

DAKOTA LANGUAGE

Dakota Alphabet

- ▶ **a** - (ah) as in wash
- ▶ **aŋ** - (aŋ) a as in wash, but nasal - aŋpetu, haŋ,
- ▶ **b** - (be) as in boy
- ▶ **C** - (ca) ch sound, but soft (unaspirated), almost like a j
- ▶ **Ç** - (çə) ch sound, but hard (aspirated), as in chalk and chop
- ▶ **C'** - (c'a) ch sound with a pause (glottal stop)

- ▶ **d** - (da) as in dog
- ▶ **e** - (e) as in stay and they
- ▶ **ǰ** - (ǰa) guttural g sound
- ▶ **g** - (ga) as in go
- ▶ **h** - (ha) as in help
- ▶ **ħ** - (ħa) guttural h sound

- ▶ **i** - (ee) pizza or machine
- ▶ **iŋ** - (iŋ) a in ink
- ▶ **k** - (ka) soft (unaspirated) k, almost like a g
- ▶ **ᵏ** - (ᵏa) hard (aspirated) k as in kite
- ▶ **k'** - (k'a) k with a pause (glottal stop) before a vowel
- ▶ **m** - (ma) as in mom

▶ **n** - (na) as in noon

▶ **o** - (oh) as in open

▶ **p** - (pa) soft (unaspirated) p, almost like a b

▶ **p̣** - (pạ) hard (aspirated) p as in pop

▶ **p'** - (p'o) p with a pause (glottal stop) before a vowel

▶ **s** - (sa) as in sample

- ▶ **S'** - (s'a) S with a pause (glottal stop) before a vowel
- ▶ **Ṣ** - (ṣa) sh sound as in shop
- ▶ **Ṣ'** - (ṣ'a) sh sound with a pause (glottal stop)
- ▶ **t** - (ta) soft (unaspirated) t as in storm, almost like a d
- ▶ **ṭ** - (ṭa) hard (aspirated) t as in top
- ▶ **t'** - (t'a) t with a pause (glottal stop) before a vowel

- ▶ **u** (oo) as the oo in loop and ooze
- ▶ **uŋ** - (uŋ) the oo sound in loop, but nasal uŋci, uŋpi
- ▶ **wa** - (wa) as in water
- ▶ **y** - (ya) as in yellow
- ▶ **z** - (za) as in zap
- ▶ **ž** - (ža) as the s sound in pleasure

Dakota Sounds:

In the Dakota language, the alphabet sounds never change. Unlike the English alphabet, each Dakota letter sounds the same in every word. This means that words should be easy to sound out once you are familiar with the alphabet.

Absent from Dakota alphabet are the English consonants:

F, J, L, Q, R, V, and X.

Eight Vowels:

▶ a

▶ aŋ

▶ e

▶ i

▶ iŋ

▶ o

▶ u

▶ uŋ

Accent:

Most Dakota words are pronounced with an accent on the second syllable. This is often unmarked. However, there are words that have the accent on the first syllable. This should be marked. For example, for many words that begin with "wo" the accent is on the first syllable.

▶ Wóuŋsida - Humility

The accent mark ´ will usually be marked above the vowel of the first syllable. Note the difference between the accent mark and the "dot" that is used in the word above.

Writing Systems:

In Dakota you may notice that there are a number of different writing systems/orthographies used. The letters may have different kinds accent marks/diacritics on the letters. Many people have preferences for different systems.

Gender of the Speaker using ye/do:

In the Dakota language, women use 'ye' and the men use 'do' or 'wo' at the end of a sentence to show emphasis.

For example:

Female: Anna emakiyapi **ye**. (They call me Anna.)

Male: Fred emakiyapi **do**. (They Call me Fred.)