

Thai Input Methods in Key Curry

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Introduction

Unifont.org's *Key Curry* currently provides three methods for entering Thai text:

1. **Standard Thai Ketmanee** layout (เกษมณี)
2. **Thai Pattachote** keyboard layout for more efficient typing (ปัตตะโชติ)
3. An “**Easy Thai**” layout using phonetic and mnemonic principles (ไทยง่าย ๆ)

At the current time, Key Curry implements simple key maps for Thai which do not provide any sort of automatic correction of incorrectly-ordered vowel or tone marks within clusters.

1. Standard Thai Keyboard Layout (เกษมณี)

Unshifted



Shifted



Key Curry's Standard Thai keyboard is based on the traditional *Ketmanee* layout. This layout will be familiar to many Thais and is recommended for experienced Thai typists.

2. Thai Pattachote Keyboard Layout (ปัตตะโชติ)

Unshifted



Shifted



This keyboard was designed by Sarit Pattajoti in the 1960's using statistical principles in order to maximize typing speed. Although this keyboard is theoretically superior to the Ketmanee layout, the vast majority of people in Thailand continue to use the Ketmanee layout.

3. “Easy Thai” Keyboard Layout (ไทย ง่าย ๆ)

Unshifted



Shifted



Key Curry's “Easy Thai” input method uses phonetic and mnemonic principles which makes learning the layout much faster for people who are familiar with a QWERTY keyboard but are not familiar with the standard Thai keyboard. This method is recommended for individuals who are learning Thai as a foreign language or those who only need to type Thai occasionally. Please read the principles below to understand how this input method works.

Phonetic and Mnemonic Principles

In this “Easy Thai” method, Thai consonants and vowels are generally accessed by typing the lower-case Latin consonant or vowel that most closely matches the Thai consonant or vowel. For example, *mo ma* “ม” is entered by simply typing the Latin letter “m”, while *so suea* “ส” is entered by typing the Latin letter “s”.

However, in order to reduce the number of keys that must be typed, we do not adhere strictly to standard Thai romanization practice. For example, the standard romanization for *ko kai* “ก” is “k”; and *kho khai* “ข” is normally romanized using “kh”. To avoid typing *two* letters whenever we know that we can get away with typing just *one* letter, we have decided to use a single “g” for *ko kai* “ก” so that we can use a single “k” for *kho khai* “ข”.

But, you might ask, what about *kho khuai* “ค”? For *kho khuai* “ค” we use Latin letter “q” as a surrogate. This allows us to type the three most common Thai velar plosives (ก, ข, ค) using the single letters *g*, *k*, and *q* respectively.

As you can see, brevity in typing trumps phonetic standards. But what about the

remaining velar plosives? For these, we just *tack on one upper-case letter that reminds us of the name of the letter in Thai*. For example, *kho ra-khang* “ฆ” is called *ra-khang (bell)*, so we just type “q**R**”: we start with “q” because *kho ra-khang* “ฆ” is low class consonant just like *kho khuai* “ค”; and we add “R” because we want to enter the more rarely-occurring consonant *kho ra-khang* “ฆ” instead of the commonly-occurring consonant *kho khuai* “ค”. We use upper-case “R” here to avoid a conflict with lower-case “r”, because lower-case “r” is reserved for *ro ruea* “ร”.

We can use the principles illustrated for the velar plosives above to create a complete input method for Thai that anyone can learn and use in about 5 minutes. Although there are some unavoidable exceptions, using this method allows us to type most common consonants using a single key stroke. The complete set of mappings is discussed below.

Nasal Consonants

Note that the using the letter “j” to enter ngo ngu “ง” discards the phonetic principle, so you just have to remember this one.

Type	Result	Mnemonic
m	ม	-
n	น	-
nN	ณ	ณ เณร = no Nen
j	ง	-

Bilabial Plosives

Type	Result	Mnemonic
b	บ	-
p	ป	-
ph	พ	-
phP	ผ	ผ ผึ้ง = pho Phueng
phS	ภ	ภ สำเภา = pho Samphao

Alveolar Plosives

Type	Result	Mnemonic
d	ด	-
dC	ฉ	ฉ ชฉา = do Cha-da
t	ต	-
tP	ถ	ถ ปถัก = to Pa-tak
th	ท	-
thT	ธ	ธ ธง = tho Thong
thU	ถ	ถ ถง = tho thUng
thA	ฐ	ฐ ฐาน = tho thAan
thN	ท	ท นาง มณโฑ = tho Nang montho
thP	ฒ	ฒ ผู้เฒ่า = tho Phu-thao

Velar Plosives

Type	Result	Mnemonic
g	ก	-
k	ข	-
kK	ข	ข ขวด = kho Khuat
q	ค	-
qK	ค	ค คน = <q> kho Khon
qR	ฆ	ฆ ระฆัง = <q> kho Rakhang

Glottal Consonant

Type	Result	Mnemonic
o	อ	o ang

Affricate Consonants

Type	Result	Mnemonic
c	จ	-
ch	ช	-
chI	ฉ	ฉ ฉิ่ง = cho chIng
chC	ฌ	ฌ เฉอ = cho Choe

Labio-dental Fricatives

Type	Result	Mnemonic
f	ฟ	-
fA	ฝ	ฝ ฝา = fo fA

Alveolar Fricatives

Type	Result	Mnemonic
s	ส	-
sO	ซ	ซ โซ่ = so sO
sS	ศ	ศ ศาลา = so Sala
sR	ษ	ษ ฤษี = so Reu-si

Trills & Approximants

Type	Result	Mnemonic
r	ร	-
y	ย	-
yY	ญ	ญ หญิง = yo Ying
l	ล	-
lC	ฬ	ฬ จุฬา = lo Chula

Vowel Symbols

Most vowel symbols that *precede* a consonant base are typed using an *upper-case* letter. The remaining vowel symbols are typed using lower-case letters.

In the following chart, *o ang* “อ” is used as the base consonant:

Type	Result	Description
o	อ	<i>o ang (consonant)</i>
a	อั	ไม้หันอากาศ <i>short a</i>
aa	อา	ลากข้าง <i>long aa</i>
aaM	อำ	<i>aam</i>
aaa	อะ	วิสรรชนีย์
^	อิ	ไม้ไต่คู้
N	อํ	นิกหิต = Nikahit
i	อิ	<i>short i</i>
ii	อี	<i>long ii</i>
v	อึ	<i>Short ue [u]</i>
vv	อึ	<i>Long ue [u:]</i>
u	อุ	<i>short u</i>
uu	อู	<i>long uu</i>
e	เอ	ไม้หน้า e
ee	แเอ	<i>ae [ε:]</i>
E	ไอ	<i>ai</i>
EM	ไอ	ไม้ม้วน = <i>mai Muan</i>
O	โอ	ไม้โอ
o	อ	ตัว อ
y	ย	ตัว ย
w	ว	ตัว ว
R	ฤ	ตัว ฤ
RR	ฤา	ตัว ฤา
L	ฃ	ตัว ฃ
LL	ฃา	ตัว ฃา
LY	า	ตัว า

Tone Marks

Tone marks are easily typed using the number keys 1-4. In the chart below, we use *ko* “กอ” as the example syllable:

Type	Result	Description
1	ก๋อ	ไม่เอก
2	ก้อ	ไม่โท
3	ก๊า	ไม่ตรี
4	กอ๋	ไม่จัตวา

Numerals

Because keys 1-4 are reserved for typing tone marks, the Thai numerals ๑-๔ require using the shifted keys which on a U.S. QWERTY keyboard are !, @, #, and \$ respectively.

Type	Result	Description
!	๑	1
@	๒	2
#	๓	3
\$	๔	4
5	๕	5
6	๖	6
7	๗	7
8	๘	8
9	๙	9
0	๐	0

Other Symbols

Type	Result	Description / Mnemonic
z	๖	อังคั้นเดี่ยว
Z	๗	อังคั้นคู่
Y	๘	ไม้ยมก = <i>mai Yamok</i>
X	๙๗	ไปยาลใหญ่
C	๑	ฟองมัน
V	๒	โคมูตร
VV	๓๒	อังคั้นวิสรรชนีย์โคมูตร
B	฿	บาท = <i>Baht</i>

