

The Romanized Vietnamese language, developed by French and Portuguese missionaries and the standard written form by the late 1800s, is called *quốc ngữ*.

Vietnamese is a tonal language; it uses diacritical marks to indicate pronunciation and tone. Slight variations in pronunciation and tone change the meaning of a word. (Plus: Many dialects are spoken throughout Vietnam, changing pronunciations/sounds.)

Vietnamese is also a mono-syllabic language (although Westerners have combined syllables into words, e.g., Viet Nam → Vietnam and Dien Bien Phu → Dienbienphu).

Vietnamese alphabet:

a ã â b c d đ e ê g h i k l m n o ô ó p q r s t u ú v x y

y & i	=	<u>bee</u>	
ai	=	<u>high</u>	(ã = ah; a = between <u>hat</u> & <u>hot</u> )
d, gi, r	=	<u>z</u>	(đ = <u>do</u> ; g = <u>gah</u> )
x	=	<u>sun</u>	
ao	=	<u>how</u>	
oa	=	<u>hat</u>	(o = <u>saw</u> ; ô = <u>go</u> ; ó = <u>mug</u> )
ê	=	<u>prey</u>	(e = <u>let</u> )
ng	=	<u>Sing</u>	[this sound does not exist as an initial sound in English; the sound begins at the back of the throat]
ph	=	<u>phone</u>	
tr	=	<u>chop</u>	
kh	=	<u>Bach</u>	(c & k = <u>sky</u> )
th	=	<u>t</u>	(t at end of word = <u>k</u> ; t elsewhere = <u>t</u> )

no “r” sound