

The
November
2024
Issue

What is in
this issue:



Writing
Systems
Around the
World

English &
International
Exchange
Club Leader
Interview



Writing Systems Around the World

For this month, we used the book *The Art of Language: Discover 26 Hand-Lettered Scripts from Around the World* by Lonely Planet. If you want to see the book, please ask!

Most Used Systems

1. Latin Script

おうじ
欧字

A B C D E F G H I
J K L M N O P Q
R S T U V W X Y Z
*abcdefghijklmnop
opqrstuvwxyz*

The Latin **script** is the most used writing system in the world. Sometimes it is called Roman script because of its connection with the **Roman Empire**. It is an **alphabet** which means that there are separate **symbols** for **consonants** and **vowels**. There are usually 26 **letters**. It is written from left to right. There are **uppercase** and **lowercase** letters. Languages like English, Spanish, French, **Portuguese**, German, and Dutch use this script. Different languages sometimes add marks on letters: **ä, ö, ü** in German, **ă, â, î, ș, ț** in **Romanian**, or **ñ, á, é, í, ó, ú** in **Spanish**. Encyclopaedia Britannica says that 70% of the world uses the Latin script!

2. Chinese Script

かんじ
漢字

人 手 火 下 虫 足 一 八 禾 母
口 日 金 大 耳 走 十 寸 门 白
土 月 刀 小 田 马 方 尺 子 黑
女 木 上 力 石 牛 页 山 斤 里
心 水 中 又 衣 羊 米 文 父 廿

Chinese is one of the oldest writing systems in the world. It is made of logograms. This means that symbols represent whole words. The symbols often look like pictures of real life things, like the character **木 (mù)**. This must look familiar, since Japanese comes from Chinese! Other languages such as Thai, Korean, **Vietnamese** and more are also inspired by Chinese. There are about 1.34 **billion** people who use Chinese, that's the 2nd highest behind the Latin alphabet. There are thousands of **Chinese characters**, so it can be very hard to learn! When people start learning, they often use a mix of characters and *Pinyin*. *Pinyin* is like *Romaji*; Chinese words written with Latin script. However, one unique thing about *Pinyin* is that it has tones like these: **ā á ǎ à** above the letters which tell you how to **pronounce** the sound.

3. Arabic Script

アラビア文字

ا ب ت ث ج ح خ د ذ ر ز
س ش ص ض ع غ ط ظ
ف ق ك ل م ن و ه ي

Arabic is written from right to left, **opposite** to English. It is a **curative** writing system which means that letters are connected to each other. It is beautiful, elegant, and flowing. The Arabic script is used in many countries, mostly in the **Middle East** and **Africa**, because of **Islam**. It is the language of the holy book, **The Quran**. In Islam, art showing people is not good. So, **calligraphy** became the treasured art! You can even see it in special buildings. More languages than just Arabic use the writing system! For example, **Persian** and **Urdu** use their own style of it.

4. Devanagari Script

デーヴァナーगरी文字

क ख ग घ ङ च छ ज झ ञ ट ठ ड ढ ण त थ द ध न श ष स ह
प फ ब भ म य र ल व

Devanagari is the most known out of the Indic scripts due to its use in **religious** books. It's the fourth most used writing system globally, with more than 600 million people across **South Asia** (India, **Nepal**) using it to write more than one hundred **languages**. Deva stands for 'divine', or of the gods. We can find Devanagari as far back as the 7th century BC. The version that is most used, for **Hindi**, has 47 characters: 33 consonants and 14 vowels. The letters and their specific order are called **varnamala**: the garland of letters. It is written from left to right, and words are connected with a **matra**, the special top line.

5. Bengali Script

ベンガル文字

অ আ ই ঐ উ ঊ ঋ এ ঐ ও ঔ
ক খ গ ঘ ঙ চ ছ জ ঝ ঞ ট
ঠ ড ঢ ণ ত থ দ ধ ন প ফ
ব ভ ম য র ল শ ষ স হ

Used by almost 275 million people in **Bangladesh** and India, it is the world's fifth most used writing system. The Bengali people fought against the **Pakistani** government to use their language, and in 1956 it became an official language. It is written left to right, and is an **alphasyllabary**, like many other South Asian scripts. This means that each consonant symbol is together with a vowel sound. (This is just like most of Japanese too!) There are 11 vowels and 32 consonants, and the end of sentences have a **vertical** line mark.

6. Cyrillic Scripts

キリル文字

Аа Бб Вв Гг Дд Ее Ёё Жж Зз
Ии Ўў Кк Лл Мм Нн Оо Пп
Рр Сс Тт Уу Фф Хх Цц Чч
Шш Щщ Ъъ Ьь Ъъ Ъъ Ъъ

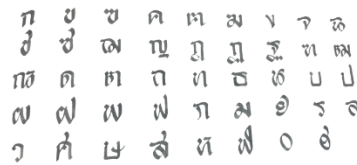
Cyrillic is an alphabet that is written from left to right. But in fact, there is not ONE Cyrillic alphabet! The most used one is **Russian** with 33 letters. Different **Slavic** languages like **Ukrainian**, **Belarusian**, and **Serbian** all use different numbers of letters, sometimes creating new ones. Some non-Slavic languages also use their own Cyrillic systems because of the **Russian Orthodox Church** and the **Soviet Union**. Some countries like **Uzbekistan** and **Kazakhstan** have switched from Cyrillic scripts to Latin scripts in recent years.

Other Interesting Systems



Thai Script

タイ文字

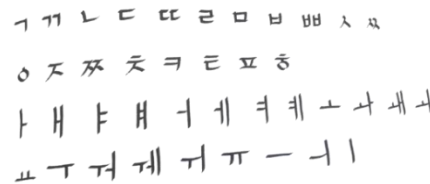


Thai is used by 38 million people all over **Thailand**. It has 44 consonants that all have an 'o' sound at the end, 15 vowels, and 28 other vowel sounds. Written from left to right, it has single characters with no **stacking** or **combining** of characters. Just like Japanese, there are no spaces between characters. To make it easier to remember, each character is named after an **object**. This helps people make less **spelling** mistakes.



Hangul Korean Script

ハングル朝鮮文字

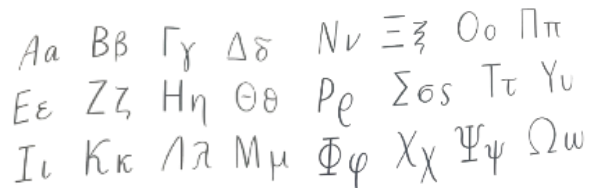


Hangul was invented in 1443 by King Sejong the Great to make the Korean alphabet easier and more **accessible** for everyone in **Korea**. Before this, they used a more **complicated** Chinese character-based writing system that only the **nobles** and upper class could use. After **World War II**, it became the official script of Korea. Letters are stacked in **blocks**, with each collection of characters becoming one **syllable**. These blocks are written left to right, with each letter stacked from top to bottom right. Some of the characters **represent** the shape the **mouth** makes when saying it.



Greek Script

ギリシャ文字

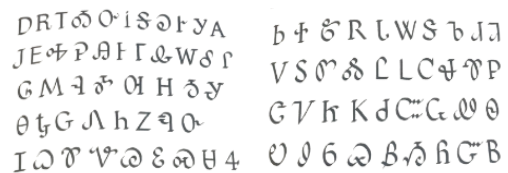


Nowadays Greek is only used by about 13 million people and is the official language of **Greece & Cyprus**. It may seem small, but it is very important. It has existed since at least 750 BC, and its alphabet **inspired** the Latin alphabet, Cyrillic script, and more. Worldwide the Greek alphabet is used in **math** and **science**. There are 24 letters. Maybe you know **Alpha & Beta**- that's Greek! Actually, it's where the word 'Alphabet' comes from!



Cherokee Script

チェロキー文字



The **Cherokee** are a **Native American** group called a **tribe**. There are actually a few Cherokee tribes, but the Cherokee **Nation** is the biggest. Their land is now in the U.S. state of **Oklahoma**. A man named Sequoyah made the Cherokee script in 1821 to help his people so they could write **messages** in their Cherokee language. Each symbol represents a syllable. Sequoyah changed his original script to be closer to Latin and Greek scripts so it could be used in **printing**. It is now 85 characters. Because of him and his script, Cherokee is one of the few Native American languages that is not 'critically **endangered**.' It even inspired **Cree** scripts in **Canada** and a script in China!

XOXO,
Sheila, Erin
& Hirithika

国際交流部の部長に会いましょう!

Meet the English & International Exchange Club Leader!



Sho from 高2

Please introduce yourself.

"Hi! I'm Sho. I'm glad to introduce about me in here! I'm the leader of International & English Exchange Club. I'm fond of travelling. I have been to China, Korea, Canada and the United States."

You are a transfer student, right? What do you think about Keika?

"I came to Keika Girls School in April and actually I'm a returnee from China. Last year, I went to study abroad in Shanghai, China for studying Chinese more. Now I'm a student at Keika, I felt the students in here are all good to me. And school provided me chances to take part in a presentation competition."

We hear that you speak 5 languages. Is that true? Please tell us about that!

"I speak 5 languages which are Japanese, Chinese, Korean, English and a little French. My mom is Chinese, and she is my best language teacher. She taught me Chinese and Korean since I was a child. Speaking of French, I started to learn French from last year so I'm still a beginner. I'm learning French in school once a week after all day class. It is so much fun!"

Do you have any tips for learning languages?

"Languages other than English and French are my native languages. I'm using Japanese, Chinese and Korean on a daily basis. When I'm learning English and French, I always face a lot of challenges. So, I will use some videos to learn the language. It is important to use books to study but sometimes we can use videos to acclimate our ears to the sound of that language."

You are the leader of the 国際交流部. Do you have any promotion for the English & International Exchange Club?

"In the English & International Exchange Club, we have a lot of fun activities. We made country introducing posters and traditional clothes posters for Keika-sai as an exhibition. One of our club's purposes is to provide the chance to understand about the other countries in the world. I hope everyone feels an interest in other countries."