

Tāttān Alphabet

Pronunciation > Tāttān Example : English Translation

Vowels : blue Consonants : red

A a	u in cup > gah : rabbit	K' k'	k with a stoppage in the throat > k'ūk : book
Ā ā	Longer in duration – something like au in caught > āh : snowshoes	Kh kh	Similar to k, but a softer sound > khit: house / building
E e	e in ten > ke' : foot	L l	l in large > la' : hand
Ē ē	Same as e, but longer in duration > kē : shoes	Ł ł	no English equivalent > łuwe : fish
I i	ee in keep > ni' : face	M m	m in mother > menh : lake
Ī ī	Same as i, but longer in duration > nī' : moss	N n	n in nothing > nasdā : lynx
O o	oa in toad > chosh : down feather	nh	No English equivalent > tenh : ice
Ō ō	Same as o, but longer in duration > chō : big, large	P p	p in pup (a very rare sound) > pāne : friend
U u	oo in boot > tu'e : daughter	S s	s in see > sas : black bear
Ū ū	Same as u, but longer > tū : water	*S̄ s̄	th in thin or s in sin > s̄indah : sit down!
,	No written equivalent – made with a stoppage in the throat (glottalization) > k'ā' : spear	Sh sh	sh in shoot > dush : cat
		T t	t in two > togatāt : pants
B b	b in big > bēs : knife	T' t'	t with stoppage in throat > t'ede : girl
Ch ch	ch in church > chime : son	Tl tl	No English equivalent > tlī' : dog
Ch' ch'	Same as ch, but made with a stoppage in the throat > ch'oh : quill	Tl' Tl'	tl with stoppage in throat > tl'ūga : coho
D d	d in did > dene : person	Ts ts	ts in cats > tsets : firewood
Dl dl	No English equivalent > dlūne : mouse	Ts' ts'	ts with stoppage in throat > ts'ede : blanket
Dz dz	ds in pads > dzime: bird	Ts̄ ts̄	No English equivalent > ts̄ē : rock
Dz̄ dz̄	No English equivalent > dz̄eł : mountain	*Ts' ts'	ts with stoppage in throat > ts'i' : head
G g	g in good > gendām : horse	W w	w in was > wahnā : glasses
Gh gh	similar to g, but a softer sound > ghū' : tooth	Y y	y in yes > yāze : young one
H h	h in head > hiyenelīn : they want it	yh	No English equivalent > tleyh : grease, lard
J j	j or dg in judge > jije : berry	Z z	z in zoo > zedā : nephew
K k	k in keep > kedā : moose	*Z̄ z̄	th in then (this is different from th in thin) > zāt : mouth

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Notes

*Amongst some speakers of Tāłtān, there are different ways of pronouncing some of the Tāłtān consonants. This difference occurs in the letters s, ts, ts', z, and dz. Words containing an underlined s (s) may be pronounced two different ways. Some people pronounce them with the th sound as in the English word thin. Others pronounce it much more closely to an s sound. Similarly, words containing an underlined z (z) are pronounced by some with the th sound in then or other, and by others by a sound much closer to an English z. In this way, a word like zas (snow), may have two perceptively different pronunciations.

This happens because the Tāłtān s series of sounds are actually made somewhere between the s and th sounds of English. A person accustomed to hearing English, sometimes perceives a sound closer to an s and other times closer to a th. To a person who grew up speaking Tāłtān, the meaning of the words with this unusual sound is perfectly clear. To someone whose first language is English, however, the distinction is not easily perceptible. For this reason, words containing either s or z may be pronounced somewhat differently depending on the individual speaker's background. Neither way is the "right way" (Carter and Tahltan Tribal Council, 1994, p. vii).

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