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filipino



- first language
- second language

For more details, see the **introduction**.

ABOUT FILIPINO

panimulâ

So which language exactly is this a phrasebook for – is it Filipino, Pilipino or Tagalog? And what's the difference anyway? This multitude of names causes confusion for Filipinos and foreigners alike, but in the end the naming reflects the political history of one language, the lingua franca of the 7000-island archipelago of the Philippines.

Filipino was first incarnated as 'Tagalog', a local language still spoken in the Manila region. Once Manila was selected as the national capital in 1595, Tagalog became the country's most widely spoken language. Chosen the official language in 1939, it was renamed 'Pilipino' 20 years later to reflect its status as

a truly national language – this acknowledged the many elements incorporated from other Philippine languages. The final evolution of the language's name was in 1987, when its initial 'p' was symbolically replaced by an 'f' to make it 'Filipino'. While the islands' local languages have no native 'f' sound, it was introduced into the language through centuries of contact with other languages, particularly Spanish and English, thus acknowledging the diverse background of the modern language.

In a republic with over 165 living languages, Filipino is the archipelago's

at a glance ...

language names:

Filipino, Pilipino, Tagalog

names in language:

Filipino pee-lee-pee-no

Pilipino pee-lee-pee-no

Tagalog ta-ga-log

language family:

Malayo-Polynesian

approximate number of speakers: 45 million

close relatives:

Bikol languages
spoken in southeastern
Luzon, North Bisayan
languages

donations to English:

boondocks (from
bundók 'mountain')

unifying force. Although not the mother tongue of every Philippine citizen, it's spoken as a second language throughout the country, and is an official language used for university instruction and in most legal, business and governmental transactions (the other official language is English). Continuing migration to other parts of Asia, the Middle East and the USA has made Filipino a language spoken by 45 million people on at least three continents. For more information on major regional languages in the Philippines, see the map and basic phrases in the special section on page 117.

Filipino belongs to the Malayo-Polynesian family of languages, which spreads from Madagascar off the coast of Africa to Tonga in the South Pacific. From these foundations, the Philippine lingua franca has been enriched with vocabulary from many sources, including the islands' other native languages. Seafaring merchants offered words of Chinese and Arabic origin during their many years of trade in the Pacific, and the 300 years of Spaniard rule left a wealth of Spanish vocabulary. Western travellers may find Filipino grammar a challenge, but they'll also find familiar vocabulary in the linguistic tapestry – English influences have been readily assimilated in recent times, so much so that the term 'Taglish' has been used to name today's Filipino.

This book will ensure that you have the words and phrases you need to speak like a true Filipino or Filipina. It's also packed with fun, social phrases to help deepen your travel experience by relating with people in their own language. Local knowledge, new relationships and a sense of satisfaction are on the tip of your tongue, so don't just stand there, say something!

abbreviations

a	adjective	m	masculine
adv	adverb	n	noun
excl	exclusive	pl	plural
f	feminine	pol	polite
incl	inclusive	prep	preposition
inf	informal	sg	singular
lit	literal translation	v	verb

Filipino is relatively easy to pronounce as most sounds are familiar to English speakers. In addition, the relationship between Filipino sounds and its spelling is straightforward and consistent. For example, when, you see an 'e' it's always pronounced the same way.

vowel sounds

Vowels are always pronounced separately even when they're written in sequence. For example, *panauhin* (visitor) is pronounced **pa-na-oo-heen**.

symbol	english equivalent	filipino example	transliteration
a	cart	<i>katók</i>	ka-tok
ai	aisle	<i>babay</i>	ba-bai
ay	say	<i>displéy</i>	dees-pley
e	bed	<i>kotse</i>	kot-se
ee	bee	<i>ikáw</i>	ee-kow
ew	like ee with rounded lips	<i>balíw</i>	ba-lew
o	hot	<i>súsunód</i>	soo-soo-nod
oh	go	<i>pos kowd</i>	pos kohd
oo	moon	<i>hulíng</i>	hoo-leeng
ow	cow	<i>ikáw</i>	ee-kow
oy	boy	<i>kahoy</i>	ka-hoy
ooy	tweak (slowly) or Spanish muy	<i>arúy</i>	a-rooy

reading & writing

Generally the relationship between Filipino sounds and their spelling is straightforward and consistent. A couple of exceptions to the generally phonetic spelling are the words *ng* (of), which is pronounced **nang**, and *mgá* (used to make nouns plural), which is pronounced **ma·nga**.

In written Filipino the glottal stop sound is represented, not by a letter, but by a circumflex (ˆ), a grave (˘) or acute accent (ˊ) over the vowel that's followed by a glottal stop. The circumflex is used when the following word begins with a vowel, otherwise either an acute or grave accent is used, for example the word *hindí* **heen-dee'** (no) may also be spelled *hindí*.

The Filipino alphabet, known as *abakada* **a·ba·ka·da**, has 28 letters that represents all the sounds in Filipino as outlined in the vowel and consonant tables. Note that the double-barrelled letters *ch* and *ng* are considered separate letters, so look up words starting with *ng* or *ch* in the **dictionary** and **menu decoder** under these letter combinations and not under *n* or *c*. For example, the word *ngayon* **nga·yon** (meaning 'now') can be found under *ng* and not *n*.

alphabet

A a a	B b ba	C c* ka	Ch ch tsa	K k ka	D d da	E e e
F f fa	G g ga	H h ha	I i ee	J j dya	L l la	M m ma
N n na	Ng ng nang	O o o	P p pa	R r ra	Rr rr** ra	S s sa
T t ta	U u oo	V v va	W w wa	X x ksa	Y y ya	Z z za

* Sometimes the English 'c' **see** is used to spell words out.

** When spelling out double letters use *doble* **do·ble** before the letter.