



"BAYBAYING SUKAT" TYPEFACE GUIDE & LICENSE



# 1 What is Baybayin?

**BAYBAYIN**, a Tagalog word that literally means "to spell", is a native 13<sup>th</sup> century writing script of the Tagalog-speaking regions of the Philippines. Originally carved into bamboo bark and palm leaves with pointed tools, the writing system is an "abugida" or syllabary script in which consonants are used as the base character, and vowels are added through notation around it. These consonant-vowel units create syllables, like its parent Brahmic or Indic scripts prevalent in Southeast Asia.

The **Pledge of Allegiance to the Philippine Flag** in Baybayin abugida and in Latin alphabet.

Baybayin is not the only native script in the Philippines. As an archipelago consisting of almost 8,000 islands, the country has a rich culture that is host to many unique dialects and writing systems, such as *Buhid*, *Hanunuo*, *Kulitan*, *Palaw'an*, and *Tagbanwa*. However, its recent popularity has seen its use as an umbrella term for all indigenous scripts of the Philippines, the same way Tagalog is often used to refer to the national language despite being just one of its many dialects.



# Writing in Baybayin

Baybayin follows a set of general rules and conventions. Here are some key points to keep in mind...

### **Directionality: Left-to-Right**

Baybayin is written and read horizontally from left to right:



#### Syllabic Characters: Abugida 2.2

As an abugida script, Baybayin makes use of combinations of characters and notations to form completed glyphs that represent syllables rather than individual letters:



Each glyph can correspond to a combination of a consonant sound and a vowel sound. Whenever a consonant is written without any notations, it is assumed to be accompanied by the "~a" vowel sound.

#### 2.3 **Consonants & Vowels: B17**

There are 3 vowel characters:



And 14 consonant characters:



These are the 17 traditional base characters of the Baybayin script, commonly referred to as "B17".

### **Character Notation: Kudlit & Pamudpod**

Baybayin employs vowel notations to represent different vowel sounds. These are diacritical marks in the form of small ticks called kudlit, which are placed above or below a character, modifying the inherent "~a" vowel sound.

There are three types of notations...





#### 2.4.1 VOWEL NOTATION

A kudlit ( ') placed above a consonant character modifies the vowel sound to "~e" or "~i":

A kudlit (, ) placed below a consonant character modifies the vowel sound to "~o" or "~u":



#### 2.4.2 TERMINAL CONSONANTS

Traditionally, there are no terminal consonants written at the end of syllables in Baybayin. In other words, syllables were not written with ending consonant sounds. Readers would just mentally imply them:



This of course made Baybayin difficult to learn, especially for foreigners that did not have the contextual or cultural familiarity needed to read some of the words. Thus, vowel suppression was introduced in the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

### 2.4.3 VOWEL SUPPRESSION

A krus-kudlit (+) placed below a consonant, or a pamudpod (,) placed at the lower-right corner of a consonant suppresses the inherent "~a" vowel sound of a character (the same way the Sanskrit virama does in its own script):



With vowel suppression, terminal consonants can be written out explicitly:



Users of vowel suppression refer to their version of Baybayin as "B17+".

#### 2.4.4 OTHER CHARACTER NOTATIONS

There are other character notations being used or proposed by various local groups and individuals in the Baybayin community. These are generally either from unique writing eccentricities of authors in historical documents, or new ideas by contemporary artists and academics who aim to mold Baybayin for more efficient modern usage.



It is important to remember that, as of this writing, these notations have not yet made their way into common usage and using them risks the possibility of alienating most readers even within the Baybayin community.

• **Terminal Consonant Repetition** by adding a *pahantig* (\*) to the right of the glyph:



• **Syllable Repetition** by adding a *padalaw-a* (:) to "~a" glyphs or repeating "~e", "~i", "~o", "~u" vowel notations:



• Word Repetition by using a pallawa (:) at the end of a completed word:



### 2.5 Spelling: Spell as Pronounced

Baybayin words are spelled as pronounced, without silent letters or diphthongs (two letters that represent one speech sound, like "sh", "ch", "th", or "ph"). It works best with simple syllabic languages. When spelling words of foreign origin, it's usually best to first translate them into Tagalog or any similar syllabic language before attempting to write or spell them in Baybayin:



Modern Tagalog assimilates many words from other languages and *Tagalizes* them into the vernacular, especially for informal use. These *Tagalized* versions of foreign words may be used as a last resort in the absence of direct Tagalog translations.

#### 2.6 Names: Write It Your Way

Generally, a name should be written using the script or alphabet with which it was originally spelled:

# ♥シャスシェルト エット Andres Bonifacio ||

Ang pangalan ko ay Andres Bonifacio.



However, should one insist on transliterating non-Baybayin names into Baybayin, the name may need to be syllabified or translated first. People are free to take liberties when transliterating their own names. For example, while "Bonifacio" can be transliterated as "BoNiPaSiYo" (and we'), the owner of the name may choose to use alternate pronunciations such as those a little closer to its Latin roots: "BoNiPaTo" (and we').

In fact, the shortening of names into simpler phonetic sounds is quite common in the Philippines, resulting in nicknames like "Kaloy" for Carlos, "Doray" for Theodora, "Eko" for Jericho, "Goyo" for Gregorio, "Igno" for Benigno, "Kiko" for Francisco, "Lito" for Angelito, "Miyong" for Romeo, "Pepoy" for Felipe, "Sisa" for Franchesca, "Tasyo" for Anastacio, "Yano" for Emiliano, etc.

### 2.7 Acronyms & Abbreviations

As a syllabic abugida, there are no acronyms in Baybayin. However, words and names may be abbreviated using their first syllables:

- "Luzon, Visayas, Mindanao" can be abbreviated as "LuzViMin" (ஒடிக்டி).
- "Gomez, Burgos, Zamorra" can be abbreviated as "GomBurZa" (മുഴ്റ്റ്റ്രേഷ).
- "Kataastaasang Kagalanggalangang Katipunan ng Mga Anak ng Bayan" (エエエ).

#### 2.8 Spaces

Traditionally, Baybayin glyphs were written continuously without any spaces in between words. Though this no longer appears to be the case in modern usage.

### 2.9 Punctuation

There are only two punctuation marks in Baybayin:

- The single (I) punctuation, which is used as a comma or verse splitter in poetry.
- The double (||) punctuation, which is used as a period or end of a paragraph.

### 2.10 Numerals

Baybayin does not come with its own set of numerals. Numbers were traditionally just spelled out using the available characters. For modern usage, it is appropriate to just keep using the Hindu-Arabic digits 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 0.

### 2.11 Disclaimer

While this document is not intended as an academic reference for learning Baybayin, it is necessary to know some of its fundamentals to use the typeface properly. No warranties are made as to the correctness or accuracy of the information presented in this document.

It is also important to note that Baybayin has different historical evolutions and regional variations. The information in this document is based on common conventions, but there may be slight differences depending on the specific context and sources used. Those learning Baybayin are advised to consult reliable resources and references to ensure accurate usage.



# 3 Baybaying Sukat Typeface

This **BAYBAYING SUKAT** typeface is a stylized font family based on the Tagalog Baybayin script and was designed for modern use while respectfully staying faithful to its traditional roots. It makes use of the widely accepted B17+ characters (the original 17 base characters, with vowel notation and vowel suppression), along with stylized variants of some consonant and vowel characters for greater flexibility. The stylizations were carefully designed to be subtle enough to remain readable to traditional readers, while allowing for more precise transliteration for modern writers.

The **Baybaying Sukat** typeface is so named because all characters have been designed with the same uniform dimensions, giving it a "well-measured" look, or in Tagalog, "sukat". It is also a homage to Barangay Sucat, where the designer grew up.

### 3.1 Baybaying Sukat Characters & Notation

The first row of the table below contains all 3 vowel characters with subtle variations to distinguish "E" from "I" and "O" from "U". Subsequent rows list down all 14 consonants along with their respective vowel notations to the right:

₹	Α	$\sim$	Ε	~	1	B	0	उ	U		
$\bigcirc$	Ва	ā	Ве	4	Ві	Õ	Во	<del></del>	Ви	Q	В
工	Ка	Ĭ	Ке	土	Ki	Ţ	Ко	于	Ku	Ţ	Κ
	Da	Ċ	De	亡	Di	Ļ	Do	4	Du	Ç	D
ઢા	Ga	૭ા	Ge	ઝા	Gi	औ	Go	औ	Gu	औ	G
S	На	Š	Не	ڼ	Hi	Ñ	Но	Ş	Hu	٠ţ	Н
5	La	す	Le	7	Li	I	Lo	T	Lu	T	L
£	Ма	¥	Ме	<del>ڔ</del>	Mi	Ř	Мо	Å	Ми	÷	Μ
3	Na	Ā	Ne	4	Ni	$\bar{\mathbf{Q}}$	No	9	Nu	1	Ν
$\supset_{\nu}$	Nga	ڪِٽ	Nge	ېد	Ngi	کَن	Ngo	کٰد	Ngu	کئ	Ng
V	Pa	Ū	Pe	نځ	Pi	Ň	Po	¥	Pu	ţ	Ρ
UB	Sa	Ū	Se	ι's	Si	Ų	So	Y3	Su	Ų	S
5	Та	ケ	Те	٢	Ti	ک	То	5	Tu	5	T
U	Wa	Ū	We	じ	Wi	Ų	Wo	Y	Wu	ţ	W
$\boldsymbol{\mathcal{V}}$	Ya	$\bar{\mathcal{V}}$	Ye	少	Yi	$\mathcal{Q}$	Yo	Ý	Yu	Ý	Υ

## 3.2 Baybaying Sukat Character Variants

The following glyphs are subtle variations to some of the original B17+ characters that are homoglyphs (characters with multiple pronunciations), to accommodate and visually differentiate additional sounds of the Latin alphabet from their phonetic counterparts in Tagalog. The variations were designed such that traditional readers would still be able to read them as original B17+ characters ("Pa/Fa", "Da/Ra", "Ba/Va", "Sa/Za"):

¥	Fa	Ū	Fe	华	Fi	٦	Fo	¥	Fu	١ţ	F
5	Ra	5	Re	4	Ri	ت	Ro	4	Ru	Ţ	R
$\Box$	Va	ā	Ve	۵	Vi	Q	Vo	<del></del>	Vu	<u></u>	V
W	Za	Ū	Ze	\\ \text{\ti}\}\eta}\text{\tetx{\text{\text{\tin}\eta}\text{\text{\text{\text{\text{\text{\text{\text{\text{\text{\text{\text{\text{\text{\text{\text{\text{\texi}\text{\text{\text{\text{\text{\text{\text{\text{\text{\text{\text{\text{\text{\texi}\text{\text{\text{\text{\text{\text{\text{\texi}\text{\text{\text{\text{\texi}\text{\ti}}}}}}}}}}}}}}}}}}}}}}}}}}}}}}}}}}}	Zi	w	Zo	ųβ	Zu	¥B	Z





## 3.3 Babaying Sukat - Numbers, Punctuation, and Other Special Characters

The following numbers, punctuation, and special characters were included, as they are usually visible on standard QWERTY keyboards:

### 3.4 Unicode Supported

The **Baybaying Sukat** typeface supports the Baybayin block of the Tagalog Official Unicode Consortium Code Chart of the Unicode Standard, Version 15. This means the font can be used with a Baybayin keyboard.



## 4 Baybaying Sukat Fonts

There are two fonts in the **Baybaying Sukat** typeface:

- 1. Baybaying Sukat Baguhan
- 2. Baybaying Sukat Bihasa

Both are available in OpenType Font (OTF) and TrueType Font (TTF) format.

### 4.1 Baybaying Sukat BAGUHAN

The **Baguhan** font is intended for beginners who are new or are still learning Baybayin. It uses a decorative feature called "Ligatures" which allows applications like Microsoft Word to automatically recognize character pairings when typed next to each other. For example, typing the character "L" (†) and the character for "i" (=) together automatically replaces both characters with the joined character for "Li" (†).

This makes it so that typing syllables using the Latin alphabet is more likely to produce the equivalent glyphs in Baybayin. Note however that this is not intended as a fool-proof substitute for learning the fundamentals. It is only meant to help users learn faster by closing the gap between typing with the Latin alphabet and with the Baybayin *abugida*.

Not all applications support Ligatures. For such applications, as well as for users who are already familiar with Baybayin, the alternative font **Bihasa** has been made available.

### 4.2 Baybaying Sukat BIHASA

The **Bihasa** font does not have Ligatures enabled, so it doesn't automatically convert letter pairings. It is intended for users who are already familiar with typing in Baybayin and don't rely on the automatic conversion provided by Ligatures.

To use the Bihasa font properly on a QWERTY keyboard, users must be aware of the following typing mechanics:

- Use consonant characters to produce the Baybayin glyph with its "~a" syllable.
  - E.g.: Typing [L] produces the "La" (▼) character.
- Use lower-case [n] for the "Na" (1) character.
- Use upper-case [N] for the "Nga" (→) character.
- Use lower-case vowels [e], [i], [o], [u] to add vowel notations to consonants.
  - E.g.: Typing [Le], [Li], [Lo], [Lu] produces the "Le" (♣), "Li" (♣), "Lo" (♣), "Lu" (♣) glyphs respectively.
- Use upper-case vowels [E], [I], [O], [U] to type vowel characters (ﷺ ﷺ) instead of vowel notations.
- Use the [|] or [\] character after consonants to insert a vowel suppressor or virama.
  - E.g.: Typing [L]] produces the "L" (Ţ) glyph.
  - E.g.: Typing [L\] produces the "L" (下) glyph.



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