

あ ア い イ

う ウ え エ

お オ が カ

き キ く ク

け ケ こ コ

i

“ee”

Long E sound,  
as the “ee” in “meet.”

a

“ah”

Soft A sound,  
as the “a” in “father.”

e

“eh”

Short E or long A sound,  
as the “e” in “met.”  
It sometimes sounds like a “y” is in front of  
it— “ye.”

u

“oo”

Double O sound,  
as the “oo” in “boot.”

ka

“kah”

“Ca” in “cause”

o

“oh”

Long O sound,  
as the “o” in “boat.”

ku

“koo”

“Coo”

ki

“kee”

“Key”

ko

“koh”

“Co” in “Coat”

ke

“keh”

“Ke” in “ketchup”

さ さ し シ

す ス セ セ

そ ソ た タ

ち チ つ ツ

て テ と ト

shi

“shee”  
“She”  
in Sushi

sa

“sah”  
“Saw”

se

“seh”  
“Se” in “set”

su

“soo”  
“Sue”

ta

“tah”  
“Ta” in “tall”

so

“soh”  
“So”

tsu

“tsoo”  
“Tzu” in “Shih Tzu”

chi

“chee”  
“Che” in “cheat”

to

“toh”  
“Toe”

te

“teh”  
“Te” in “tell”

な ナ に ニ

ぬ 又 ね ネ

の ノ は ハ

ひ ヒ ふ フ

へ へ ほ ホ

ni

“nee”  
“Knee”

na

“nah”  
“No” in “not”

ne

“neh”  
“Ne” in “net”

nu

“noo”  
“New”

ha

“hah”  
“Ha” in “haunt”

no

“noh”  
“No”

fu

“foo”  
This letter is produced  
by blowing through  
circular lips.

It can be either  
“fu” or “hu.”

hi

“hee”  
“He”

ho

“hoh”  
“Hoe”

he

“heh”  
“He” in “head”

ま マ み ミ

む ム め メ

も モ や ヤ

ゆ ユ よ ヨ

ん ン り リ

mi

“mee”  
“Me”

ma

“mah”  
“Ma” in “mall”

me

“meh”  
“Me” in “met”

mu

“moo”  
“Moo” in “mood”

ya

“yah”  
“Ya” in “yacht”

mo

“moh”  
“Mo” in “most”

yo

“yoh”  
“Yo” in “yoke”

yu

“yoo”  
“You”

ri

“lee”

n

“n” This can sound like the English N.  
Sometimes it’s a little softer and nasalized, like the nasalized N in French. When it precedes an M, B or P sound, it sounds like M (because the mouth is about to be closed in those letters).



る ル れ し

ろ 口 ら ラ

わ ワ を ヲ

re

“leh”

ru

“loo”

ra

“lah”

ro

“loh”

w(o)

“(w)o”

This can be pronounced or spelled  
as either “wo” as in “won’t” or “o”  
as in “oat.”

wa

“wa”

“Wa” in “want”

が ガ きぎ ギ

ぐ グ げゲ

ご ゴ ざザ

じ ジ ずズ

ぜ ゼ ぞゾ

gi

“gee”  
“gee” in “geese”

ga

“gah”  
“ga” in “gallbladder”

ge

“geh”  
“ge” in “get”

gu

“goo”  
“goo” in “goon”

za

“zah”  
“zo” in “zombie”

go

“goh”  
“go”

zu

“zoo”  
“zoo”

ji

“jee”  
“ge” in “genius.”  
This sounds like J, not Z.

zo

“zoh”  
“zo” in “zone”

ze

“zeh”  
“ze” in “zest”

だ 夕 ぢ ぢ

づ ッツ ず ず

ど ド ぼ ぼ

び ビ ぶ ぶ

べ べ ぼ ぼ

di

“dee”

da

“dah”  
“da” in “daunting”

de

“deh”  
“de” in “dent”

du

“doo”

ba

“bah”  
“ba” in “ball”

do

“doh”  
“Dough”

bu

“boo”  
“boo” in “boot”

bi

“bee”  
“bee”

bo

“boh”  
“bo” in “boat”

be

“beh”  
“be” in “bed”

ぱ ぱ ひ ひ

ぷ ぷ ぺ ぺ

ぽ ぽ

pi

“pee”  
“pea” in “peace”

pa

“pah”  
“po” in “pond”

pe

“peh”  
“pe” in “pen”

pu

“poo”  
“poo” in “pool”

po

“poh”  
“poe”





