

Nuuchahnulth alphabet summary • East Barkley Sound*

1. Alphabetical order

a	aa	c	ć	č	č̣	e	ee	h	ħ	i	ii	k	k ^w	ḳ
k ^w	ł	λ	ł̣	m	ṃ	n	ṇ	o	oo	p	p̣	q	q ^w	s
š	t	ṭ	u	uu	w	ẉ	x	x ^w	x̣	x̣ ^w	y	ỵ	?	ʔ

2. Sounds by place and manner

	lips	tongue tip			tongue back				throat		
plain plosives	p	t	λ	c	č	k	k ^w	q	q ^w		
hard plosives	p̣	ṭ	λ̣	ć	č̣	ḳ	ḳ ^w			ʔ	ʔ̣
spirants		ł	s	š	x	x ^w	x̣	x̣ ^w	ħ	h	
plain resonants	m	n		y		w					
hard resonants	ṃ	ṇ		ỵ		ẉ					

high vowels		i	ii	u	uu		
mid vowels		e	ee	o	oo		
low vowels						a	aa

3. Letters and example words

	letter name	how it is said	word	translation
a	short a	<i>uh</i>	patpat	inboard motorboat
aa	long a	long <i>ah</i>	waa	say
c	plain cee	<i>ts</i>	caapin	sawbill duck
ć	hard cee	explosive <i>ts</i>	ćawaak	one
č	cee wedge	<i>ch</i>	čakup	man
č̣	hard cee wedge	explosive <i>ch</i>	č̣apac	canoe
e	short e	as in <i>pet</i>	we?ič	sleep
ee	long e	as in <i>eh</i> , and long	?eepinis	apple
h	aitch	<i>h</i>	husmin	kelp
ħ	back aitch	like breathing on glass	ħayu	ten
i	short i	as in <i>pit</i>	hisit	ocean sockeye
ii	long i	as in <i>ski</i> , and long	tiič	alive
k	kay	<i>k</i>	kuuk	packed lunch
k ^w	round kay	<i>k</i> with rounded lips	k ^w istuup	something different

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ḳ	hard kay	explosive <i>k</i>	keeʔin	crow
ḳ ^w	hard round kay	<i>ḳ</i> with rounded lips	ḳ ^w iis	snow
ł	barred el	a hissed <i>l</i> , like <i>lth</i>	łuucsma	woman
λ	barred lambda	<i>tl</i>	λama	house post
λ̣	hard barred lambda	explosive <i>tl</i>	λ̣isuk	white
m	em	<i>m</i>	maamaati	bird
ṃ	hard em	<i>m</i> with a catch	ṃaaṃiiqsu	older sibling
n	en	<i>n</i>	nunuuk	sing
ṇ	hard en	<i>n</i> with a catch	huuñii	drift whale
o	short o	<i>oh</i> or <i>aw</i>	—	—
oo	long o	long <i>oh</i> or <i>aw</i>	ʔooyinčas	orange (fruit)
p	pee	<i>p</i>	paawac	nest
p̣	hard pee	explosive <i>p</i>	p̣ap̣ii	ear
q	cue	back <i>k</i>	qawii	salmonberry
q ^w	round cue	<i>q</i> with rounded lips	q ^w inii	seagull
s	ess	<i>s</i>	saasin	hummingbird
š	ess wedge	<i>sh</i>	šuk ^w aa	sugar
t	tee	<i>t</i>	tupkuk	black
ṭ	hard tee	explosive <i>t</i>	ṭaṭuus	star
u	short u	as in <i>put</i>	mukmuk ^w a	rockfish
uu	long u	as in <i>due</i> , and long	muu	four
w	double-u	<i>w</i>	witwaak	warrior
ẉ	hard double-u	<i>w</i> with a catch	suẉa	you
x	front ex	like a cat's hiss	xaʔuumin	pigeon
x ^w	round front ex	<i>x</i> with rounded lips	x ^w akak	swollen
x̣	back ex	like hissing to spit	x̣ax̣aṣ̌kuk	pilot biscuit
x̣ ^w	round back ex	<i>x̣</i> with rounded lips	mux̣ ^w aṣ̌kin	soapberry
y	wye	<i>y</i>	yačaa	dogfish
ỵ	hard wye	<i>y</i> with a catch	siỵa	me
ʔ	glottal stop	a catch, as in <i>uh-oh</i>	ʔaama	loon
ʕ	pharyngeal stop	a catch plus <i>r</i>	ʕaanus	heron