



3/20/2012

ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ ᐱᐱᐱᐱ / ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ

# *Illustrated English/N'Ko Alphabet*

*An introduction to  
N'Ko for  
English Speakers*

**Book One** \* ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ

Written & Published by  
Mamady Doumbouya  
N'Ko Institute of America

ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ  
ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ  
ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ



# N'Ko for English Speakers

# Illustrated English / N'Ko Alphabet

𐎗𐎂𐎐𐎓𐎊𐎇 / 𐎎𐎗𐎔𐎓

# Book One \* 𐎎𐎗𐎔𐎓

Written & Published by  
Mamady Doumbouya  
N'Ko Institute of America



𐎎𐎗𐎔𐎓 𐎎𐎗𐎔𐎓  
𐎎𐎗𐎔𐎓 𐎎𐎗𐎔𐎓  
𐎎𐎗𐎔𐎓 𐎎𐎗𐎔𐎓

2012/3121: No Deposit

3/20/2012

# Contents

---

PREFACE .....	4
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	6
<i>INTRODUCTION</i> .....	7
<i>N'KO ALPHABET</i> .....	8
VOWELS .....	14
ACCENTS.....	22
CONSONATS .....	30
NUMERALS .....	53
APPENDIX .....	57

---

# **PREFACE...**

...N'KO

“N’Ko for English Speakers” is for teaching English speakers how to learn N’Ko.

The first purpose of this book is to give the English speaking Mandens the opportunity to learn, read and write their own language, and consequently give them greater understanding of their culture. Due to the fact that the N’Ko alphabet was invented, and developed mostly in countries whose official languages are French, the English speaking Mandens have generally been left out of this important discovery. I hope that this small book will at least partially remediate this oversight.

The second is to give other English speakers, N’Ko students and teachers around the world, the opportunity to explore and learn N’Ko, in order to gain greater understanding of both, Manden speakers, and their culture. Historically, college and university campuses around the world offer Manden studies. The study of the N’Ko writing system, however, is just beginning. This book is an illustrated approach to the N’Ko alphabet that would provide an important tools for educators in Africa, as well as other parts of the world.

**N'Ko** is the writing system and the common name of the Manden languages of West Africa generally known as Mandenkan, Mandenkan is divided into four main branches: Bamanankan, Julakan, Maninkakan, Mandenkoka, and many smaller branches. It is a combination of multiple languages, dialects, and accents. It is spoken primarily in ten countries including

When Mandens people from different branches talk to each other, it is common practice for them to switch, consciously or subconsciously, from one's own dialect to a conventional language known as N'Ko or Kangbe (""). The Word N'Ko means literally "I say". It is the one expression that provides the common thread that links most Manden languages. Therefore, those branches that say "N'Ko" to express "" have greater chance of understanding each other than those who do not. The word N'Ko is written with capital "N" capital, apostrophe, "K" and small "o".

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This book is dedicated to my wife Alma and our three children, Moussa, Aissa, and Sekou. They are the first Manden-American of our family group (Kabila) born in America. I hope that this book will help them bridge the small divide between their American and Manden cultures.

My thanks: to my first teacher Ladji Kaba, who taught me my first lessons in N'Ko; Karamo Sanussi Fiman Diane for his tireless efforts with the N'Ko bookstore; and Karamo Baba Mamadi Diane who published the first book and audio tapes I used in my studies, Last but not least, I humbly express my sincere gratitude to the genius and great teacher Karamo Solomana Kante, the inventor of the N'Ko writing system for dedicating his life to the enlightenment of his people.

# INTRODUCTION

... N'KO 3

The alphabet was invented 1949 by the genius and great teacher, Solomon Kante of Guinea in West Africa. After studying other alphabets including Latin and Arabic. he decided that the best way to represent all the consonants, vowels, and tones of the Manden languages, in one alphabet was to create a new one. He called this alphabet N'Ko, which means ("I say"). *N'Ko is read and written from right to left.*

N'Ko is a flexible writing system capable of writing any language, especially African languages. These languages have their own unique sounds and tones from the use of the accents that are not often found in other languages and writing systems. Its power comes from its use of the accents. With the accent each vowel can represent 16 tones, and also with those accents it can combine all the various branches, and sub-branches of Mandenkan into one powerful writing system. A good example of this flexibility is that it is able to represent Maninka and Bamanan branches without substituting words from the branches. These two language branches however closely related, have subtle differences in accents and dialects. As an example, the word "Name" in Bamanan is "Toko" and in Maninka it is "Toh". In written communications each will write it as Tô (Tô) in N'Ko, and yet read and pronounce it differently.



# **N'Ko Alphabet**

... ٧٥٤٣٢١

**N'Ko is divided into two sets of characters.** The first is the basic set consisting of 27 letters, 10 numbers, and 9 accents. The tenth accent is the sound of the vowels without an accent. These characters are designed to represent the sounds of Manden languages. The following are the basic characters:

<p><b>Vowels</b> ٧ ٥ ٤ ٣ ٢ ١ ٠ ١</p> <p><b>Consonants</b> ٩ ٨ ٧ ٦ ٥ ٤ ٣ ٢ ١ ٠ ١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥ ٦ ٧ ٨ ٩</p> <p><b>Numbers</b> ٠ ١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥ ٦ ٧ ٨ ٩</p> <p><b>Accents</b> ٠ ١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥ ٦ ٧ ٨</p> <p>•</p>
--

*The second consists of extended characters. These characters are a combination of consonants and accents. These combinations are designed to not only express sounds and tones not found in Manden languages but to also to write words belonging to other languages.*

**Example:**

**KH = ḱ , V = ṽ , Z = ž , G = ġ**

It can be difficult to make a one-to-one association of the letters of the English alphabet and those of N'Ko. Nevertheless, I have attempted to associate N'Ko letters and sounds to their English counterparts to help the student remember the N'Ko letters.

# VOWELS



The vowels are called *Siralans*. The basic difference in N'Ko between the vowels and consonants is that the vowels can be sounded without associating any others letters to them. The following are the vowels:

The 7 Vowels:

ἰ ḡḡḡḡḡ ḡḡḡḡḡ

English Names

N'Ko Letters

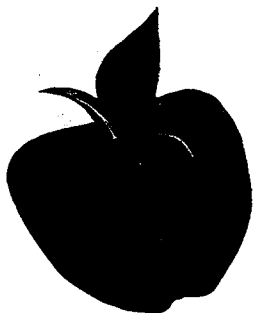
A  
E  
I  
EH  
U  
O  
AW

ἰ  
Ṷ  
ḡ  
ḡ  
ḡ  
ḡ  
ḡ

N'Ko Letter



Like in



Pronounced



ᱠᱤᱨ = ᱵᱷᱚᱨ

English Letter



APPLE = ᱠᱷᱚᱨᱵᱚᱰ

ᱠ ᱢ ᱤ ᱥ ᱦ ᱧ ᱨ ᱩ ᱪ ᱫ ᱬ ᱭ ᱮ ᱯ ᱰ ᱱ ᱲ ᱳ ᱴ ᱵ ᱶ ᱷ ᱸ ᱹ ᱺ ᱻ ᱼ ᱽ ᱾ ᱿

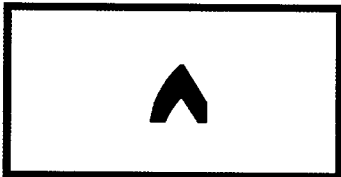
Practice writing the N'Ko letter in the spaces below - ᱵᱚᱰ ᱵᱚᱰ ᱵᱚᱰ ᱵᱚᱰ ᱵᱚᱰ ᱵᱚᱰ ᱵᱚᱰ ᱵᱚᱰ ᱵᱚᱰ ᱵᱚᱰ ᱵᱚᱰ

~ ᱠᱷᱚᱨ	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	I Print
~ ᱠᱷᱚᱨ	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	J ascript





N'Ko Letter



English Letter



Like in



Bell = 𞑦𞑭

Pronounced



ᑦᑭᑭ = ᑭᑭ

𞑦 𞑧 𞑨 𞑩 𞑪 𞑫 𞑬 𞑭 𞑮 𞑯 𞑰 𞑱 𞑲 𞑳 𞑴 𞑵 𞑶 𞑷 𞑸 𞑹 𞑺 𞑻 𞑼 𞑽 𞑾 𞑿

Practice writing the N'Ko letter in the spaces below - 𞑦 𞑧 𞑨 𞑩 𞑪 𞑫 𞑬 𞑭 𞑮 𞑯 𞑰 𞑱 𞑲 𞑳 𞑴 𞑵 𞑶 𞑷 𞑸 𞑹 𞑺 𞑻 𞑼 𞑽 𞑾 𞑿

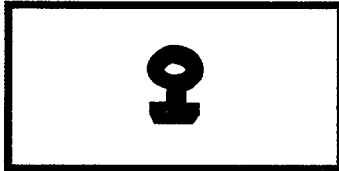
𞑦𞑭	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	 Print
𞑦𞑭	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	 Script







N'Ko Letter



Like in



Pronounced



English Letter





ᱠᱡ = 139ᱠ

Paw = ᱠᱡ

ᱠ ᱡ ᱢ ᱣ ᱤ ᱥ ᱦ ᱧ ᱨ ᱩ ᱪ ᱫ ᱬ ᱭ ᱮ ᱯ ᱰ ᱱ ᱲ ᱳ ᱴ ᱵ ᱶ ᱷ ᱸ ᱹ ᱺ ᱻ

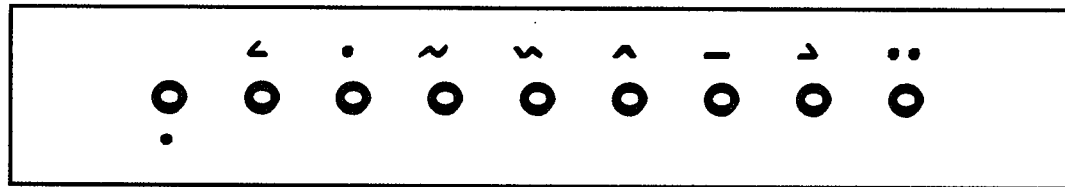
Practice writing the N'Ko letter in the spaces below - ᱠᱡ ᱢᱣ ᱤᱥ ᱦᱧ ᱨᱩ ᱪᱫ ᱬᱭ ᱮᱯ ᱰᱱ ᱲᱳ ᱴᱵ ᱶᱷ ᱸᱹ ᱺᱻ ᱼ

ᱠᱡ	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	 Print
ᱠᱡ	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	 Script

# ACCENTS

The first rule to remember in learning the N'Ko alphabet is to know that Mandenkan is a tonal language. Therefore to learn the language well, it is very important to be comfortable with the accents. The accents gave N'Ko its linguistic flexibilities by extending it to a level not found in many other languages. It is not uncommon to see two or more words that are written exactly alike but have different meanings. It is the accents that provide clarification in those instances by signaling the appropriate tone. Furthermore, accents also have an additional function of unifying the writing of the Manden branches and sub-branches into one cohesive writing system. Although they may look a bit difficult, understanding them is necessary. Once one learns their use, reading, writing, and even speaking become much easier.

The N'Ko alphabet has 9 accents characters used to indicate pronunciation and tone. They can be written above or below the letters. The tenth accent is the sound of the letters without an accent. There are two types, the Kanadiyalan (tone sweetener) which is a dot written below the letters, and the Kamasere (tone identifier) which is written above the letters. The following table shows the accents.



## **Kamasere or tone identifiers**

Kamasere or tone identifiers are accents placed above the letters to modify the tone of the vowels. These accents have two forms, the short and the long tones. The short tone are considered the primary tone because the long tone are a combination of short tones. The following are the Kamasere's:

### **Short tones**

- ! Short uniform middle tone
- ī Short High tone
- ĩ Short Low tone
- î Short Rising tone

### **Long Tones**

- î Long descending tone
- ī Long High Tone
- ĩ Long rising Tone
- ĩ Long Low Tone

## Kamasere or tone identifiers

ï

Two dot placed above a letter is used produce foreign tone like the French vowels E = Ö and U = Ü

## Kanadiyalan, the “N” sound

!

Kanadiyalan or tone sweetener is the nasalization mark indicated by a dot placed below a vowel denoting the “N” sound

# Kamasere or tone identifiers

## Short tones



### Short uniform middle tone

ᵃᵇᵇᵇᵇ ᵇᵇᵇᵇᵇᵇ

This form is the vowel used without accent. The sound is the short uniform middle tone. This is the most common use of the vowel, and is similar to how the vowels are used in English. This form is written as follows:

ᵇ	ᵇ	ᵇ	ᵇ	ᵇ	ᵇ	ᵇ
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

### Reading Exercise

ᵇ	ᵇ	ᵇ	ᵇ	ᵇ	ᵇ	ᵇ
ᵇ	ᵇ	ᵇ	ᵇ	ᵇ	ᵇ	ᵇ
ᵇ	ᵇ	ᵇ	ᵇ	ᵇ	ᵇ	ᵇ
ᵇ	ᵇ	ᵇ	ᵇ	ᵇ	ᵇ	ᵇ
ᵇ	ᵇ	ᵇ	ᵇ	ᵇ	ᵇ	ᵇ
ᵇ	ᵇ	ᵇ	ᵇ	ᵇ	ᵇ	ᵇ
ᵇ	ᵇ	ᵇ	ᵇ	ᵇ	ᵇ	ᵇ

## Short tones\_(continued)



- Short Low tone

بجاءت فتيحة

The short low tone is composed with a short squiggly line like a tilde to signify a low tone. This accent can be used at any part of a word, at the beginning, middle and the end. The accents are used as follows:

ḥ	ḥ	ū	ā	ŷ	ō	ī
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

### Reading Exercise

ḥ	ḥ	ū	ā	ŷ	ō	ī
ī	ḥ	ḥ	ū	ā	ŷ	ō
ō	ī	ḥ	ḥ	ū	ā	ŷ
ŷ	ō	ī	ḥ	ḥ	ū	ā
ā	ŷ	ō	ī	ḥ	ḥ	ū
ū	ā	ŷ	ō	ī	ḥ	ḥ
ḥ	ū	ā	ŷ	ō	ī	ḥ

## Short tones\_(continued)



- Short Rising tone

ḅ ḁ ḃ ḅ ḇ ḉ ḋ

The short rising tone is signified by a dot above the vowel. Actually, this is a combination of two tones, the short low tone followed by the short middle tone. ḅ = | This accent is used as follows:

ḅ	ḁ	ḃ	ḅ	ḇ	ḉ	ḋ
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

### Reading Exercise

ḅ	ḁ	ḃ	ḅ	ḇ	ḉ	ḋ
ḁ	ḅ	ḃ	ḅ	ḇ	ḉ	ḋ
ḉ	ḁ	ḅ	ḃ	ḅ	ḇ	ḉ
ḇ	ḉ	ḁ	ḅ	ḃ	ḅ	ḇ
ḅ	ḇ	ḉ	ḁ	ḅ	ḃ	ḅ
ḃ	ḅ	ḇ	ḉ	ḁ	ḅ	ḃ
ḉ	ḃ	ḅ	ḇ	ḉ	ḁ	ḅ



## Kamasere or tone identifiers

### Long Tones



-

Long Descending Tone

ḶḶḶḶḶ ḶḶḶḶ ḶḶḶḶḶ

The long descending tone is signified by a sign that looks like a circumflex above the vowel. The long descending tone unifies the Manden language branches and sub-branches into one cohesive writing system. It is a combination of two Short uniform middle tones, | | = Ḷ. The accents are used as follows

Ḷ	Ḷ	Ḷ	Ḷ	Ḷ	Ḷ	Ḷ
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

### Reading Exercise

Ḷ	Ḷ	Ḷ	Ḷ	Ḷ	Ḷ	Ḷ
Ḷ	Ḷ	Ḷ	Ḷ	Ḷ	Ḷ	Ḷ
Ḷ	Ḷ	Ḷ	Ḷ	Ḷ	Ḷ	Ḷ
Ḷ	Ḷ	Ḷ	Ḷ	Ḷ	Ḷ	Ḷ
Ḷ	Ḷ	Ḷ	Ḷ	Ḷ	Ḷ	Ḷ
Ḷ	Ḷ	Ḷ	Ḷ	Ḷ	Ḷ	Ḷ
Ḷ	Ḷ	Ḷ	Ḷ	Ḷ	Ḷ	Ḷ

# Kamasere or tone identifiers

## Long Tones



- Long High Tone

ἰ ἱ ἲ ἳ ἴ ἵ ἶ ἷ Ἰ Ἱ ἰ ἱ ἲ ἳ ἴ ἵ ἶ ἷ Ἰ Ἱ

The accent for the Long High Tone is the circumflex open to the left. This accent is a combination two short low tones,  $\bar{ } \bar{ }$ . It is used as follows:

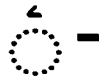
ἰ	ἱ	ἲ	ἳ	ἴ	ἵ	ἶ	ἷ
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

### Reading Exercise

ἰ	ἱ	ἲ	ἳ	ἴ	ἵ	ἶ	ἷ
ἱ	ἰ	ἲ	ἳ	ἴ	ἵ	ἶ	ἷ
ἲ	ἱ	ἰ	ἲ	ἳ	ἴ	ἵ	ἶ
ἳ	ἱ	ἲ	ἰ	ἲ	ἳ	ἴ	ἵ
ἴ	ἱ	ἲ	ἳ	ἰ	ἲ	ἳ	ἴ
ἵ	ἱ	ἲ	ἳ	ἴ	ἰ	ἲ	ἳ
ἶ	ἱ	ἲ	ἳ	ἴ	ἵ	ἰ	ἲ
ἷ	ἱ	ἲ	ἳ	ἴ	ἵ	ἶ	ἰ

# Kamasere or tone identifiers

## Long Tones



- Log Rising tone

ḌḌḌḌḌḌ ḌḌḌḌ ḌḌḌḌḌḌ

The long rising tone is signified by a circumflex open to the right above the vowel. It is a combination of a long descending and a short low tone,  $\acute{ } \acute{ } = \acute{ }$ . The accent is used as follows:

Ḍ	Ḍ	Ḍ	Ḍ	Ḍ	Ḍ	Ḍ
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

### Reading Exercise

Ḍ	Ḍ	Ḍ	Ḍ	Ḍ	Ḍ	Ḍ
Ḍ	Ḍ	Ḍ	Ḍ	Ḍ	Ḍ	Ḍ
Ḍ	Ḍ	Ḍ	Ḍ	Ḍ	Ḍ	Ḍ
Ḍ	Ḍ	Ḍ	Ḍ	Ḍ	Ḍ	Ḍ
Ḍ	Ḍ	Ḍ	Ḍ	Ḍ	Ḍ	Ḍ
Ḍ	Ḍ	Ḍ	Ḍ	Ḍ	Ḍ	Ḍ
Ḍ	Ḍ	Ḍ	Ḍ	Ḍ	Ḍ	Ḍ

## Kamasere or tone identifiers

### Long Tones



-

Long Low Tone

Ḑḑḑḑḑḑ ḑḑḑḑḑḑ ḑḑḑḑḑḑ

The sign for the long low tone is composed of two joint reverse right angles. This accent is a combination two short low tones:

ḑ ḑ = ḑ. It is used as follows:

ḑ	ḑ	ḑ	ḑ	ḑ	ḑ	ḑ
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

### Reading Exercise

ḑ	ḑ	ḑ	ḑ	ḑ	ḑ	ḑ
ḑ	ḑ	ḑ	ḑ	ḑ	ḑ	ḑ
ḑ	ḑ	ḑ	ḑ	ḑ	ḑ	ḑ
ḑ	ḑ	ḑ	ḑ	ḑ	ḑ	ḑ
ḑ	ḑ	ḑ	ḑ	ḑ	ḑ	ḑ
ḑ	ḑ	ḑ	ḑ	ḑ	ḑ	ḑ
ḑ	ḑ	ḑ	ḑ	ḑ	ḑ	ḑ
ḑ	ḑ	ḑ	ḑ	ḑ	ḑ	ḑ

## Kanadiyalan, the “N” sound

ಇಳಿಚೆಯ ಗುಣಿತ

Kanadiyalan or tone sweetener is the nasalization mark indicated by a dot placed below the vowel ( ◌̣ ) denoting the “N” sound (not to be confused with the N’ character that we will cover later). The tone is a short nasal sound like in the following English words: **Ten** = ᵗᵇ and **Ken** = ᵗᵏ

ಌ	ಋ	ೠ	ಌ̣	ಎ̣	ಋ̣	ಌ̣
AWM	OHN	OON	EN	IN	EHN	AN

### Reading Exercise

ಌ	ಋ	ೠ	ಌ̣	ಎ̣	ಋ̣	ಌ̣
ಌ̣	ಌ	ಋ	ಎ̣	ಌ̣	ಎ̣	ಋ̣
ಋ̣	ಌ̣	ಌ	ಋ	ಌ̣	ಌ̣	ಎ̣
ಎ̣	ಋ̣	ಌ̣	ಌ	ಋ	ಎ̣	ಌ̣
ಌ̣	ಌ̣	ಎ̣	ಌ̣	ಌ̣	ಌ̣	ಋ̣
ಋ̣	ಌ̣	ಌ̣	ಎ̣	ಌ̣	ಌ̣	ಋ̣
ಋ̣	ಌ̣	ಌ̣	ಎ̣	ಌ̣	ಌ̣	ಋ̣

## Foreign sounds and tones

ḿḿ ḿḿḿḿ ḿḿḿḿḿḿ ḿḿḿḿḿḿ

In this age of inter-dependence any alphabet writing system that does not consider the possibility of including words from other languages will create language barriers. Solomana Kante, the inventor of the N'Ko script understood this basic principle. He knew that there will be a need to include foreign names and words in the alphabet. Therefore, he combined accents, and consonants to create the foreign sounds needed in N'Ko. This combination allows one to write any language in N'Ko including French, English, and non Manden family African languages.

- The two dot placed above a letter denotes foreign tone like the French vowels E = **ë** and U = **ü**.

### Sample Foreign letters

ḿ	ḿ	ḿ	ḿ	ḿ	ḿ
ZH	U	E	KP	GH	SCH
ḿ	ḿ	ḿ	ḿ	ḿ	ḿ
J	MH	YH	G	CH	R
ḿ	ḿ	ḿ	ḿ	ḿ	ḿ
TH	V	KH	NH	Z	BH

# CONSONANTS



The alphabet contains 19 consonants called *Sirata's*. They are the characters that cannot be sounded without the association of a vowel. Therefore N'Ko adds the vowel " I " (A) to name the consonants. For example, the name of the letter **F** (B) is **IF** (BA) pronounced BAH. The table below shows the name of all the consonants.

**Consonant Table**

<u>N'Ko Names</u>	<u>English Names</u>	<u>N'Ko Letters</u>	<u>N'Ko Names</u>	<u>English Names</u>	<u>N'Ko Letters</u>
<b>IF</b>	Fa	<b>F</b>	<b>IF</b>	Ba	<b>F</b>
<b>IK</b>	Ka	<b>K</b>	<b>IK</b>	pa	<b>K</b>
<b>IL</b>	La	<b>L</b>	<b>IL</b>	Ta	<b>L</b>
<b>IM</b>	Ma	<b>M</b>	<b>IM</b>	Ja	<b>M</b>
<b>IN</b>	Nya	<b>N</b>	<b>IN</b>	CHa	<b>N</b>
<b>IO</b>	Na	<b>O</b>	<b>IO</b>	da	<b>O</b>

## Consonant Table (continued)

N'Ko Names	English Names	N'Ko Letters	N'Ko Names	English Names	N'Ko Letters
Ɑ	Ha	Ɑ	Ɱ	ra	Ɱ
Ɐ	Wa	Ɐ	Ɒ	rra	Ɒ
ⱱ	Ya	ⱱ	Ⱳ	sa	Ⱳ
ⱳ	N'	ⱳ	ⱴ	gba	ⱴ

**Note:** Although the ⱳ, N' character is listed with the consonant, It is neither consonant or vowel. It is a diphthong that has the characteristics of both.



N'Ko Letter

F

English Letter

B



Ball = 𞑦𞑦

Pronounced

𞑦

𞑦𞑦 = 𞑦𞑦

BAH

𞑦 𞑦

Practice writing the N'Ko letter in the spaces below - 𞑦

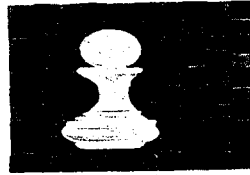
𞑦	𞑦	𞑦	𞑦	𞑦	𞑦	𞑦	Print
							F
𞑦	𞑦	𞑦	𞑦	𞑦	𞑦	𞑦	Script
							𞑦



**N'Ko Letter**

**1**

**Like in**



**Pronounced**

**l1**

**English Letter**

**CH**

**Chess = ɔʌ1**

ɔ1ɔɖ = lɔɔɖ

**CHA**

ɣ ɔ ɔ1 ɣ ɣ1 ʔ ɖ ɔ # ɧ ɞ 1 ʌ ɓ ʔ ɤ ɔ ɤ ɤ ʌ ɶ ɔ |

Practice writing the N'Ko letter in the spaces below - ɭ ʒ ʒ̄ ʒ̄ ʒ̄ ʒ̄ ʒ̄ ʒ̄

ɔ1	ɔ1	ɥ1	ʌ1	ɶ1	ɔ1	l1	Print <b>1</b>
ɭ	ʒ	ʒ̄	ʒ̄	ʒ̄	ʒ̄	l1	Script <b>1</b>

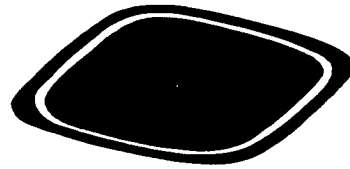




N'Ko Letter



Like in



Pronounced



English Letter



ARROW = ɗ

ɗ = ɗ



ɗ ɗ

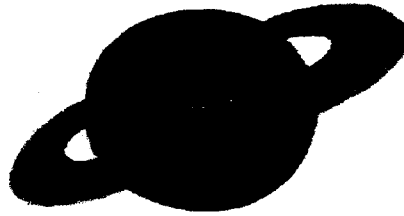
Practice writing the N'Ko letter in the spaces below - ɗ

ɗ	ɗ	ɗ	ɗ	ɗ	ɗ	ɗ	Print ɗ
ɗ	ɗ	ɗ	ɗ	ɗ	ɗ	ɗ	Script ɗ

**N'Ko Letter**



**Like in**



**Pronounced**



**English Letter**



Saturn = 𞤎𞤵𞤺𞤸𞤺𞤵𞤺𞤸

ᶘ19ᶑ = 139ᶑ



𞤎 𞤵 𞤺 𞤸 𞤺 𞤵 𞤺 𞤸 𞤺 𞤸 𞤵 𞤺 𞤸 𞤺 𞤵 𞤺 𞤸 𞤺 𞤵 𞤺 𞤸 𞤺 𞤵 𞤺 𞤸 𞤺 𞤵 𞤺 𞤸 𞤺 𞤵 𞤺 𞤸 𞤺 𞤵 𞤺 𞤸 𞤺 𞤵 𞤺 𞤸 𞤺

Practice writing the N'Ko letter in the spaces below - 𞤎 𞤵 𞤺 𞤸 𞤺 𞤵 𞤺 𞤸 𞤺 𞤵 𞤺 𞤸 𞤺 𞤵 𞤺 𞤸 𞤺 𞤵 𞤺 𞤸 𞤺 𞤵 𞤺 𞤸 𞤺 𞤵 𞤺 𞤸 𞤺 𞤵 𞤺 𞤸 𞤺 𞤵 𞤺 𞤸 𞤺

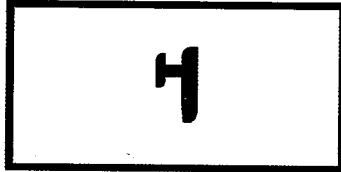
𞤵	𞤺	𞤵	𞤵	𞤵	𞤵	𞤵	Print 𞤵
𞤵	𞤺	𞤵	𞤵	𞤵	𞤵	𞤵	Script 𞤵



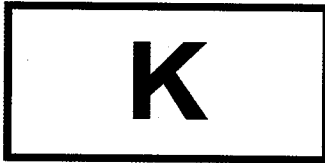




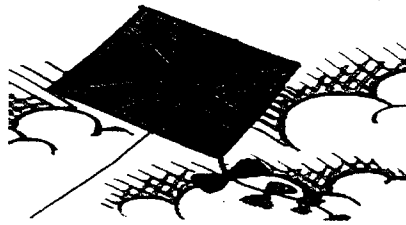
**N'Ko Letter**



**English Letter**



**Like in**



**Kite = bYIka**

**Pronounced**



ka = ka



ka ba ca da ea fa ga ha ia ja ka la ma na pa qa ra sa ta va wa xa ya za

Practice writing the N'Ko letter in the spaces below - ka ba ca da ea fa ga ha ia ja ka la ma na pa qa ra sa ta va wa xa ya za

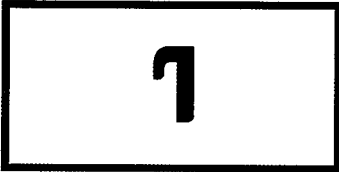
ka	ba	ca	da	ea	fa	ga	ha	Print ka
ka	ba	ca	da	ea	fa	ga	ha	Script ka



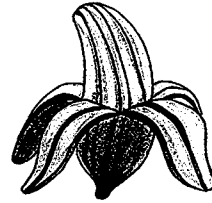




N'Ko Letter



Like in



Pronounced



English Letter



Banana = 𞤎𞤍𞤏𞤢

𞤎𞤍𞤏𞤢 = 𞤎𞤍𞤏𞤢



𞤎 𞤍 𞤏 𞤢 𞤎𞤍 𞤎𞤏 𞤎𞤢 𞤎𞤏𞤢 𞤎𞤍𞤏𞤢 𞤎𞤍𞤏𞤢 𞤎𞤍𞤏𞤢 𞤎𞤍𞤏𞤢 𞤎𞤍𞤏𞤢 𞤎𞤍𞤏𞤢 𞤎𞤍𞤏𞤢 𞤎𞤍𞤏𞤢 𞤎𞤍𞤏𞤢 𞤎𞤍𞤏𞤢 𞤎𞤍𞤏𞤢

Practice writing the N'Ko letter in the spaces below - 𞤎𞤍 𞤎𞤏 𞤎𞤢 𞤎𞤏𞤢 𞤎𞤍𞤏𞤢 𞤎𞤍𞤏𞤢 𞤎𞤍𞤏𞤢 𞤎𞤍𞤏𞤢

𞤎	𞤍	𞤏	𞤢	𞤎𞤍	𞤎𞤏	𞤎𞤢	Print
							𞤎
𞤎	𞤍	𞤏	𞤢	𞤎𞤍	𞤎𞤏	𞤎𞤢	Script
							𞤎



N'Ko Letter



Like in



Pronounced



English Letter



Water = ʼaʼbiʼa

ʼaʼbiʼa = ʼwaʼbiʼa



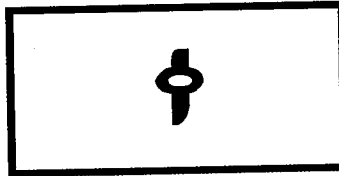
ʼaʼ ʼaʼ

Practice writing the N'Ko letter in the spaces below - ʼaʼ

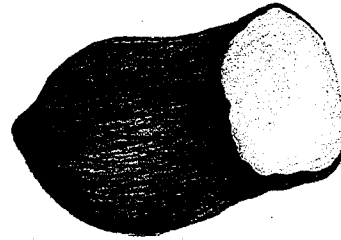
ʼaʼ	ʼaʼ	ʼaʼ	ʼaʼ	ʼaʼ	ʼaʼ	ʼaʼ	Print
							ʼaʼ
ʼaʼ	ʼaʼ	ʼaʼ	ʼaʼ	ʼaʼ	ʼaʼ	ʼaʼ	Script
							ʼaʼ



**N'Ko Letter**



Like in



**Pronounced**



ḱ1ḱḱ = 1ḱḱḱ

**English Letter**



Yam = Δ1ḱ



ḱ 1ḱ 2ḱ 3ḱ 4ḱ 5ḱ 6ḱ 7ḱ 8ḱ 9ḱ 10ḱ 11ḱ 12ḱ 13ḱ 14ḱ 15ḱ 16ḱ 17ḱ 18ḱ 19ḱ 20ḱ

Practice writing the N'Ko letter in the spaces below - ḱ 1ḱ 2ḱ 3ḱ 4ḱ 5ḱ 6ḱ 7ḱ 8ḱ 9ḱ 10ḱ 11ḱ 12ḱ 13ḱ 14ḱ 15ḱ 16ḱ 17ḱ 18ḱ 19ḱ 20ḱ

ḱ	1ḱ	2ḱ	3ḱ	4ḱ	5ḱ	6ḱ	7ḱ	Print
								ḱ
ḱ	1ḱ	2ḱ	3ḱ	4ḱ	5ḱ	6ḱ	7ḱ	Script
								ḱ

**N'Ko Letter**



**English Letter**



**Like in**



**Pronounced**



𞤀 198 = 1398

**N'Ko = 𞤀 𞤀**



𞤀 𞥅 𞥆 𞥇 𞥈 𞥉 𞥊 𞥋 𞥌 𞥍 𞥎 𞥏 𞥐 𞥑 𞥒 𞥓 𞥔 𞥕 𞥖 𞥗 𞥘 𞥙 𞥚 𞥛 𞥜 𞥝 𞥞 𞥟 𞥠 𞥡 𞥢 𞥣 𞥤 𞥥 𞥦 𞥧 𞥨 𞥩 𞥪 𞥫 𞥬 𞥭 𞥮 𞥯 𞥰 𞥱 𞥲 𞥳 𞥴 𞥵 𞥶 𞥷 𞥸 𞥹 𞥺 𞥻 𞥼 𞥽 𞥾 𞥿

Practice writing the N'Ko letter in the spaces below - 𞤀 𞤀 𞤀 𞤀 𞤀 𞤀 𞤀 𞤀

𞤀	𞤀	𞤀	𞤀	𞤀	𞤀	𞤀	Print 𞤀
𞤀	𞤀	𞤀	𞤀	𞤀	𞤀	𞤀	Script 𞤀

# NUMERALS

N'Ko **numerals** are called *Jateden's*. **Numerals** are the easiest part of the N'Ko learning course for English speakers. This is because they operate in the same way as English numbers. Nevertheless, one should always remember that unlike English which is a left to right language orientated language, N'Ko is a right to left language orientated language. Of course the appearance, and the names of the characters are also different. Apart from these facts, everything else is about the same. The following are the **numerals** and their names:

## Cardinal Numbers

᠑	᠘	᠗	᠖	᠕	᠔	᠓	᠒	᠑	᠐
9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
Konodo	Seyin	Worowula	Woro	Lolu	Nani	Saba	Fila	Kelen	dokolon

## Ordinal Numbers

᠑	᠘	᠗	᠖	᠕	᠔	᠓	᠒	᠑
Konodo- nan	Seyin- nan	Worowula- nan	Woro- nan	Lolu- nan	Nani- nan	Saba- nan	Fila- nan	Foloma

Add the suffix "nan" to form the ordinal number, except for the "first" which is called "Foloma".

## N'Ko Numerals...

... ⵜⵓⵎⵏⵏⵉ ⵜⵉⵎⵏⵏⵉ ⵜⵉⵎⵏⵏⵉ

Like in English, numbers above 9 are constructed by combining numbers 0-9. This also applies to the reading of the numbers. In addition to the numeric characters 0-9, the numbers in the first table below have unique names:

### Unique Names

<b>000000ⵏ</b>	<b>000ⵏ</b>	<b>00ⵏ</b>	<b>0ⵏ</b>	<b>0ⵏ</b>
1,000,000	1,000	100	20	10
Wulu	Wa	Keme	Muwan	Tan or Bee

Therefore, to read 11 you say “Tan ni Kelen”, which means 10 and 1. To express 25 say “Muwan ni Lolu”, 120 is read Keme ni Muwan. To read a number greater than 9, except 20 such as 10, 100, 1000 etc. say the unique name followed by the digit name. For instance, 30 will be BiSaba, 50 is BiLolu, 400 is KemeNani, and 5000 is WaLolu and so on.

<b>00ⵏ</b>	<b>0ⵏ</b>	<b>0ⵏ</b>	<b>0ⵏ</b>	<b>0ⵏ</b>	<b>0ⵏ</b>	<b>0ⵏ</b>	<b>0ⵏ</b>	<b>0ⵏ</b>	<b>0ⵏ</b>
100	90	80	70	60	50	40	30	20	10
Cheme	Bee Konodo	Bee Seyin	Bee Worowula	Bee Woro	Bee Lolu	Bee Nani	Bee Saba	Muwan	Tan

## Operation of N'Ko Numerals

The operation of N'Ko *Numerals* are very similar to that of English *Numerals*. Therefore, addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division are done the same way. Once again remember that N'Ko is read and written from right to left. This is specially true for the numerals alignments and combinations.

**Addition**

$$\begin{array}{r} 32 \\ + 2 \\ \hline 34 \end{array}$$

᠕᠑᠎ᠠᠮᠠᠨᠠᠨᠠ

$$\begin{array}{r} 32 \\ 2 \\ + \\ \hline 34 \end{array}$$

**Substraction**

$$\begin{array}{r} 32 \\ - 2 \\ \hline 30 \end{array}$$

᠕᠑᠎ᠠᠮᠠᠨᠠ

$$\begin{array}{r} 32 \\ 2 \\ - \\ \hline 30 \end{array}$$

**Mutiplication**

$$\begin{array}{r} 32 \\ \times 2 \\ \hline 64 \end{array}$$

᠕᠑᠎ᠠᠮᠠᠨᠠᠨᠠ

$$\begin{array}{r} 32 \\ 2 \\ \times \\ \hline 64 \end{array}$$

**Division**

$$\begin{array}{r} 32 \\ \div 2 \\ \hline 16 \end{array}$$

᠕᠑᠎ᠠᠮᠠᠨᠠᠨᠠ

$$\begin{array}{r} 32 \\ 2 \\ \div \\ \hline 16 \end{array}$$

# N'Ko Numerals Exercises

Remember N'Ko ( ɓɓ ) is written from right to left

Write the numbers below with N'Ko ( ɓɓ ) NUMBERS!

N'Ko	English	Exercises	
ɪ	1	<i>Example:</i> 50 = 0ɪ 25 = _____ 37 = _____	
ɪ	2		
ɪ	3		
ɪ	4	Try some of the numbers on the right :	
ɪ	5	11 = _____	11
ɪ	6	22 = _____	20
ɪ	7	_____ = _____	35
ɪ	8	_____ = _____	40
ɪ	9	_____ = _____	100
0	0	_____ = _____	300

# N'Ko Alphabet Exercises

Remember N'Ko (𞤎𞤵) is written from right to left  
**Write the words below with N'Ko (𞤎𞤵) LETTERS!**

English	N'Ko	Exercises	English	N'Ko
A	𞤀	<p><i>Example: John = 𞤎𞤵𞤎</i></p> <p>MY NAME IS: _____</p> <p>GAME: _____</p> <p>PAW: _____</p>	N	𞤎
B	𞤁		O	𞤏
CH	𞤂		P	𞤐
D	𞤃		AW	𞤔
E	𞤄	<p>Try your own words below:</p> <p>HAT = _____</p> <p>KITE = _____</p> <p>_____ = _____</p> <p>_____ = _____</p> <p>_____ = _____</p> <p>_____ = _____</p> <p>_____ = _____</p>	R	𞤒
F	𞤅		S	𞤓
G	𞤆		T	𞤔
H	𞤇		U	𞤕
I	𞤈		ny	𞤎𞤵
J	𞤉		W	𞤗
K	𞤊		EH	𞤈
L	𞤋		Y	𞤌
M	𞤍		N'	𞤎'

## N'KO GREETINGS

ᠨᠢᠴᠤ ᠭᠡᠷᠢᠨ᠎ᠠ

### **One of the corner stones of Manden culture.**

One afternoon, long before I thought of going to Europe or to America, I was having tea with an European friend at a local sidewalk café when another European greeted us as he passed. I could see that my friend was very annoyed by the stranger's action. Later that day he commented "Why did that person greet us? He did not know us."

I, in turn, was very surprised that one would be annoyed or be angered because of being greeted by a stranger. I didn't understand his reaction, After several years in Europe, Asia, and America, I realized that greetings can be an act of friendship, or an invasion of one's personal space, depending on the culture, or the situation.

By contrast in the Manden culture, one is expected to greet first before any activity takes place, even if such activity is simply two strangers passing by each other. It is considered rude to pass by someone without greeting the person. Any visitor to a Manden society should be careful to greet the host first before engaging in any conversation for business or pleasure.



## Rules for Greeting

One of the indications of how important greetings are in Manden society is the length of time it takes to greet a friend or relative one has not seen for a long time. Such a greeting can take an hour or more before it is completed. The reason why greetings may take a long time to complete is because it is customary for the host who has been greeted to reverse roles and begin greeting the guest. Therefore the one that was performing the first leg of the greeting now become the respondent. This role reversal can repeat itself multiple times before starting any new business. It will include asking about the person, asking about the family members one at a time, the friends, and other acquaintances. It may also include sharing a souvenir of one or more common events.

Although the rules of greeting in Manden culture is not easily articulated, one can observe with frequency the following:

1. Before transacting any kind of business or friendly exchange, one must first engage in a period of formal or informal greeting.
2. A person who is approaching, greets the other who is standing still or sitting.
3. A person who is entering another's domicile or place of business is the one to greet the occupants first.

## Basic Manden Greetings

The following are some common greetings:

Greeting	Answer
<p><b>Morning Greeting (Sunrise to noon)</b></p> <p>E nee somah = ḶḶḶḶ ḶḶ Ḷ = Good morning to you</p> <p>Tanna mahssee = ḶḶ ḶḶ ḶḶḶḶ = How was your night?</p>	<p>E nee somah = ḶḶḶḶ ḶḶ Ḷ = Good morning to you also</p> <p>Tanna ssee teh = ḶḶ ḶḶ ḶḶḶḶ = everything is fine</p>
<p><b>Noon Greeting (Noon to 15:30)</b></p> <p>E nee Tele = ḶḶḶḶ ḶḶ Ḷ = Good Mid-day to you</p> <p>Tanna mah Tele = ḶḶḶḶ ḶḶ ḶḶḶḶ = How was your Mid-day?</p>	<p>E nee Tele = ḶḶḶḶ ḶḶ Ḷ = Good Mid-day to you</p> <p>Tanna ssee the = ḶḶ ḶḶ ḶḶḶḶ = Everything is fine</p>
<p><b>Afternoon Greeting (15:30 to sunset)</b></p> <p>E nee Wura = ḶḶḶḶ ḶḶ Ḷ = Good Mid-day to you</p> <p>Tanna mah Tele = ḶḶḶḶ ḶḶ ḶḶḶḶ = How was your Mid-day?</p>	<p>E nee Tele = ḶḶḶḶ ḶḶ Ḷ = Good Mid-day to you</p> <p>Tanna ssee te = ḶḶ ḶḶ ḶḶḶḶ = Everything is fine</p>
<p><b>Evening Greeting (sunset to sunrise)</b></p> <p>E nee suh = ḶḶ ḶḶ Ḷ = Good evening to you</p> <p>Tanna mah Tele = ḶḶḶḶ ḶḶ ḶḶḶḶ = How was your evening?</p>	<p>E nee su = ḶḶ ḶḶ Ḷ = Good evening to you</p> <p>Tanna ssee the = ḶḶ ḶḶ ḶḶḶḶ = Everything is fine</p>

## Neutral Greetings

A new style of greeting has emerged from the widespread use of telephone and the internet, called neutral greeting. "I ni tuma" "good moment to you" is a good example. Because of these new technologies, one could be greeting someone in a different time zone. For example one person may greet another in the United States or England from Mali or Guinea. The appropriate greeting in Mali may be "I ni sogomah", "good morning" while the appropriate greeting in the United States or England may be "I ni tele", "good afternoon" or "I ni suu" "good evening" depending on the time. Therefore, it is alright to say "I ni tuma," "good moment." However, it is better to know your party's true time frame to conduct your greeting accordingly.

The Following are some time neutral greetings:

1. I ni tuma =  $\bar{\text{I}} \bar{\text{ni}} \bar{\text{tuma}}$  = Good moment to you Tana si te
2. A beh dee =  $\bar{\text{a}} \bar{\text{beh}} \bar{\text{dee}}$  = How is it Tana si te

***(This greeting can also be used to answer a telephone call instead of saying Hello!)***

Please note that any action word preceded with "I ni" will become a greeting. Look at the following examples:







1. I ni bara = Good work or good job
2. I ni borii = Good run
3. I ni suno = Good sleep

**Pease be aware that the pronunciations of the greeting may vary slightly from locality and group to group however they are generally understood by most N'Ko speakers.**







# APPENDIX

... ለጥያቄ

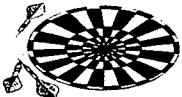




## Pictures Index

Picture	Name	Pronunciation	N'Ko Name	Page Number
	Apple	keasaba	ገላገላ	9
	Jay	kono	ገገገ	10
	Bee	lekeasey	ላገላገላ	11
	Bell	tahlahn	ገላገላ	12
	Tooth	nyin	ገገ	13
	Boat	takuloon	ገላገላ	14

## Pictures Index (CONTINUED)

Picture	Name	Pronunciation	N'Ko Name	Page Number
	Paw	sorinma	سورينما	15
	Ball	tulaan	تولان	26
	Pepper	foroto	فوروتو	27
	Tamtam	jenbeh	جينبه	28
	Jet	sanmakulun	سانماكلون	29
	Chess	chekaman	شيمان	30

## Pictures Index (CONTINUED)




Picture	Name	Pronunciation	N'Ko Name	Page Numbers
	Dart	Kown	ᠠᠵᠢ	31
	Rainbow	kololo	ᠠᠵᠢᠵᠢᠵᠢᠵᠢ	32
	Arrow	kalakiseh	ᠠᠵᠢᠵᠢᠵᠢᠵᠢ	33
	Saturn	kedeatea	ᠠᠵᠢᠵᠢᠵᠢᠵᠢ	34
	Guava	beayaki	ᠠᠵᠢᠵᠢᠵᠢᠵᠢ	35
	Face	nyadola	ᠠᠵᠢᠵᠢᠵᠢᠵᠢ	36

## Pictures Index (CONTINUED)

Picture	Name	Pronunciations	N'Ko Name	Page Numbers
	<b>Kite</b>	freakrea	ƵƵƵƵƵƵ	37
	<b>Lamp</b>	taadun	ƵƵƵƵ	38
	<b>Mask</b>	nyadoh	ƵƵƵƵ	39
	<b>Nyala</b>	tankon	ƵƵƵƵ	40
	<b>banana</b>	namasa	ƵƵƵƵ	41
	<b>Hat</b>	fuulah	ƵƵƵƵ	42



**Pictures Index (CONTINUED)**

Picture	Name	Pronunciation	N'Ko Name	Page Number
	Water	jea	𞤎𞤵	43
	Yam	koo	𞤎𞤵	44
	N'Ko	N'Ko	𞤎𞤵	45



