

DADEREEN JAMAICAN PATOIS ALPHABET TUTORIAL

ALPHABET

The standard Jamaican patois alphabet has 24 letters with letters “Q” and “X” missing.

A a	B b	Ch ch	D d	E e	F f	G g	H h	I i
a	bi	chi	di	e	ef	gi	hech	i
[ɑ:]	[bi]	[tʃi]	[di]	[ɛ]	[ɛf]	[gi]	[hɛtʃ]	[i:]
J j	K k	L l	M m	N n	O o	P p	R r	S s
jei	kei	el	em	en	o	pi	ar	es
[dʒɛɪ]	[kɛɪ]	[ɛl]	[ɛm]	[ɛn]	[o:]	[pi]	[ɑr]	[ɛs]
T t	U u	V v	W w	Y y	Z z			
ti	u	vi	dablju	wai	zei			
[ti]	[ju]	[vi]	[dablju]	[waɪ]	[zɛɪ]			

Figure 1: Standard Jamaican patois alphabet

Vowels

Jamaican patois has 5 short vowels, 3 long vowels and 5 nasal vowels as illustrated in tables 1, 2 and 3 below.

Short Vowels

The short vowels are letters “a”, “e”, “i”, “o” and “u”.

Short vowels and some English and Jamaican patois words

Vowels	Words	
Short	English	Patois
I	Brick, Kick	Brik, Kik
E	Bell, Dead	Bel, Ded
A	Band	Ban

O	Book, Cook	Buk, Kuk
U	But, Cut	Bot, Kot

Long Vowels

The long vowels are letters “aa”, “ii”, and “uu”.

Long vowels and some English and Jamaican patois words

Vowels	Words	
	English	Patois
Long vowels		
II	Beat, Tea, Treat	Biit, Tii, Triit
AA	Ball	Baal
UU	Boot	Buut

Nasal Vowels

Nasal vowel is a vowel that is produced with a lowering of the velum (a muscular flap that closes off the nasopharynx during swallowing or speaking) so that air escapes both through nose as well as the mouth.

In the nasal vowel, letters “**hn**” are added to the **five short vowels (a, e, i, o, u)** as in table below:-

Nasal vowels and some English and Jamaican patois words

Vowels	Words	
	English	Patois
Nasal		
IHN	Isn't it	Ihn
EHN	They	Dehn
AHN	And, Can't	Anh, ,Kyaahn
OHN	Don't, On, Some	Douhn, Panh, Sohn
UHN	Soon	Suhn

2.2 Diphthong

Table 1: Diphthongs and some English and Jamaican patois words

DIPHTHONGS	WORDS	
	English	Patois
IE	Cake, Late, Pay, Spare, Status, Stay, Table	Kiek, Liet, Pie, Spier, Stietos, Stie, Tiebl
UO	Boat, Coat	Buot, Kuot
AI	Bile,Bite,Life	Bail,Bait,Laif
OU	About, Cow, Mouth, South	Bout, Kou, Mout, Sout

Consonants

Letter “C” in Jamaican patois is “CH”. Other consonants include “NG”, “SH” and “ZH”

Consonants and some English and Jamaican patois words

Consonants											
	English	Patois		English	Patois		English	Patois		English	Patois
B	Baby	Biebi	H	Hole	Huol	NG	Bring	Bring	V	Voice	Vais
D	Dirty	Dotti	J	JoJ	Judge	P	Pay	Pie	W	Wild	Wail
CH	Church	Choch	K	Knife	Naif	R	Rain	Rien	Y	Youth	Yuut
F	Foot	Fut	L	Learn	Laan	S	Same	Siem	Z	Zoo	Zuu
G	Go	Guh	M	Mercy	Masi	SH	Should	Shud	ZH	Version	Vorzhan
			N	Nose	Nuoz	T	Third	Toerd			

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