

Sound: ǎa

Letter: /ia/ (as in ear)

Length: Short

Placement: Left-Top-Right

Example Words

ឆើយ

dtîa

Short (height)

(adjective)

ខៀយ

Sound: àa

Letter: /iaa/ (as in ear)

Length: Long

Placement: Left-Right

Example Words

ស៊ី

sì

Lost/Gone
(adjective)

ម្តាយ

mí

Wife
(noun)

ខ្យល់

Sound: àa

Letter: /iaa/ (as in ear)

Length: Long

Placement: Middle

Example Words

ឃ្លាន

kǎn

Write
(verb)

ស្រាវ

hán

Learn/Study
(verb)

ស្រួច

nào

Sticky
(adjective)

WORDS WRITING PRACTICE

Trace the words then write them in the space next to it.

Short (height)
dtîa

ត្លីយ

Lost/Gone
sîa

ស៊ីយ

Wife
mîa

មើយ

Write
kĭan

ខ្យង

Learn/Study
hían

ឆ្យង

Sticky
nìao

ឃ្យង

PICTURE/WORD WRITING

Look at the pictures or English words below.
Write them in Lao on the line below.

Lost/Gone



Short (height)

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____



Wife

Sticky

4 _____

5 _____

6 _____

1. ເສຍ 2. ຮຽນ 3. ເຕ້ຍ 4. ຊຽນ 5. ເມຍ 6. ໜຽວ

Sound: ṣ̣a

Letter: /eua/ (as in sure-ah)

Length: Short

Placement: Left-Top-Right

Example Words

ṣ̣a

Name (female)

(noun)

The **၎ေိ၎** vowel is not commonly used. However, it can be used in the form of a person's name.

Sound: ṣ̣aa

Letter: /euaa/ (as in sure-ah)

Length: Long

Placement: Left-Top-Right

Example Words

ṣ̣aa

Tiger

(noun)

ḥaaan

House

(noun)

p̣aaan

Friend

(noun)

ḳaaang

Things

(noun)

WORDS WRITING PRACTICE

Trace the words then write them in the space next to it.

(Name)

ຸ້າ

ເອີອີ

Tiger

ສຸ້າ

ເສີອີ

House

ຸ້ານ

ເວີອີນ

Friend

ປຸ້ານ

ເພີອີນ

Things

ກຸ້າງ

ເຄີອີງ

PICTURE/WORD WRITING

Look at the pictures or English words below.
Write them in Lao on the line below.



Things/Articles

Name (female)

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

Friend



4 _____

5 _____

1. ເສືອ 2. ເຄື່ອງ 3. ເອືອ 4. ເພື່ອນ 5. ເຮືອນ

ណ
ຍ
វ
ា
ង

Sound: ŷa

Letter: /ua/ (as in oar)

Length: Short

Placement: Top-Right

Example Words

ណ
យ
វ
ា
ង

nyŷa

Persuade

(verb)

ណ
ត
វ
ា
ង

dtŷa

Lie

(verb)

၅၅

Sound: ùa

Letter: /uaa/ (as in oar)

Length: Long

Placement: Top-Right

Example Words

၅၅

ngúa

Cow

(noun)

၅၅

kôp-kúa

Family

(noun)

X၅X

Sound: ùa

Letter: /uaa/ (as in oar)

Length: Long

Placement: Middle

Example Words

၅၅

múai

Boxing

(verb)

၅၅

gwua

More/Less than

(adverb)

WORDS WRITING PRACTICE

Trace the words then write them in the space next to it.

Persuade

nyũa

ຍົວະ

Lie

dtũa

ຕົວະ

Cow

ngũa

ງົວ

Family

kôwp-kúa

ຄອບຄົວ

Boxing

múai

ມວຍ

More/Less Than

gwua

ກວ່າ

PICTURE/WORD WRITING

Look at the pictures or English words below.
Write them in Lao on the line below.



Persuade

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____



Lie

More/Less Than

4 _____

5 _____

6 _____

1. ຄອບຄົວ 2. ມວຍ 3. ຍິວະ 4. ງົວ 5. ຕົວະ 6. ກວ່າ

ເອ້ວ

Sound: ěo

Letter: /aeo/ (as in meow)

Length: Short

Placement: Left-Top-Right

Example Words

The ເອ້ວ and ເອວ vowels are not really new vowels but a combination of ເອ with ວ as the final consonant.

ເເອ້ວ

Sound: éeo

Letter: /aaeo/ (as in meow)

Length: Long

Placement: Left-Right

Example Words

ເເມວ

méeo

Cat

(noun)

ເເລ້ວ

lêeo

Already

(adjective/adverb)

ເເຈ້ວ

jéeo

Dipping Sauce

(noun)

ເເຂວງ

kwěeng

Province

(noun)

WORDS WRITING PRACTICE

Trace the words then write them in the space next to it.

Cat

mέεο

ແມ່ວ

Already

lêεο

ແລ້ວ

Dipping Sauce

jεεο

ແຈ້ວ

Province

kwěεng

ແຂວງ

PICTURE/WORD WRITING

Look at the pictures or English words below.
Write them in Lao on the line below.

Already



Province

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____



4 _____

1. ແລ້ວ 2. ແມວ 3. ແຂວງ 4. ແຈ້ວ

ໄອ / ໃອ

Sound: ài

Letter: /ai/ (as bye)

Length: Short/Long

Placement: Left

Example Words

ໄປ

bpài

Go

(verb)

ໄກ່

gai

Chicken

(noun)

ໄດ້

dâi

Get/Able to

(verb)

ຢູ່ໃສ

yuu-sǎi

Where

(adverb)

ໃຈ

jài

Heart/Mind

(noun)

ຂອບໃຈ

kòɔp-jài

Thank you

(verb)

ອາຍ

Sound: àai

Letter: /aai/ (as in bye)

Length: Long

Placement :Middle-Right

Example Words

ອ້າຍ

âai
Brother (older)
(noun)

ຫຼາຍ

lăai
A lot/Many
(adjective)

ສະບາຍ

sa-bàai
Wellness/comfort
(adjective)

WORDS WRITING PRACTICE

Trace the words then write them in the space next to it.

Go
bpài

ໄປ

Chicken
gai

ໄກ່

Get/Able to
dâi

ໄດ້

Where
yuu-săi

ຢູ່ໃສ

Heart/Mind
jài

ໃຈ

Thank you
kòp-jài

ຂອບໃຈ

WORDS WRITING PRACTICE

Trace the words then write them in the space next to it.

Brother (older)
âai

ອ້າຍ

A lot/Many
lăai

ຫຼາຍ

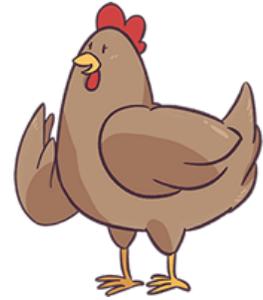
Wellness
sa-bàai

ສະບາຍ

PICTURE/WORD WRITING

Look at the pictures or English words below.
Write them in Lao on the line below.

A lot



1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

Go

Thank you

Well-being

4 _____

5 _____

6 _____

1. ຫຼາຍ 2. ອ້າຍ 3. ໄກ່ 4. ໄປ 5. ຂອບໃຈ 6. ສະບາຍ

ເອົາ

Sound: ào

Letter: /ao/ (as in wow)

Length: Short/Long

Placement: Left-Top-Right

Example Words

ເຈົ້າ

jāo

You

(pronoun)

ເວົ້າ

wāo

Speak

(verb)

ເຂົ້າ

kào

Rice

(noun)

ສາວ

Sound: ǎo

Letter: /aao/ (as in wow)

Length: Long

Placement: Middle-Right

Example Words

ສາວ

sǎao

Girl/Young female

(noun)

ລາວ

láo

Laos/he/she

(noun)

ດາວ

dào

Star/planet

(noun)

WORDS WRITING PRACTICE

Trace the words then write them in the space next to it.

You
jâu

ເຈົ້າ

Speak
wâu

ເວົ້າ

Rice
kào

ຂົ່ງ

Girl
sǎao

ສາວ

Laos/he/she
láao

ລາວ

Star
dào

ດາວ

PICTURE/WORD WRITING

Look at the pictures or English words below.
Write them in Lao on the line below.



Speak

Laos/He/She

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____



You

4 _____

5 _____

6 _____

1. ສາວ 2. ເວົ້າ 3. ລາວ 4. ດາວ 5. ເຂົ້າ 6. ເຈົ້າ

Sound: àm

Letter: /am/ (as in some)

Length: Short/Long

Placement: Top-Right

Example Words

lám

Folksong

(noun)

nâam

Water

(noun)

tàm

Cave

(noun)

Sound: äam

Letter: /aam/ (as in some)

Length: Long

Placement: Middle-Right

Example Words

săam

Three

(noun)

tăam

Query/Question

(verb)

ngáam

Beautiful

(noun)

WORDS WRITING PRACTICE

Trace the words then write them in the space next to it.

Folksong
lám

ລໍາ

Water
nâam

ນໍ້າ

Cave
tàm

ຕໍ່າ

Three
săam

ສາມ

Query/Question
tăam

ຖາມ

Beautiful
ngáam

ງາມ

PICTURE/WORD WRITING

Look at the pictures or English words below.
Write them in Lao on the line below.

?



3

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

Beautiful

Folksong



4 _____

5 _____

6 _____

1. ຖາມ 2. ຖ້າ 3. ສາມ 4. ງາມ 5. ລໍາ 6. ນໍ້າ

Sentences

Sentences in Lao do not have spaces between them.

That is, ***"sentencesinlaodonthavespacesbetweenthem"***

Can you read the line above? If so, it's because you were able to recognize certain English words already.

It works similar in Lao. Thus, it's helpful to learn certain common Lao words and recognize them in the context of a sentence.

Learning to read Lao is useful when you come across new words. Most of the words you have learned so far will be used in our Lao sentence writing exercises.

Keep in mind that when it comes to translations, there isn't an exact 1-to-1 correspondence with Lao to English words.

In fact, as you start to write more Lao sentences, you will notice they are more compact in nature. You can express many ideas by just using with few words elegantly.

Grammar

Lao grammar can be different and similar to English in a few ways.

As an example, Lao follows a similar grammar structure: ***Subject + Verb + Object.***

That is not to say, Lao grammar is easier nor more difficult. Lao should be expressed on its own merit.

Grammar Rules

Here are some helpful grammar rules you need to know to write sentences in Lao.

- Lao terms/ending particles are gender neutral
- Lao has no articles (a, an, the)
- Lao has no tense or verb conjugations
- Adjectives/modifiers are placed after a noun
- Pronouns are often omitted
- Lao language is very elegant and expressive
- Lao sentences should be compact enough for clarity

Statement

There are different ways to express "Thank you" in Lao.

ຂອບໃຈ /kawp jai/

ຂອບໃຈ is the most common way to express "thanks" in Lao.

ຂອບໃຈເດີ້ /kawp jai derr/

ຂອບໃຈເດີ້ is saying "thank you" in an endearing way with a polite ending particle.

ຂອບໃຈຫຼາຍໆ /kawp jai laai laai/

ຂອບໃຈຫຼາຍໆ is thank you + a lot (2x). The ໆ is a repeat symbol in Lao.

Hence, we can translate this as "Thank you a lot" or "Thank you very much"

ຂໍຂອບໃຈ /kaw kawp jai/

ຂໍຂອບໃຈ begins with ຂໍ which means "to request"; literally, "I request my gratitude upon you" It's mainly use among a formal audience.

WRITING EXERCISE

Translate the English sentences to Lao.
Write them using the lines below.

Thank you

Thank you (endearing)

Thank you very much

Thank you (formal audience)

Sentence

I'm feeling glad (happy) and having good luck

ຂ້ອຍ /kawi/
I/me

ຂ້ອຍດີໃຈ /kawi dii jai/
I + glad = I'm feeling glad

As mentioned, Lao sentences can be expressed in a compact manner. Writing the pronoun + feeling is similar to saying, "I am + feeling"

ຂ້ອຍດີໃຈແລະມີ /kawi dii jai lae mii/
I'm feeling glad and have...

ຂ້ອຍດີໃຈແລະມີໂຊກດີ
/kawi dii jai lae mii sok dii/
I'm feeling glad and having good luck

ມີໂຊກດີ is literally "have + luck + good" or "having good luck" when translated to proper English. The word ມີ /mii/ means "have" but we translate it as "having" based on the context of the sentence.

Note: many Lao words are often combined to form new ones.

In this example, you have learned the word ໂຊກ /sok/ means luck and ດີ /dee/ means good. "luck + good" is a compound word meaning "good luck"

WRITING EXERCISE

Translate the English sentences to Lao.
Write them using the lines below.

I'm feeling glad and having good luck

I/me

I'm feeling glad (I + glad)

I 'm feeling glad and have...

I'm feeling glad and having good luck

Sentence

My family has many people

ຄອບຄົວ /kawpkua/
Family

ຄອບຄົວຂອງຂ້ອຍ
/kawpkua kawng kawi/
Family of mine = My Family

For expressing possession in Lao, the word ຂອງ /kawng/ is place before a pronoun. However, in causal Lao, it's often omitted.

ຄອບຄົວຂອງຂ້ອຍມີຄົນ
/kawpkua kawng kawi mii kon/
My family has people

ຄອບຄົວຂອງຂ້ອຍມີຫລາຍຄົນ
/kawpkua kawng kawi mii laai kon/
My family has many people

To express quantity, as in "many/a lot" of something, you can place the word ຫລາຍ /laai/ before or after the noun.

WRITING EXERCISE

Translate the English sentences to Lao.
Write them using the lines below.

My family has many people

Family

My family

My family has people

My family has many people

Sentence

My older brother has a wife already

ອ້າຍ /aai/
Older brother

ອ້າຍຂ້ອຍ
/aai kawi/
My older brother

ອ້າຍຂ້ອຍມີເມຍ
/aai kawi mii mia/
My older brother has a wife

Literally, the sentence is now "older brother + I/mine + has + wife"
Remember, Lao does not have articles like "a, an, the" -- but we use "a" to make our English translation sounds grammatically correct.

ອ້າຍຂ້ອຍມີເມຍແລ້ວ
/aai kawi mii mia laaeo/
My older brother has a wife already

ແລ້ວ /laeao/ means "already" in Lao. Since Lao does not have tense conjugations, we use this word to indicate something occurred in the past.

WRITING EXERCISE

Translate the English sentences to Lao.
Write them using the lines below.

My older brother has a wife already

Older brother

My older brother

My older brother has a wife

My older brother has a wife already

Sentence

The Lao girl is beautiful. Really cute!

ສາວລາວ /saao laao/
(The) Lao girl

ສາວລາວງາມ
/saao laao ngaam/
The Lao girl is beautiful.

Remember that, "Adjectives/modifiers are placed after a noun." In this case, it's "girl + beautiful" (noun + adjective)

ສາວລາວງາມຫຼາຍ
/saao laao ngaam laai/
The Lao girl is very beautiful

ສາວລາວງາມຫຼາຍໜ້າຮັກແທ້
/saao laao ngaam laai naa-hak taae/
The Lao girl is very beautiful. Really cute

To express an adjective with emphasis, like "very delicious" or "real cute" -- we place the modifier (ແທ້ /taae/ meaning "really") after the adjective (ໜ້າຮັກ /naa-hak).

WRITING EXERCISE

Translate the English sentences to Lao.
Write them using the lines below.

The Lao girl is very beautiful. Really cute.

Lao girl

The Lao girl is beautiful.

The Lao girl is very beautiful

The Lao girl is very beautiful. Really cute

Sentence

He's a Lao person with a good heart

ຄົນ /kon/
People/person

ຄົນລາວ /kon laao/
Lao person

Literally, "people + Lao." Lao have multiple meanings: it can refer to a pronoun for he/she or the people and country of "Laos"

ລາວເປັນຄົນລາວ
/laao bpen kon laao/
He's a Lao person

Both ເປັນ /bpen/ and ແມ່ນ /maaen/ can be translated as "is"
However, /bpen/ "to be" refers to being something.

ລາວເປັນຄົນລາວມີໃຈດີ
/laao bpen kon laao mii jai dee/
He's a Lao person with a good heart.

This sentence can more accurately be translated as "He's a Lao person having a good heart" where ມີ /mii/ means "have" We're describing someone having a certain quality.

Using the term ກັບ /gap/ meaning "with" as a preposition would not be correct, as the word describes a series of items or people.

WRITING EXERCISE

Translate the English sentences to Lao.
Write them using the lines below.

He's a Lao person with a good heart

Person

Lao person

He's a Lao person

He's a Lao person with a good heart.

Sentence

I like to study Lao language with a teacher

ຂ້ອຍ /kawi/
I/me

ຂ້ອຍມັກ /kawi mak/
I like

ຂ້ອຍມັກຮຽນ
/kawi mak hian/
I like to study

Lao sentence is more compact than English. In English, we tend to say "subject + to + verb" whereas in Lao, we can simply use "subject + verb"

ຂ້ອຍມັກຮຽນພາສາລາວ
/kawi mak hian paasaa laao/
I like to study Lao language

ຂ້ອຍມັກຮຽນພາສາລາວກັບຄູ
/kawi mak hian paasaa laao gap kuu/
I like to study Lao language with a teacher

ກັບຄູ /gap kuu/ literally is "with + teacher" In English, we translate it as "with a teacher"

WRITING EXERCISE

Translate the English sentences to Lao.
Write them using the lines below.

I like to study Lao language with a teacher

I

I like

I like to study

I like to study Lao language

I like to study Lao language with a teacher

Sentence

My mom likes to dance (traditional)

ແມ່ /maae/
Mother/mom

ແມ່ຂອງຂ້ອຍ
/maae kawng kawi/
My mom

We can either use "mother + I" or "mother + of + I" In this case, we're using the latter structure.

ແມ່ຂອງຂ້ອຍມັກພ້ອນ
/maae kawng kawi mak fawn/
My mom likes to dance

ແມ່ຂອງຂ້ອຍມັກພ້ອນລຳ
/maae kawng kawi mak fawn lam/
My mom likes to dance (traditional)

ລຳ /lam/ means "folksong" In this case, ພ້ອນລຳ /fawn lam/ refers to a traditional style of dance to folk music.

WRITING EXERCISE

Translate the English sentences to Lao.

Write them using the lines below.

My mom likes to dance (traditional)

Mother/Mom

My mom

My mom likes to dance

My mom likes to dance (traditional/folksong)

Sentence

I like to eat rice with chicken

ຂ້ອຍມັກ /kawi mak/
I like

ຂ້ອຍມັກກິນ
/kawi mak gin/
I like to eat

ຂ້ອຍມັກກິນເຂົ້າ
/kawi mak gin kao/
I like to eat rice

This follows the subject + verb + object grammar structure like English.

ຂ້ອຍມັກກິນເຂົ້າກັບຊີ້ນໄກ່
/kawi mak gin kao gap siin gai/
I like to eat rice with chicken

We use the word ຊີ້ນ /siin/ before the chicken to indicate eating chicken meat specifically.

WRITING EXERCISE

Translate the English sentences to Lao.

Write them using the lines below.

I like to eat rice with chicken

I like

I like to eat

I like to eat rice

I like to eat rice with chicken

Sentence

This steamed fish is truly delicious

ປາ /bpaal/
Fish

ໝັກປາ
/mok bpaal/
Steamed fish

ໝັກປານີ້
/mok bpaa nii/
This steamed fish

The word for this ນີ້ /nii/ comes after the subject.

ໝັກປານີ້ແຊບ
/mok bpaa nii saap/
This steamed fish is delicious

ໝັກປານີ້ແຊບແທ້ໆ
/mok bpaa nii saap taae taae/
This steamed fish is truly delicious

WRITING EXERCISE

Translate the English sentences to Lao.
Write them using the lines below.

This steamed fish is truly delicious

Fish

Steamed fish

This steamed fish

This steamed fish is delicious

This steamed fish is truly delicious

Sentence

You ate a lot more sticky rice than me

ເຈົ້າ /jao/
You

ເຈົ້າກິນ

/jao gin/
You ate

Verbs in Lao do not have past tense conjugation; that is, "eat" vs "ate." The word ກິນ /gin/ remain with the same spelling.

ເຈົ້າກິນເຂົ້າໜຽວ

/jao gin kao nio/
You ate sticky rice

ເຈົ້າກິນເຂົ້າໜຽວຫຼາຍ

/jao gin kao nio laai/
You ate a lot of sticky rice

ເຈົ້າກິນເຂົ້າໜຽວຫຼາຍກວ່າຂ້ອຍ

/jao gin kao nio laai guaa kawi/
You ate a lot more sticky rice than me

The word ກວ່າ /guaa/ is an adverb use for comparing two quantities. In this case, we using "more than"

WRITING EXERCISE

Translate the English sentences to Lao.

Write them using the lines below.

You ate a lot more sticky rice than me

You

You ate

You ate sticky rice

You ate a lot of sticky

You ate a lot more sticky rice than me

Sentence

The tiger ate more fish than the elephant

ເສືອ /seua/
Tiger

ເສືອກິນ

/seua gin/

The tiger ate

ເສືອກິນປາ

/seua gin bpa/

The tiger ate fish

ເສືອກິນປາຫຼາຍ

/seua gin bpa laai/

The tiger ate a lot of fish

ເສືອກິນປາຫຼາຍກວ່າຊ້າງ

/seua gin bpa laai guaa saang/

The tiger ate a lot more fish than the elephant

Although we use "the" in our English translation, there are no articles (a, an, the) in Lao.

WRITING EXERCISE

Translate the English sentences to Lao.
Write them using the lines below.

The tiger ate a lot more fish than the elephant

Tiger

The tiger ate

The tiger ate fish

The tiger ate a lot of fish

The tiger ate a lot more fish than the elephant

Sentence

I eat pork with hot dipping sauce

ຂ້ອຍ /kawi/
I

ຂ້ອຍກິນ /kawi gin/
I eat

ຂ້ອຍກິນຊີ້ນໝູ
/kawi gin siin muu/
I eat pork

ຊີ້ນ /siin/ ໝູ /muu/ is literally, "meat + pig", which is pork.

ຂ້ອຍກິນຊີ້ນໝູກັບແຈ້ວ
/kawi gin siin muu gap jaaeo/
I eat pork with dipping sauce

A common Lao food word is ແຈ້ວ /jaaeo/. It's a type of sauce mostly used to dip sticky rice with during a meal.

ຂ້ອຍກິນຊີ້ນໝູກັບແຈ້ວເຜັດ
/kawi gin siin muu gap jaaeo paet/
I eat pork with hot dipping sauce

Notice that the adjective ເຜັດ /paet/ comes after the object. /paet/ in this case describes taste and not temperature.

WRITING EXERCISE

Translate the English sentences to Lao.

Write them using the lines below.

I eat pork with hot dipping sauce

I/me

I eat

I eat pork

I eat pork with dipping sauce

I eat pork with hot dipping sauce

Sentence

I want to eat Pho noodle that has beef

ຂ້ອຍ /kawi/
I

ຂ້ອຍກິນ /kawi gin/
I eat

ຂ້ອຍຢາກກິນ
/kawi yaak gin/
I want to eat

This still follow the S + V + O structure: "I + want + eat"

ຂ້ອຍຢາກກິນເຝີ
/kawi yaak gin ferr/
I want to eat Pho noodle

ເຝີ /ferr/ is Pho, which is a popular Vietnamese style type of soup.

ຂ້ອຍຢາກກິນເຝີມີຊີ້ນງົວ
/kawi yaak gin ferr mii siin nguaa/
I want to eat Pho noodle that has beef

ຊີ້ນງົວ is literally "meat + cow", which is beef in Lao.

WRITING EXERCISE

Translate the English sentences to Lao.

Write them using the lines below.

I want to eat Pho noodle that has beef

I/me

I eat

I want to eat

I want to eat Pho noodle

I want to eat Pho noodle that has beef

Sentence

I want to eat real spicy papaya salad

ຂ້ອຍກິນ /kawi gin/
I eat

ຂ້ອຍຢາກກິນ

/kawi yaak gin/
I want to eat

ຂ້ອຍຢາກກິນຕໍາຫມາກຫຸ່ງ

/kawi yaak gin dtam maak huung/
I want to eat papaya salad

ຕໍາຫມາກຫຸ່ງ /dtam maak huung/ or sometimes transcribed as "Tham Mak Hong" means "pounded" + "papaya" -- and is a signature Lao cuisine dish.

ຂ້ອຍຢາກກິນຕໍາຫມາກຫຸ່ງເຜັດ

/kawi yaak gin dtam maak huung paet/
I want to eat spicy papaya salad

ຂ້ອຍຢາກກິນຕໍາຫມາກຫຸ່ງເຜັດແທ້

/kawi yaak gin dtam maak huung paet taae/
I want to eat real spicy papaya salad

WRITING EXERCISE

Translate the English sentences to Lao.
Write them using the lines below.

I want to eat real spicy papaya salad

I eat

I want to eat

I want to eat papaya salad

I want to eat spicy papaya salad

I want to eat real spicy papaya salad

Sentence

My stomach hurts because I ate something spicy

ຂ້ອຍ /kawi/
I

ຂ້ອຍເຈັບ /kawi jeab/
I'm hurt

ຂ້ອຍເຈັບທ້ອງ
/kawi jeab tawng/
My stomach hurts

Literally, in Lao this is "I + hurt/pain + stomach"

ຂ້ອຍເຈັບທ້ອງເພາະຂ້ອຍກິນ
/kawi jeab tawng paw kawi gin/
My stomach hurts because I ate

ເພາະ /paw/ or ເພາະວ່າ /paw waa/ is a conjunction meaning "because"

ຂ້ອຍເຈັບທ້ອງເພາະຂ້ອຍກິນຂອງເຜັດ
/kawi jeab tawng paw kawi gin kawng paet/
My stomach hurts because I ate something spicy

Notice that the adjective ເຜັດ /paet/ comes after the object. /paet/ in this case describes taste and not temperature.

WRITING EXERCISE

Translate the English sentences to Lao.

Write them using the lines below.

My stomach hurts because I ate something spicy

I/me

I'm hurt

My stomach hurts

My stomach hurts because I ate

My stomach hurts because I ate something spicy

Sentence

The papaya salad was spicy, right?

ຕໍ່າ /dtam/
Pound/Hit

ຕໍ່າຫມາກຫຼ່ຽງ /dtam mak huung/
Pounded + papaya = Papaya Salad

ຕໍ່າຫມາກຫຼ່ຽງເຜັດ
/dtam mak huung paet/
The papaya salad is spicy

ຕໍ່າຫມາກຫຼ່ຽງເຜັດເນາະ
/dtam mak huung paet naw/
The papaya salad was spicy, right?

ເນາະ /naw/ as you learned is an inquiring ending particle. It's sometimes translated as, "right?", "isn't/wasn't it?"

WRITING EXERCISE

Translate the English sentences to Lao.

Write them using the lines below.

The papaya salad was spicy, right?

Pound/Hit

Papaya salad

The papaya salad is spicy

The papaya salad was spicy, right?

Sentence

My friend's house has many things

ເຮືອນ /heuan/
House

ເຮືອນເພື່ອນ /heuan peuan/
A friend's house

ເຮືອນເພື່ອນຂ້ອຍ
/huean peuan kawī/
My friend's house

ເຮືອນເພື່ອນຂ້ອຍມີເຄື່ອງ
/huean peuan kawī mii keuan/
My friend's house has things

ເຄື່ອງ /keuan/ can refer to articles/things

ເຮືອນເພື່ອນຂ້ອຍມີເຄື່ອງຫລາຍ
/huean peuan kawī mii keuan laai/
My friend's house has many things

WRITING EXERCISE

Translate the English sentences to Lao.

Write them using the lines below.

My friend's house has many things

House

A friend's house

My friend's house

My friend's house has things

My friend's house has many things

Question - Where

A "where" question in Lao is usually form by placing the word at the end of a statement

Subject + (location/where)

ຢູ່ໃສ /yuusai/

ແຂວງ ເຈົ້າ ຢູ່ໃສ

/kwaaeng jao **yuusai**/

province + you + **where**

Where is your province?

ແຂວງເຈົ້າຢູ່ໃສ

ແຂ້ວ ແມວ ຢູ່ໃສ

/kaaeo maeo **yuusai**/

teeth + cat + **where**

Where the cat's teeth?

ແຂ້ວແມວຢູ່ໃສ

ແຂ້ວ ແມວ ເສຍ ແລ້ວ

/kaaeo maeo siaa laaeo/

teeth + cat + lost + already

The cat's teeth is lost already

ແຂ້ວແມວເສຍແລ້ວ

WRITING EXERCISE

Translate the English sentences to Lao.

Write them using the lines below.

Note: write without spaces

Where is your province?

Where the cat's teeth?

The cat's teeth is lost already

Question - Where

ເຈົ້າ ຢາກ ໄປ ໃສ ມື້ນີ້

/jao yaak bpai sai meua-nii/
you + want + go + where + today
Where do you want go to today?

You can think of this sentence as "where do you want to go?
+ "today"

ມື້ນີ້ ຂ້ອຍ ຢາກ ໄປ ຖ້ຳ ແລະ ຂຶ້ນ ພູ

/meua-nii kawi yaak bpai tam lae keuan puu/
today + I + want + go + cave + and + up + mountain
Today, I want to go to the cave and up the mountain

ສາວ ດາວ ຢູ່ໃສ

/saao daao yuusai/
miss + Dao + where
Where is Sao Dao?

ລາວ ຢູ່ ເຮືອນ ແມ່

/lao yuu heuan maae/
she + at + house + mother
She is at her mom's house

WRITING EXERCISE

Translate the English sentences to Lao.

Write them using the lines below.

Note: write without spaces

Where do you want go to today?

Today, I want to go to the cave and up the mountain

Where is Sao Dao?

She is at her mom's house

Question - What

Similarly, a "what" question in Lao is usually form by placing the word at the end of a statement

What

ແມ່ນຫຍັງ /maaen nyang/

ຫຍັງ /nyang/

ນີ້ ແມ່ນ

/nii maaen/

this + is

This is

ນີ້ ແມ່ນ ຫຍັງ

/nii maaen nyang/

this + is + what

What is this?

ແມ່ນ /maaen/ can also mean "yes, it is"

ນີ້ ເອີ້ນ ຫຍັງ

/nii ernn nyang/

this + call + what

What is this called?

WRITING EXERCISE

Translate the English sentences to Lao.

Write them using the lines below.

Note: write without spaces

This

This is

What is this?

What is this called?

Question - What

ນີ້ ແມ່ນ ຊີ້ນ ຫຍັງ

/nii maaen siin **nyang**/
this + is + meat + **what**
What meat is this?

ນີ້ ແມ່ນ ຊີ້ນ ຫູ

/nii maaen siin ຫູ/
this + is + meat + pig
This is pork

ເຈົ້າ ເຮັດ ຫຍັງ

/jao het **nyang**/
you + do + **what**
What are you doing?

ຂ້ອຍ ເຮັດກິນ

/kawi het gin/
I + do + eat

I am cooking/preparing meals

The word ເຮັດ /het/ means do and ກິນ /gin/ means eat.
"do + eat" is a compound word meaning "to cook"

WRITING EXERCISE

Translate the English sentences to Lao.

Write them using the lines below.

Note: write without spaces

What meat is this?

This is pork

What are you doing?

I am cooking/preparing meals

Question - What

ເປັນ ຫຍັງ

/is nyang/

is + what

What is happening? (to a person)

The word ແມ່ນຫຍັງ /maæn nyang/ also means "what" -- but refer to an event occurring. ເປັນ ຫຍັງ /bpen nyang/ is more specific in inquiring about someone.

ບໍ່ ເປັນ ຫຍັງ

/baaw bpen nyang/

not + is/am + what

Nothing is happening

ບໍ່ເປັນຫຍັງ /baaw bpen nyang/ is a very common expression in Lao society and culture.

It's very much a literal response to the question, "What is happening/going on?" "Nothing is happening!"

The phrase conjures the idea of "easy going", "no worrying", and "taking things easy" and a reflection of Lao society in general.

Some close English equivalents are "Don't worry", "Not a problem", "you're welcome", "all good"

WRITING EXERCISE

Translate the English sentences to Lao.

Write them using the lines below.

Note: write without spaces

What is happening?

Nothing is happening/All good/Not a problem

Sentence - Negation

ບໍ່ /baw/ can act as a question particle, a word for “no” or even a negation for a verb or adjective.

Negation (Not, no)

ບໍ່ /baaw/

1) A negative response by itself.

Example: ບໍ່

ບໍ່ /baaw/. **No**

2) Negation of a verb/adjective.

Example: ບໍ່ + [Verb/Adjective]

ດີ /dee/. ບໍ່ດີ /baaw dee/

Good. Not Good = Bad.

ກິນ /gin/. ບໍ່ກິນ /baaw gin/

Eat. Not + Eat = Not eating

Sentence - Negation

3) Forming a question from a statement.

Example: [Statement] + ບໍ່

ຢາກກິນ /yaak gin/. ຢາກກິນບໍ່? /yaak gin baaw/

Want to Eat (or not) = Want to eat?

ກິນ / gin/. ກິນບໍ່? /gin baaw/

Eat (or not) = Want to eat?

4) Double negative question.

Example: ບໍ່ + [Statement] + ບໍ່

ບໍ່ຢາກກິນບໍ່? /baw yak gin baw/

Don't you want to eat?

We omitted the pronoun in the sentence assuming that the context is already known.

Note: you can respond "yes" by repeating the verb.

WRITING EXERCISE

Translate the English sentences to Lao.

Write them using the lines below.

Note: write without spaces

Eat

Not eating

Want to eat?

Don't you want to eat?

Sentence - Negation

ເຈັບ ຫົວ ບໍ່

/jeab hua **baaw**/

hurt + head + **not**

(Do you) have a headache?

ຫົວ ເຈັບ ບໍ່

/hua jeab **baaw**/

head + hurt + **not**

(Does your) head hurt?

ເຈັບ ຫ້ອງ ບໍ່

/jeab tawng **baaw**/

hurt + stomach + **not**

(Do you) have a stomach ache?

ຫ້ອງ ເຈັບ ບໍ່

/tawng jaeb **baaw**/

stomach + hurt + **not**

(Does your) stomach hurt?

We omitted the pronouns "you/your." This is a compact way of forming a Lao sentence when the context is known.

WRITING EXERCISE

Translate the English sentences to Lao.

Write them using the lines below.

Note: write without spaces

(Do you) have a headache?

(Does your) head hurt?

(Do you) have a stomach ache?

(Does your) stomach hurt?

Sentence - Negation

ກິນ ເຂົ້າ ແລ້ວ **ບໍ່**

/gin kao laaeo **baaw**/

eat + rice/food + already + **not**

Did (you) eat already?

ກິນ ແລ້ວ

/gin laaeo/

eat + already

(I) ate already

ກິນ ຫຍັງ

/gin nyang/

eat + what

What did (you) eat?

ກິນ ປາ

/gin bpaa/

eat + fish

(I) ate fish

WRITING EXERCISE

Translate the English sentences to Lao.

Write them using the lines below.

Note: write without spaces

Did (you) eat already?

(I) ate already

What did (you) eat?

(I) ate fish

Sentence - Negation

ເຈົ້າ ຈື່ ບໍ່

/jao jeua **baaw**/
you + remember + **not**
Do you remember?

ຂໍໂທດ ຂ້ອຍ ບໍ່ ຈື່

/kaaw toot kawi **baaw** jeua/
sorry + I + **not** + remember
Sorry, I don't remember

ຂ້ອຍ ລືມ ແລ້ວ

/kawi leuam laaeo/
I + forgot + already
I forgot already

ຂ້ອຍ ບໍ່ ຕົວະ

/kawi **baaw** dtua/
I + **not** + lie
I'm not lying

WRITING EXERCISE

Translate the English sentences to Lao.

Write them using the lines below.

Note: write without spaces

Do you remember?

Sorry, I don't remember

I forgot already

I'm not lying

Sentence - Negation

ນີ້ ແມ່ນ ກາເຟ ຂອງ ເຈົ້າ **ບໍ່**

/nii maaen gaafea kawng jao **baaw**/

this + is + coffee + of + you + **not**

Is this your coffee?

ບໍ່ ແມ່ນ ເອົາ ໄປ ເດີ

/**baaw** maaen ao bpai derr/

not + is + take + go + please

No it's not. Take it away, please

ເອົາໄປ is combination of "take + go", which is a compound word. ເອົາ ໄປ /ao bpai/ means to "take away"

ຂ້ອຍ **ບໍ່** ຢາກ ກິນ ຊີ້ນ ດິບ

/kawi **baaw** yaak gin siin dip/

I + **not** + want + eat + meat + raw

I don't want to eat raw meat

ຂ້ອຍ ເບິ່ງ **ບໍ່** ໄດ້

/kawi bperng **baaw** dai/

I + watch + **not** + can

I can't watch

WRITING EXERCISE

Translate the English sentences to Lao.

Write them using the lines below.

Note: write without spaces

Is this your coffee?

No it's not. Take it away, please

I don't want to eat raw meat

I can't watch

Sentence - Negation

ຂ້ອຍ **ບໍ່** ມີ ເງິນ

/kawi **baaw** mii ngern/

I + **not** + have + money

I don't have money

ຂ້ອຍ ເບິ່ງ ເຈົ້າ ກິນ

/kawi bpern jao gin/

I + watch + you + eat

I'm watching you eat

The above two statements can be interpreted in English as, "I don't have money; I'm watching you eat."

ເຈົ້າ ເວົ້າ ພາສາ ລາວ ໄດ້ **ບໍ່**

/jao wao paasaa laao dai **baaw**/

you + speak + language + Lao + can + not

Can you speak Lao?

ເຈົ້າ ຂ້ອຍ ເວົ້າ ພາສາ ລາວ ໄດ້

/jao kawi wao paasaa laao dai/

yes + I + speak + language + Lao + can

Yes. I can speak Lao

ເຈົ້າ /jao/ means "yes" in this context.

WRITING EXERCISE

Translate the English sentences to Lao.

Write them using the lines below.

Note: write without spaces

I don't have money

I'm watching you eat

Can you speak Lao?

Yes. I can speak Lao

WRITING EXERCISE

Translate the English sentences to Lao.

Write them in the open space below.

A) Hello, what will you do today?

B) Today, I will study Lao.

A) Can you write in Lao language?

B) Yes, I can

A) Can you speak Lao?

B) I can't speak much

B) I will study with a teacher

A) Good luck!

B) Not a problem!

