

A Proposal for Romanization of Japanese extending Hepburn System

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- Refer to the [PDF](#) version.

Introduction

This document describes how to spell Japanese language with Roman Letters. This is written as a reference to revise ISO 3602.

Syllabary 1

Syllabary 1 is used to spell ordinary Japanese documents.

Syllabary 1 for native words

	a	e	i	o	u		a	e	i	o	u												
	a	ア	e	エ	i	イ	o	オ	u	ウ													
b	ba	バ	be	ベ	bi	ビ	bo	ボ	bu	ブ	by	bya	ビヤ		byo	ビョ	byu	ビュ					
							ch	cha	チャ	chi	チ	cho	チョ	chu	チュ								
d	da	ダ	de	デ		do	ド																
f						fu	フ																
g	ga	ガ	ge	ゲ	gi	ギ	go	ゴ	gu	グ	gy	gya	ギヤ		gyo	ギョ	gyu	ギュ					
h	ha	ハ	he	ヘ	hi	ヒ	ho	ホ			hy	hya	ヒヤ		hyo	ヒョ	hyu	ヒュ	h	ー	(*1)		
											j	ja	ジャ	ji	ジ	jo	ジョ	ju	ジュ				
k	ka	カ	ke	ケ	ki	キ	ko	コ	ku	ク	ky	kya	キヤ		kyo	キョ	kyu	キユ					
m	ma	マ	me	メ	mi	ミ	mo	モ	mu	ム	my	mya	ミヤ		myo	ミョ	myu	ミユ					
n	na	ナ	ne	ネ	ni	ニ	no	ノ	nu	ヌ	ny	nya	ニヤ		nyo	ニョ	nyu	ニユ	n	ン	(*2)		
p	pa	パ	pe	ペ	pi	ピ	po	ポ	pu	プ	py	pya	ピヤ		pyo	ピョ	pyu	ピユ					
q																			q	ツ	(*3)		
r	ra	ラ	re	レ	ri	リ	ro	ロ	ru	ル	ry	rya	リヤ		ryo	リョ	ryu	リュ					
s	sa	サ	se	セ			so	ソ	su	ス													
											sh	sha	シャ	shi	シ	sho	ショ	shu	シュ				
t	ta	タ	te	テ			to	ト															
ts									tsu	ツ													
w	wa	ワ									y	ya	ヤ		yo	ヨ	yu	ユ					
z	za	ザ	ze	ゼ			zo	ゾ	zu	ズ													

(*1) Prolonged Vowels

The letter "h" is used to spell prolonged vowels. It is usually replaced with the circumflex or the macron. They are omitted in the Japanese passport guideline. Prolonged vowels are sometimes spelled as double vowels or follow Japanese orthography of *Kana* script.

- ユーラクチョー: Yuhrakuchoh → Yûrakuchô, Yûrakuchō (Yurakucho)
- ユウラクチョウ: Yuurakuchou → Yuhrakuchoh → Yûrakuchô (Yurakucho)

(*2) The Nasal Syllable

The letter "n" is used to spell the nasal syllable. It may be replaced with the letter "m" before the letters "b", "m", and "p".

- カンダ: Kanda

- シンバシ: Shinbashi, Shimbashi

(*3) The Glottal Stop

The letter "q" is used to spell the glottal stop. When the glottal stop is located before a consonant, it usually changes to a prolonged consonant. The letter "q" before a consonant may be replaced with the first letter of double consonants such as "kk", "pp", "ss" and "tt". Exceptionally, it may be replaced with "t" before the consonant "ch".

- ニッポリ: Niqpori → Nippori
- ニッシン: Niqshin → Nisshin
- エッチュージマ: Eqchuhjima → Etchuhjima → Etchûjima

When a vowel or a semivowel needs to start a new syllable at the middle of a word, the glottal stop letter "q" may be inserted to avoid ambiguity. Vowels is "a", "e", "i", "o", and "u". Semivowels are "w" and "y". The letter "q" is usually replaced with the apostrophe. It is omitted in the Japanese passport guideline.

- カンエツ: Kanqetsu → Kan'etsu (Kanetsu)
- オーオカ: Ohqoka → Oh'oka (Ohoka) → Ôoka

When the following exceptional sequences appear, the letter "q" is literally used as the glottal stop.

- アツ: Aq (at the end of a word)
- バツハ: Baqha (before the letter "h". "Bahha" is interpreted as "Bâha".)
- アッオ: Aqgo → Aq'o ("qq" or "q'" is located before a vowel or a semivowel.)

Syllabary 2

Syllabary 2 is used to spell Japanese documents including loanwords. This syllabary complements most of the blank cells of Syllabary 1.

Syllabary 2 for loanwords

	a	e	i	o	u		a	e	i	o	u					
						ch	+che	チエ	++		+					
d	+	+	di	デイ	+	du	ドウ	dy			dyu	デュ				
f	fa	ファ	fe	フェ	fi	フィ	fo	フォ	+	fy		fyo	フヨ	fyu	フユ	
gw	gwa	グア	gwe	グエ	gwi	グイ	gwo	グオ								
h	+	+	+	+		hy	+hye	ヒエ		+		+				
						j	+je	ジエ	++		+					
k	+	+	+	+	+	ky	+kye	キエ		+		+				
kw	kwa	クア	kwe	クエ	kwi	クイ	kwo	クオ								
n	+	+	+	+	+	ny	+nye	ニエ		+		+				
s	+	+	si	スイ	+											
						sh	+she	シエ	++		+					
t	+	+	ti	テイ	+	tu	トウ	ty				tyu	テユ			
ts	tsa	ツア	tse	ツエ	tsi	ツイ	tso	ツオ	+							
v	va	ヴァ	ve	ヴェ	vi	ヴィ	vo	ヴォ	vu	ヴ	vy		vyo	ヴヨ	vyu	ヴユ
w	+	we	ウエ	wi	ウイ	wo	ウオ		y	+ye	イエ		+		+	
z	+	+	zi	ズイ	+	+										

- The cells marked with "+" are already defined in Syllabary 1.
- The breve may be used for transliteration. For example, "ドウ, テユ, ウオ" are spelled as "dōu, tēyu, ūo".

Syllabary 3

Syllabary 3 may be used to spell classic Japanese documents and grammatical documents. This syllabary represents the real sound of the *Kana* script when it was invented.

Syllabary 3 for classic words

	a	e	i	o	u	a	ei	o	u	
d	+	+	* di チ	+	* du ツ	dy dya チャ		dyo チョ	* dyu チュ	(*1)
gw	* gwa グワ	*	*	*						(*2)
h	+	+	+	+	hu フ	hy	+	*	+	
kw	* kwa クワ	*	*	*						(*2)
s	+	+	* si シ	+	+	sy sya シヤ		syo ショ	syu シュ	(*3)
t	+	+	* ti チ	+	* tu ツ	ty tya チャ		tyo チョ	* tyu チュ	(*3)
w	+	* we エ	* wi ヱ	* wo ヲ		y	+	*	+	(*2)
z	+	+	* zi ジ	+	+	zy zya ジャ		zyo ジョ	zyu ジュ	(*3)

- The cells marked with "+" or "*" are already defined in Syllabary 1 or 2 respectively.
- (*1) "ヂ, ツ, チャ, チョ, チュ" are spelled as "ji, zu, ja, jo, ju" for modern words, and may be spelled as "dji, dzu, dja, djo, dju" for transliteration.
- (*2) "グワ, クワ, エ, ヱ" are not used but "ヲ" is spelled as "o" for modern words.
- (*3) "シ, チ, ツ, チュ, ジ" are defined as "shi, chi, tsu, chu, ji" in Syllabary 1.

Appendices

Consonants

Vowels

	labial		alveolar		post-alveolar		palatal	velar		glottal	front	center	back
	VL	V	VL	V	VL	V	V	VL	V	VL			
	plosive	p	b	t	d				k	g	q		
affricate			ts		ch								
fricative	f	v	s	z	sh	j				h			
nasal		m		n							a		
tap and flap				r									
approximant		w					y						

VL: voiceless, V: voiced.

Kana Syllabary and the Order

	a	i	u	e	o	ka	ki	ku	ke	ko	sa	shi	su	se	so	ta	chi	tsu	te	to	na	ni	nu	ne	no
Katakana	ア	イ	ウ	エ	オ	カ	キ	ク	ケ	コ	サ	シ	ス	セ	ソ	タ	チ	ツ	テ	ト	ナ	ニ	ヌ	ネ	ノ
Hiragana	あ	い	う	え	お	か	き	く	け	こ	さ	し	す	せ	そ	た	ち	つ	て	と	な	に	ぬ	ね	の
	ha	hi	fu	he	ho	ma	mi	mu	me	mo	ya	yu	yo	ra	ri	ru	re	ro	wa	wi	we	wo	n		
Katakana	ハ	ヒ	フ	ヘ	ホ	マ	ミ	ム	メ	モ	ヤ	ユ	ヨ	ラ	リ	ル	レ	ロ	ワ	ヰ	ヱ	ヲ	ン		
Hiragana	は	ひ	ふ	へ	ほ	ま	み	む	め	も	や	ゆ	よ	ら	り	る	れ	ろ	わ	ゐ	ゑ	を	ん		

References

- Rômaji no Tsuzurikata
http://www.mext.go.jp/b_menu/hakusho/nc/k19541209001/k19541209001.html
- Gairaigo no Hyôki
http://www.mext.go.jp/b_menu/hakusho/nc/k19910628002/k19910628002.html

- Sep. 2nd, 2016: Modified the explanation on the glottal stop letter 'q' and Syllabary 3.
- Nov. 12th, 2017: Modified the explanation on Syllabary 3 and the table of consonants.
- Nov. 18th, 2017: Appended the description on the breve to Syllabary 2.