Thai

An Essential Grammar

This is a concise and user-friendly guide to the basic structures of the language.

Grammatical forms are demonstrated through examples, given in both Thai script and romanised transliteration, with clear, jargon-free explanations. It is designed for use both by students taking a taught course in Thai and for independent learners, and includes guidance on pronunciation, speech conventions and the Thai writing system as well as grammar.

Topics include:

- Sentence particles
- Negation
- Questions
- Numerals and quantification
- Location markers and prepositions

With numerous examples bringing grammar to life, this unique reference work will prove invaluable to all students looking to master the grammar of Thai.

David Smyth is Lecturer in Thai at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.
Routledge Essential Grammars

The following titles are available in the Essential Grammars series:

Chinese
Danish
Dutch
English
Finnish
Georgian: A Learner’s Grammar
Hungarian
Modern Hebrew
Norwegian
Polish
Portuguese
Swedish
Urdu

Other titles of related interest published by Routledge:

Colloquial Thai
By John Moore and Saowalak Rodchue
Thai

An Essential Grammar

David Smyth

London and New York
For Manas Chitakasem
Contents

Preface xiii

Introduction 1
Thai and its speakers 1
Romanisation 2
Learning Thai 2
Dictionaries 3
Linguistic literature on Thai 3

Chapter 1 Pronunciation 5
1.1 Consonants 5
1.2 Vowels and diphthongs 7
1.3 Tones 9
1.4 Stress 10

Chapter 2 The writing system 11
2.1 Consonants 11
2.2 Consonants by class 14
2.3 Vowels 14
2.4 Live syllables and dead syllables 15
2.5 Tone rules 16
2.6 Miscellaneous 19

Chapter 3 Nouns, classifiers and noun phrases 23
3.1 Proper nouns 23
3.2 Common nouns 24
## Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11.8 Negative imperatives</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.9 Negative causatives</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.10 Negative questions</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.11 Negative conditional clauses</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.12 Saying ‘no’</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.13 Useful negative expressions</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.14 Two further negatives: mì and hàa . . . mây</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Chapter 12 Questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12.1 Yes/no questions</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.2 Wh- questions</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.3 Alternative questions</td>
<td>169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.4 Indirect questions</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Chapter 13 Numbers, measurement and quantification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13.1 Cardinal numbers</td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.2 Cardinal numbers with sâk and tâŋ</td>
<td>174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.3 Ordinal numbers</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.4 Sanskrit numbers</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.5 Once, twice . . .</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.6 Fractions, decimals, percentages, multiples</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.7 Collective numbers</td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.8 Some idiomatic expressions involving numbers</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.9 Measurements</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.10 Distances</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.11 Distribution: ‘per’</td>
<td>182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.12 Quantifiers</td>
<td>182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.13 Negative quantification</td>
<td>184</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.14 Approximation: ‘about’</td>
<td>184</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.15 Restriction: ‘only’</td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.16 ‘More than’</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.17 ‘Less than’</td>
<td>188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.18 ‘As many as’</td>
<td>188</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This volume aims to fill a long-felt need, among both teachers and students of Thai, for a detailed descriptive grammar which is accessible to the ordinary learner with little or no knowledge of linguistic terminology. For beginners, it should prove a useful reference source that may be used in conjunction with any introductory language course; for more advanced learners, it will hopefully clarify grey areas in their knowledge and provide some further insight into the language.

This book could not have been attempted, let alone completed, without the help and encouragement of many people, over a period of many years. I am indebted to all those Thais who, over the years, with charm, grace and tact have helped me to improve my knowledge of their language; to all those authors listed in the bibliography (and many others, too numerous to mention); to the late Peter J. Bee, formerly Lecturer in Tai at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, who did much to arouse my curiosity about language in general and Thai in particular; and to those students of Thai who each year ask new and searching questions and fill me with fresh resolve not to have to bluff my way through the following year. I am especially grateful to Sujinda Khantayalongkoch, Manas Chitakasem, Vantana Cornwell and Routledge’s anonymous reviewer from Australia, for their careful checking of the draft manuscript and their numerous constructive suggestions for improving the text; their input has been invaluable. I am also grateful to Walaiporn Tantikanangkul, Andrew Simpson and Justin Watkins for some very practical guidance. Errors, omissions and other shortcomings that may remain are, however, entirely my own responsibility. Finally, my greatest debt of gratitude is to Manas Chitakasem, my teacher, colleague and friend for nearly thirty years, for his unstinting support and encouragement since my first faltering forays into Thai; it is to him that this book is dedicated with respect and affection.
Thai and its speakers

Thai (formerly called ‘Siamese’) is a member of the Tai family of languages which are spoken by an estimated 70 million people dispersed over a wide area of Asia, from northern Vietnam to northern India. Thai, with nearly 50 million first-language speakers, is the most important language in the Tai family, which also includes Lao, Shan (spoken in northern Burma) and some 15 million speakers in southwestern China. Despite common structural features, even closely related Tai languages are often mutually unintelligible because of phonological and lexical differences. Tai speakers were once thought to have originated from China and migrated southwards, but today the border area between northern Vietnam and China’s Guangxi province is regarded as a more likely origin. From the eighth century AD Tai speakers began to migrate westwards and south-westwards into what is present-day Thailand.

Thai is the national language of Thailand. Distinct regional dialects of Thai are spoken in the north, northeast and south of the country, but the language of the Central Region is regarded as the standard and is used both in schools and for official purposes throughout the country.

Thai is a tonal language, with the meaning of each syllable determined by the pitch at which it is pronounced. Standard Thai has five tones – mid, low, high, rising and falling. Thai has no noun or verb inflections: a noun has a single form, with no distinction between singular and plural, while past, present and future time can be conveyed by a single verb form. Like many other South-East Asian languages, Thai has a complex pronoun system, which reflects gender, age, social status, the formality of the situation and the degree of intimacy between speakers. Much of the original Thai lexicon is monosyllabic; a high percentage of polysyllabic words are foreign borrowings, particularly from the classical Indian languages, Sanskrit and Pali.
Romanisation

There is no universally recognised system for romanising Thai and Thais can neither write their language in the Western alphabet nor easily read Westerners’ romanisations of Thai. When romanising Thai, linguists use one system, librarians another and the Royal Thai Institute yet another; the average Thai, if called upon to romanise Thai words, would almost certainly do so in a quite unsystematic way.

The system used in this book is based on the phonemic transcription devised by the American scholar, Mary Haas, in the early 1940s and slightly modified in J. Marvin Brown’s AUA Thai course materials. While this system is widely used in the linguistic literature on Thai and academic writing on Thailand, commercially published courses often avoid transcriptions that use symbols from the International Phonetic Alphabet. The system appears in full in Appendix 1.

Learning Thai

A number of readily available Thai courses can be used in conjunction with this grammar. The Linguaphone Thai Course (1984) by Manas Chitakasem and David Smyth, and Teach Yourself Thai (1995) by David Smyth, both equip the learner with the necessary grammar and vocabulary to deal with a range of everyday situations and provide a structured introduction to the script; both works include cassettes/CDs.

Of earlier materials, Spoken Thai (1945–8) by Mary Haas and Heng Subhanka, although dated in places, is an extremely solid work, which offers many valuable insights into the language. Foundations of Thai (1968) by Edward Anthony et al., and Thai Basic Course (1970) by Warren G. Yates and Absorn Tryon likewise provide very thorough introductions to the language with comprehensive grammar notes. The AUA Language Center Thai Course (1967), prepared by J. Marvin Brown, is designed for classroom use with a native speaker, rather than self-tuition, but other works produced by AUA, including Brown’s AUA Language Center Thai Course: Reading and Writing (1979), and Adrian Palmer’s imaginative dialogue books, Small Talk (1974) and Getting Help with Your Thai (1977) are well worth consulting. Fundamentals of the Thai Language (1957) by Stuart Campbell and Chuan Shawewongse (although in the most recent reprint, authorship is now attributed to ‘the editors of Marketing Media Associates Co., Ltd.’), has long provided the Bangkok
expatriate with a sound introduction to the language, despite its traditional grammar-translation approach.

Two substantial books on Thai grammar addressed to English speakers are *Thai Reference Grammar* (1964) by Richard Noss and *Teaching of Thai Grammar* (1982) by William Kuo. Noss’s book, based on his doctoral thesis, is a detailed and insightful descriptive grammar that no serious student of Thai can fail to benefit from; however, it is addressed to those with a background in linguistics, and its use of linguistic terminology is at best bewildering and at times simply intimidating for the majority of beginners. Kuo’s book, by contrast, is a much more down-to-earth work-book for practising key structures, but it does require a prior knowledge of Thai script.

**Dictionaries**

The most useful dictionary for the learner is *Thai-English Student’s Dictionary* (1964) compiled by Mary Haas. Each Thai script entry is followed by a phonemic transcription and English gloss. A particularly useful feature for the learner is that for every noun the appropriate classifier is indicated; many of the entries also include well-chosen examples of everyday usage. George B. McFarland’s *Thai-English Dictionary* (1944), although dated, remains a valuable reference work for the more advanced student of Thai, for it contains many words of Sanskrit origin and extensive listings of flora and fauna not found in the Haas volume. Two impressive recent works, which do not include pronunciation guides, but do reflect more up-to-date usage, are Domnern and Sathienpong’s *Thai-English Dictionary* (1994) and Thianchai Iamwaramet’s *A New Thai Dictionary with Bilingual Explanation* (1993). Robertson’s *Practical English-Thai Dictionary* (1969) is an invaluable pocket-sized aid for the beginner, which gives Thai equivalents of about 2,500 common English words in both romanised transcripion and Thai script.

**Linguistic literature on Thai**

There is a rich English-language literature on many aspects of Thai linguistics, most of which is catalogued in Franklin E. Huffman’s *Bibliography and Index of Mainland Southeast Asian Languages and Linguistics* (1986). Much of this literature is in the form of unpublished doctoral theses written in American university linguistics departments during the 1970s.
and 1980s and therefore not readily available. A number of collections of essays produced to honour leading scholars of Thai, most notably William J. Gedney (1975), Fang-Kuei Li (1976) and Vichin Panupong (1997), include contributions which the serious learner can benefit from. Anthony Diller’s essays on levels of language use (1985) and the role of Central Thai as a national language (1991) and William A. Smalley’s *Linguistic Diversity and National Unity: Language Ecology in Thailand* (1994), a masterful study of the relationship between the national language, regional dialects and minority languages, are accessible to the layman and offer invaluable insights into the language and language situation in Thailand.
Chapter 1

Pronunciation

Thai differs radically from English and other European languages in being a tone language. In tone languages the meaning of a syllable is determined by the pitch at which it is pronounced. The Thai sound system also includes a small number of consonant and vowel sounds which have no close equivalent in English. The lists of consonant and vowel sounds in this section include, where possible, a close equivalent sound in standard British English. An example of the sound in a word is given for confirmation with a Thai native speaker.

1.1 Consonants

1.1.1 Initial consonants

The consonants d, b, f, l, m, n, r, y, w, s, h are similar to English; the following consonants, however, need further clarification:

k similar to g in get e.g. kày (ก่อ) chicken
kh similar to kh in khaki e.g. khày (ข้าว) egg
ŋ similar to ng in singer e.g. ŋaan (นั่ง) work
c similar to j in jar e.g. caan (คำ) plate
ch similar to ch in chart e.g. chaay (ชาย) male
t similar to t in stop e.g. taam (ตาม) to follow
th similar to th in Thailand e.g. thay (ไทย) Thai
p similar to p in spin e.g. pay (ไป) to go
ph similar to p in part e.g. phaasāa (ภาษา) language
Many Thais find it difficult to produce an initial r and will substitute l. Thus rūu (‘to know’) is often pronounced lūu.

1.1.2 Final consonants

A Thai syllable can end in two types of consonant sounds:

(a) the stops -p, -t, -k

The final stop consonants are unreleased. Unreleased stops are produced when the airstream is closed to make the sound, but not re-opened, so that no air is released. Examples in English include the ‘p’ in the casual pronunciation of ‘yep!’ and the ‘t’ in ‘rat’ when ‘rat trap’ is said quickly. Beginners sometimes find it difficult to hear the difference between words like rāk (‘to love’), rāt (‘to bind’) and rāp (‘to receive’), while in attempting to reproduce these sounds, they may inadvertently ‘release’ the final consonant.

(b) the nasals -m, -n, -ŋ

These sounds are familiar from English and present no problem.

1.1.3 Consonant clusters

The following consonant clusters exist in Thai; they occur only at the beginning of a word:

kr- as in kruŋ (กรุง) city
kl- as in klai (ไกล) far
kw- as in kwāŋ (กว่าง) wide
khr- as in khrae (ใคร) who?
khāl- as in khlaay (คล้าย) to resemble
khw- as in khwāa (ขวา) right
pr- as in pratuu (ประตู) door
pl- as in phlaa (ปลา) fish
phr- as in phra (พระ) monk
phl- as in phlāat (พลัด) to miss, fail
tr- as in troŋ (ตรง) straight
In everyday speech many Thais will omit the second consonant in a cluster:

plaă (ปลา) ‘fish’ becomes paa
khraę (ใคร) ‘who?’ becomes khay
pratuu (ประตู) ‘door’ becomes patuu

A more radical transformation, associated with Bangkok working-class speech, is the change of initial khw- to f-:

khwaă (ขวา) ‘right’ becomes faă
khwaam sūk (ความสุข) ‘happiness’ becomes faam sūk

1.2 Vowels and diphthongs

Thai distinguishes between short and long vowels. Short vowels are transcribed with a single letter (e.g. -a, -e, -o, etc.) and long vowels with two letters (e.g. -aa, -ee, -ii, etc.).

Diphthongs (combinations of two vowel sounds) are similarly distinguished by length. Short diphthongs are represented by a single letter followed by w or y (e.g. -aw, -oy, -uy, etc.); long diphthongs are represented by either two different letters (e.g. -ia, -ua, -ua, etc.) or two similar letters followed by w or y (e.g. -aaw, -eew, -aay, etc.).

Learners are likely to experience some difficulty in hearing and producing differences between the short and long diphthongs -aw/-aaw and -ay/-aay:

raw (เรา) we raaw (ราว) about
khâw (เข้า) to enter khâaw (ข้า) rice
tay (ตาย) liver taay (ตาย) to die
sây (ใส) clear sâay (สาย) late morning

When reading Thai script it is essential to be able to distinguish between long and short vowel symbols, as vowel length influences tone (see Chapter 2):

-a similar to u in run e.g. yaŋ (ยัง) still
-aa similar to o in father e.g. maa (มา) to come
-e similar to e in let e.g. dêk (เด็ก) child
-ee similar to ay in may e.g. thee (ที) to pour
-ə similar to er in number e.g. ṭon (โจน) money
-əə similar to er in her e.g. oon (อง) to meet
-ɛ short vowel, similar to air in hair e.g. khɛŋ (กี้) hard
-ɛɛ long vowel, similar to air in hair e.g. mɛɛ (มี่) mother
-i similar to i in bin e.g. bin (บิน) to fly
-ii similar to ee in fee e.g. mi (มี่) to meet
-ɔ short vowel, similar to or in corn e.g. ðuŋ (ดิ่ง) must
-ɔɔ long vowel, similar to or in corn e.g. bu (บู) to say
-o similar to o in Ron e.g. con (คอน) poor
-oo similar to o in go e.g. too (โต) big
-u similar to oo in book e.g. yuŋ (ยุน) era
-uu similar to oo in coo e.g. ruu (รู) to know
-û short vowel, with no equivalent in English; e.g. nuŋ (หนึ่ง) one
-uu long vowel, with no equivalent in English; e.g. muu (มือ) hand
-ia similar to ear in hear e.g. sia (เสีย) to lose
-ua similar to oer in doer e.g. rua (รู) fence
-ua long diphthong with no equivalent in English; e.g. bua (บู) bored
-iaw similar to io in Rio e.g. diaw (ดีเอว) single
-uay similar to oué in roué e.g. ruay (รัว) rich
-uy diphthong with no equivalent in English; e.g. nuay (หน้าว) tired
-uy similar to ewy in chewy e.g. khu (คุ้) to chat
-ooy long diphthong with no equivalent in English; e.g. dooy (ดอย) by
-ooy long diphthong with no equivalent in English; e.g. nooy (นอย) butter
-ɔy similar to oy in boy e.g. bo (บอย) often
-ɔɔy similar to oy in boy e.g. rɔɔy (ร้อย) hundred
-ay short diphthong, similar to ai in Thai e.g. thay (ไทย) Thai
-aay long diphthong, similar to ai in Thai e.g. taay (ตาย) dead
-iw similar to ue in hue e.g. hiw (หิว) hungry
-ew short diphthong, similar to ayo in Mayo e.g. rew (เร็ว) fast
-eew long diphthong, similar to ayo in Mayo e.g. leew (ล้า) bad
-ew short diphthong with no equivalent in English; e.g. thėw (ทะว) row
-ëew long diphthong with no equivalent in English; e.g. leëew (ล้าว) already
-aw short diphthong, similar to ao in Lao e.g. raw (เรา) we
-aaw long diphthong, similar to ao in Lao e.g. raaw (เรา) about

1.3 Tones

Each syllable in Thai is pronounced with a specific tone. Standard Thai has five different tones, which are represented in the transcription system by an accent over the first vowel in the syllable. They are mid tone (.notifyDataSetChanged), high tone ((routes)), low tone (routes), rising tone (routes) and falling tone (routes).

a  Mid tone (siaŋ sàaman): normal voice pitch:
   pay (ไป) to go maa (มา) to come phëaw (แพง) expensive
b  High tone (siaŋ trìi): higher than normal voice pitch:
   rót (รถ) car sùu (ซื้อ) to buy lék (เล็ก) small
c  Low tone (siaŋ èek): lower than normal voice pitch:
   sip (สิบ) ten càak (จาก) from yày (ใหญ่) big
d  Rising tone (siaŋ càttawaa): starting from a lower than normal voice pitch with a distinctive rising contour:
   khûaw (ขอ) of súa (เร้ว) pretty phûom (เผื่อม) thin
e  Falling tone (siaŋ thoo): starting from a higher than normal voice pitch with a distinctive falling contour:
   thëi (ที่) at chùap (ช่วย) to like phûut (พูท) to speak
1.3.1 **Tone change**

There are a few common words which have a different tone in normal conversation when pronounced slowly and deliberately in isolation. For example, kháw (ฃ่ำ) ‘he, she, they’, chán (ช่ำ) ‘I’ and máy (ไฌ) (question particle) are all pronounced with a high tone in normal conversation but a rising tone when pronounced in isolation.

In one form of adjectival reduplication (see 6.4), the first element is pronounced with a high tone for the purpose of emphasis or intensification:

súay (ส่ำย) beautiful

súay súay (ส่ำยส่ำย) so beautiful!

In certain situations tones may also change; the unstressed first syllable in a two-syllable word is usually pronounced with a mid tone (see 1.4), while when two syllables with rising tones follow one another, the first is often pronounced as a high tone:

náŋsrú (หนังสือ) book

sáŋ sáam khon (สองสามคน) two or three people

1.4 **Stress**

In words of two syllables, unlike in English, it is the second syllable which is stressed. When the vowel in the first syllable is -a, it is normally reduced to -ā and in normal speech the tone is mid:

pratuu–prātuu (ประตู) door

sadūak–sāduak (สะดวก) convenient

When the vowel -aa occurs in both the first and second syllable, it is commonly shortened in the first syllable:

aahāan–ahāan (อาหาร) food

phaasāa–phāsāa (ภาษา) language
Thai is written in a unique script. This has evolved from a script which originated in South India and was introduced into mainland South-East Asia during the fourth or fifth century AD. The neighbouring Lao and Cambodian scripts bear some close similarities to Thai. The first recorded example of Thai writing is widely believed to be a stone inscription found by the future King Mongkut (Rama IV, 1851–68) at Sukhothai in 1833, and dated 1283 AD. In this inscription, the author, King Ramkhamhaeng, records that he actually devised the script. In recent years there has been lively debate in academic circles about its authenticity; much of this can be found in Chamberlain (1991).

The Thai writing system is alphabetic. It is written across the page from left to right with no spaces between words; when spaces are used, they serve as punctuation markers, instead of commas or full stops. There is generally a close match between spelling and pronunciation. The following sections outline the key features of the Thai writing system:

### 2.1 Consonants

The Thai alphabet has forty-two consonants which are arranged according to the traditional Indian alphabetic order, beginning with velar stops, then palatals, dentals, bilabials and finally, sonorants.

All consonants are pronounced with an inherent -०० vowel sound. Each consonant has a name, rather like ‘a-for-apple, b-for-bat’, which children learn in school. For the foreign learner, knowing these names can be useful when asking how to spell a word, but is not necessary for learning to read.

Many consonant symbols change their pronunciation at the end of a word because of the very limited number of final consonant sounds that exist
in Thai (1.1.2); thus, the *letters* representing initial kh, c, ch, d, th, b, ph, s and f sounds are each channelled into one of just three possible *sounds* – k, p, t – when they occur at the end of a word. The following table lists the consonants in dictionary order with their names and pronunciations, both as initial and as final consonants:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Initial</th>
<th>Final</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ก koo káy (chicken)</td>
<td>k</td>
<td>k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ข khoo kháy (egg)</td>
<td>kh</td>
<td>k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ค khoo khwaay (buffalo)</td>
<td>kh</td>
<td>k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ฆ khoo rakhaŋ (bell)</td>
<td>kh</td>
<td>k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ง gōu gūu (snake)</td>
<td>ظ ð</td>
<td>ظ ð</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>จ jōo caan (plate)</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ฉ chōo chīŋ (small cymbals)</td>
<td>ch</td>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ช chōo cháaŋ (elephant)</td>
<td>ch</td>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ซ sōo sōo (chain)</td>
<td>s</td>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ม mōo (ka)chāo (tree)</td>
<td>ch</td>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ญ yōo yiŋ (girl)</td>
<td>y</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>อ dōo cháa (theatrical crown)</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>อ tōo patāk (goad)</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>อ thōo thāan (base)</td>
<td>th</td>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>อ thōo monthoo (Indra's Queen)</td>
<td>th</td>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>อ thōo thāw (old person)</td>
<td>th</td>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>อ nōo neen (novice)</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>อ dōo dēk (child)</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>อ tōo taw (turtle)</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>อ thōo thūŋ (bag)</td>
<td>th</td>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>อ thōo thahāan (soldier)</td>
<td>th</td>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>อ thōo thōŋ (flag)</td>
<td>th</td>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>อ nōo nūu (mouse)</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>อ bōo bay máay (leaf)</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>p</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>อ pōo plaa (fish)</td>
<td>p</td>
<td>p</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>อ phóo phóŋ (bee)</td>
<td>ph</td>
<td>p</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The following table summarises the representation of final consonant sounds; although there are theoretically fifteen ways of writing a final -t sound, less than half of these are likely to be encountered in normal usage.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Final consonant sound</th>
<th>Thai consonant symbol</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-p</td>
<td>บ ป พ ฟ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-t</td>
<td>ต ท ถ ฑ ฒ ทั ตัง ส</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-k</td>
<td>ก ข ค ฅ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-m</td>
<td>ม มำ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-n</td>
<td>น นำ นระ ลฝ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ñ</td>
<td>ง</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-y</td>
<td>ย</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-w</td>
<td>ว</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*See 2.3.
2.2 Consonants by class

Thai consonants are divided into three classes: high, mid and low. The class of the initial consonant is one factor in determining the tone of a word or syllable. In order to be able to read, the learner has to memorise the class of each consonant; the easiest way to do this is to memorise the shorter lists of mid-class and high-class consonants so that everything not on those lists can be assumed to be low class.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Low class:</th>
<th></th>
<th>n</th>
<th>m</th>
<th>ง</th>
<th>ร</th>
<th>ล</th>
<th>ย</th>
<th>ว</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ค</td>
<td>ฮ</td>
<td>ช</td>
<td>ท</td>
<td>พ</td>
<td>ฟ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>kh</td>
<td>ch</td>
<td>s</td>
<td>th</td>
<td>ph</td>
<td>f</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ข</td>
<td>ท</td>
<td>ญ</td>
<td>ย</td>
<td>n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>kh</td>
<td>th</td>
<td>ph</td>
<td>y</td>
<td>n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>น</td>
<td>ทร</td>
<td>พ</td>
<td>ย</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ch</td>
<td>th</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>l</td>
<td>h</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mid class:</th>
<th>ก</th>
<th>จ</th>
<th>ฉ</th>
<th>จ</th>
<th>ฐ</th>
<th>ฑ</th>
<th>ป</th>
<th>อ</th>
<th>ฐ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>k</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>p</td>
<td>zero</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High class:</th>
<th>ข</th>
<th>ฃ</th>
<th>ค</th>
<th>ฅ</th>
<th>ฅ</th>
<th>ส</th>
<th>ษ</th>
<th>ห</th>
<th>ฬ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>kh</td>
<td>ch</td>
<td>th</td>
<td>ph</td>
<td>f</td>
<td>s</td>
<td>h</td>
<td>th</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.3 Vowels

Vowel symbols can only be written in combination with a preceding consonant; they can appear after, before, above, or below a consonant, and even surrounding the consonant on three sides; in the following table, a dash is used to indicate the position of the consonant. When a word begins with a vowel sound, the ‘zero’ or ‘glottal’ consonant symbol is used. (Note that the Thai letter representing ‘zero’ consonant and the -a vowel are identical.) Vowel length is important in Thai because it plays a part in determining the tone of a syllable; short vowels are indicated by a single letter in the transcription (e.g. -a, -i, -e, -ə) and long vowels by two letters (e.g. -aa, -uu, -ee); the diphthongs -ua, -ia, -ua are
regarded as long vowels. The following table lists the vowel symbols in alphabetical order:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thai Vowel</th>
<th>Roman Equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/owl/</td>
<td>/aw/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>owel</td>
<td>/a/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>utow</td>
<td>/u/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iew</td>
<td>/e/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iew</td>
<td>/i/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iew</td>
<td>/ii/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iew</td>
<td>/e/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iew</td>
<td>/ee/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iew</td>
<td>/eo/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iew</td>
<td>/ay/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iew</td>
<td>/ay/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iew</td>
<td>/oo/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 2.4 Live syllables and dead syllables

Thai syllables are either live or dead. A live syllable (kham pen) ends with either a long vowel, or an m, n, η, w, or y sound; a dead syllable (kham taay) ends with either a short vowel, or a p, t, or k sound:

**Live syllables:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thai Vowel</th>
<th>Roman Equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>maa</td>
<td>/maː/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>duu</td>
<td>/duː/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wan</td>
<td>/waː/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ram</td>
<td>/raː/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kûŋ</td>
<td>/kùŋ/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aw</td>
<td>/aː/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>khâay</td>
<td>/kʰaː/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Dead syllables:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thai Vowel</th>
<th>Roman Equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tô</td>
<td>/tʰaː/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kà</td>
<td>/kʰaː/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dù</td>
<td>/dɯː/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ráp</td>
<td>/râːp/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cût</td>
<td>/tʰaːt/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bûk</td>
<td>/bûk/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.5 Tone rules

The tone of a syllable is determined by a combination of three different factors: (i) the type of syllable (live or dead); (ii) the class of the initial consonant (high, medium or low); and (iii) the length of the vowel (long or short).

2.5.1 Dead syllables

The following table summarises tone rules for dead syllables with examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initial consonant</th>
<th>Short vowel</th>
<th>Long vowel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low class</td>
<td>HIGH TONE</td>
<td>FALLING TONE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>รา๑tk</td>
<td>แม๑k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid class</td>
<td>LOW TONE</td>
<td>LOW TONE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ติ๑t</td>
<td>บ๑åat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High class</td>
<td>LOW TONE</td>
<td>LOW TONE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ฃ๑kh๑p</td>
<td>ส๑w๑p</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.5.2 Live syllables and tone marks

Live syllables with no tone mark are pronounced with a mid tone if the initial consonant is either low class or mid class, but a rising tone if it is a high-class consonant.

To represent live syllables with high, falling and low tones (such as the words ต๑o ‘must’ and แม๑y ‘not’), tone marks are used, which are written above the initial consonant. The two most common tone marks are แม๑y éek (´) and แม๑y thoò (´). Unfortunately for the learner, because of a radical change in the tone system that occurred centuries ago, these tone marks do not indicate one specific tone each; again, it is the class of the initial consonant which determines how the tone mark will be interpreted.
The following table summarises rules for live syllables with examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initial consonant mark</th>
<th>(no tone)</th>
<th>mày èek</th>
<th>mày thoo</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Low class</strong></td>
<td>MID TONE</td>
<td>FALLING TONE</td>
<td>HIGH TONE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mì</td>
<td>mà</td>
<td>mà mà</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mid class</strong></td>
<td>MID TONE</td>
<td>LOW TONE</td>
<td>FALLING TONE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tàam</td>
<td>tìwì</td>
<td>tìwì tìwì</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>High class</strong></td>
<td>RISING TONE</td>
<td>LOW TONE</td>
<td>FALLING TONE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>khì</td>
<td>khì</td>
<td>khì khì</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Two further tone marks, mày triì (˚) and mày càttawaa (˛) are also used, although they are much less common. The former always produces a high tone, the latter, always a rising tone.

dìwà | bìpìì | kìe

tó | pépsìi | kìe

dìaw | cìa | kìuay tiaw

**2.5.3 Silent initial consonants: ฮ and ฮ**

When the high-class consonant ฮ occurs before the low-class consonants, น, ://{ }มะ, ร, ๅ, ุ, ั, ิ, ี, ื, ถ, ง, ษ, ห it is silent but has the effect of transforming the low-class consonants into high-class consonants; such words then follow the tone rules for words with initial high-class consonants (2.5.1, 2.5.2):

yùt, ลบ, หนี, หญิง, หนัง

The mid-class consonant ฮ occurs silently before the low-class consonant ฮ and has the effect of transforming the low-class consonant into a mid-class consonant. There are only four words in this category, all of which are pronounced with a low tone:

yàak, ย่า, ยัง, อยู่

yàa, ย่า, ยำ, ยู
2.5.4 Consonant clusters

Consonant clusters occur only at the beginning of a syllable in Thai. In syllables beginning with a consonant cluster, the class of the first consonant in the cluster is used for determining the tone of the syllable. The following chart summarises possible consonant cluster sounds with examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cluster</th>
<th>Sound</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>kr-</td>
<td>(กรอง krōnk)</td>
<td>kr- (เกล้ klāy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>khr-</td>
<td>(กทธ krāy)</td>
<td>khr- (คลาย khlaay)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tr-</td>
<td>(ตรร trūat)</td>
<td>tr- (ทรร prāap)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pr-</td>
<td>(ปรร prāap)</td>
<td>pr- (ปล่ plūk)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>phr-</td>
<td>(พระ prā)</td>
<td>phr- (พลทรง phlāat)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kl-</td>
<td>(กล klāy)</td>
<td>kl- (เกล้ klāy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>khl-</td>
<td>(กลลาย khlaay)</td>
<td>khl- (คลลาย khlaay)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>phl-</td>
<td>(พลทรง phlāat)</td>
<td>phl- (พลทรง phlāat)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.5.5 Unwritten vowels

2.5.5.1 Monosyllables

Syllables consisting of two consonants with no written vowel symbol are pronounced with an inherent o vowel sound:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consonants</th>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>khon</td>
<td>yōk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cōp</td>
<td>hōk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mōt</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.5.5.2 Two-syllable words

Many two-syllable words in Thai have an unwritten a vowel in the first syllable. The first syllable is unstressed and pronounced with a mid tone in normal speech; the tone of the second syllable is determined by the second consonant in the word (i.e. the initial consonant of the second syllable), unless that consonant is either ง, น, ภ, ภ, ภ, or ผ, in which case the first consonant ‘over-rules’ it and determines the tone:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consonants</th>
<th>Vowel</th>
<th>Tonal</th>
<th>Syllable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sabaay</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>sathāan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>saphāap</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>sanūk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>talōk</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are a small number of words beginning with the letters ป-ใน in which the unwritten vowel sound is o:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consonants</th>
<th>Vowel</th>
<th>Tonal</th>
<th>Syllable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bōrisāt</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>bōriween</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bōrikaan</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>bōrihāan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bōrip[hóok</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.6 Miscellaneous

2.6.1 Mismatch between spelling and pronunciation

Overall, the match between spelling and pronunciation in Thai is remarkably close; if you know the rules, you can almost guarantee that you will be able to read a word correctly. However, two common types of mismatch between spelling and normal pronunciation, are:

1. Tone suggested by the spelling is not reflected in pronunciation

Words written with rising tones but pronounced with high tones:
- เขา (he, she, they) written khāw but pronounced kháw
- ฉัน (I) written chān but pronounced chán
- ใคร (question particle) written māy but pronounced máy

Words written with falling tones but pronounced with low tones:
- ประโยชน์ (advantage) written prāyōot but pronounced prāyōot
- ประโยค (sentence) written prāyōok but pronounced prāyōok
- ประวัติ (history) written prāwāt but pronounced prāwāt

2. Vowel length in the written form is not reflected in pronunciation

Words written with long vowels but pronounced with short vowels:
- ต้อง (must) written tōng but pronounced tōn
- เงิน (money) written nāan but pronounced nān
- ท่าน (you) written thān but pronounced thān

Words written with short vowels but pronounced with long vowels:
- ถ้า (can, able to) written dāy but pronounced dāay
- ก้าว (nine) written kāw but pronounced kāaw
- ไม้ (wood) written māy but pronounced máay
2.6.2 Linker syllables and double-functioning consonants

A number of words that appear to consist of two syllables are joined by a linker syllable consisting of the final consonant of the first syllable with an unwritten a vowel between them:

สกปรก คุณภาพ ผลไม้ รายการ
sökkaprök khunnaphâap phõnlamâay râatchakaan

2.6.3 Silenced consonants

Thai words that have been borrowed from Sanskrit, Pali and English usually try to retain as much of the original spelling as possible; as this will often produce pronunciations that are impossible or misleading, a ‘killer’ symbol is placed above the redundant consonant to indicate that it may be ignored:

เบียร์ เบอร์ จอนห์ เสาร์ อัธยา
bia bër jophon saër äthiya

Sometimes the ‘killer’ sign, called kaaran in Thai, cancels out not only the consonant above which it appears, but also the one immediately preceding it:

คัน ศาสตร์
can sàat

Sometimes, even though there is no kaaran sign, the final consonant is not pronounced:

บัต สมัคร
bât samâk

2.6.4 Silent final vowels

A number of words of Indic origin are spelt with a final short vowel which is not pronounced:

ชาติ ญาติ เหตุ
châat yâat hèet
2.6.5 Irregular §

The letter §, normally pronounced as an initial r and final n, occurs in a number of irregular combinations:

2.6.5.1 ทร-

These two letters together at the beginning of a word behave like low class §:

ทรบ ทรราย ทรง.
sâap saay soŋ

2.6.5.2 สร-

The letter § is not pronounced in words that begin with these two letters:

สราว สราง สร
sâaŋ sàaŋ sâ

2.6.5.3 Final §

As a final consonant the letter § is normally pronounced n; in words where there is no immediately preceding written vowel, it is pronounced ːn:

เพร่ นคร ลำคร
phûn nakhûn lakûn

2.6.5.4 -ษ

When the letters ษษ occur at the end of a syllable, they are pronounced an; if they are followed by a final consonant they are pronounced a:

สาร บารุก กรม พระค.
sân banthûk kam phâk

2.6.5.5 จึง

The letter § is ignored in the pronunciation of the word จึง (ciŋ).
2.6.6 The symbols ฿ and ฿

The symbol ฿ indicates the abbreviation of a word and occurs most commonly in the word kruŋthêep, the Thai name for Bangkok. The symbol ฿ indicates the reduplication of the preceding word:

กฤษฎา โพธินก เล็ก
kruŋthêep phån phån lék lék

2.6.7 Consonants . . . or what?

The four symbols below are listed in dictionaries as if they were consonants. Despite this, Thais tend to think of the Thai alphabet as having 44 consonants, including 2 obsolete consonants in addition to the 42 listed in 2.1, but excluding the symbols below.

฿ ฿ ฿ ฿
ร ร ร ร

The first symbol occurs in only a very small number of words (but including ‘English’ where it has the value ri), while the latter three are unlikely to be encountered.

อังกฤษ ำกritic English
ฤดู ำด้วู season
Nouns can be divided into two broad categories: proper nouns and common nouns.

3.1 Proper nouns

Proper nouns refer to unique things, such as personal names, place names and names of institutions.

3.1.1 Personal names

Names of individuals follow the same order as in English, with the personal name preceding the family name. People are addressed, referred to and known by their personal name rather than their family name; family names are used primarily for administrative purposes. Most Thais will also have a nickname, by which they will be known within the family and among friends.

The polite title khun is used before the personal name, and sometimes the nickname, to address both males and females of similar or higher status. Thus, Mr Suchart Boonsoong and Mrs Yupha Saibua will be known as khun suchāat and khun yuphaa respectively. Thais will often use khun followed by the surname when addressing Westerners in formal situations.

3.1.2 Place names

Individual place names, names of rivers, mountains and other geographical features, institutions, organisations, buildings, and so on, follow the noun
identifying the type of place; an exception is Thailand’s oldest university, Chulalongkorn University, which deliberately reverses the order:

caŋwàt nakhon phanom
จังหวัดนครพนม
Nakhon Phanom Province

phàak iisàañ
ภาคอีสาน
North Eastern Region

mè̂r náam cāw phraya
แม่น้ำเจ้าพระยา
Chao Phraya River

mùn thay
เมืองไทย
Thailand

thanôn sukhûmwit
ถนนสุขุมวิท
Sukhumwit Road

sanāam bin dûc thàñg
สนามบินดอนเมือง
Don Muang Airport

mahāwitthayaalay thammasàat
มหาวิทยาลัยธรรมศาสตร์
Thammasat University

culaaloŋkçon mahāwitthayaalay
จุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย
Chulalongkorn University

3.2 Common nouns

Common nouns are traditionally divided into concrete nouns, which are observable, such as ‘house’, and abstract nouns, which are not, such as ‘love’.

Common nouns in Thai have a single fixed form. Unlike many European languages, no suffix is added to indicate plural or to show whether the noun is the grammatical subject or object in a sentence; nor are nouns
classified by gender. The word *phuan* thus means either ‘friend’ or ‘friends’, depending on the context. Usually the context provides sufficient information for there to be no confusion. When it is necessary to be more specific, numbers or indefinite quantifier words, such as many, every, a few, can be used; a very small number of nouns may be reduplicated as a means of indicating plurality:

- *phom pay káp phuan*  
  ผมไปกับเพื่อน
  I went with a friend/friends.

- *phom pay káp phuan sding khon*  
  ผมไปกับเพื่อนสองคน
  I went with two friends.

- *phom pay káp phuan làay khon*  
  ผมไปกับเพื่อนหลายคน
  I went with several friends.

- *phom pay káp phuan phuan*  
  ผมไปกับเพื่อนๆ
  I went with friends.

### 3.3 Making new nouns

Common nouns make up the largest part of the language’s vocabulary and are an ever-growing category. New nouns have, and continue to, come into the language through borrowing from other languages and from the Thai language’s own means of generating new words, chiefly the process of compounding.

#### 3.3.1 Borrowings

The Thai lexicon includes a considerable number of loan words, borrowed over the centuries from Khmer (Cambodian), the classical Indian languages, Sanskrit and Pali and, more recently, English. In some instances a word of Indic (Sanskrit or Pali) origin is used in preference to a ‘pure’ Thai word to convey a sense of politeness, refinement or formality:
There has been a huge influx of English borrowings over the past fifty years, including scientific, technical and business terms and words associated with food, dress, arts, sports and other leisure activities. Thais’ pronunciation of English loanwords will depend very much on their level of education and exposure to English; some English borrowings (e.g. páttìk, the ‘uneducated’ pronunciation of ‘plastic’, or bôn, the abbreviated pronunciation of ‘football’) may be scarcely recognisable to an English native speaker when adapted to the Thai sound system and assigned tones. Here is just a tiny sample of English words in everyday use in Thai:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Informal</th>
<th>Formal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Thai origin)</td>
<td>(Indic origin)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>phuˇa ฝ่า</td>
<td>sãamii สามี</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mia เมีย</td>
<td>phanrayaa ภรรยา</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hùa หัว</td>
<td>sîsà ศีรษะ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ผงาจ เมือง</td>
<td>prathêet ประเทศไทย</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>māa หมา</td>
<td>sunák สุนัข</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Compounding involves joining two or more words together to make a new word. The first word or ‘head noun’ may be followed by either a ‘noun attribute’ or a ‘verb attribute’, which qualifies or restricts the meaning of the head noun; in some compounds, a verb attribute is followed by a grammatical object:
3.3.3 Some common head nouns

A number of head nouns occur either normally or exclusively in compounds; some common examples include the following:

3.3.3.1 nák (‘one skilled in . . .’) + VERB or NOUN

- nák sêksàa นักศึกษา student (sêksàa to study)
- nák khìan นักเขียน writer (khìan to write)
- nák kiïlaa นักกีฬา sportsman, athlete (kiïlaa sport)
- nák thúrákit นักธุรกิจ businessman (thúrákit business)
- nák náŋsûphim นักหนังสือพิมพ์ journalist (náŋsûphim newspaper)

3.3.3.2 phûu (‘one who . . .’) + VERB (but note last two examples with noun)

- phûu yày ผู้ใหญ่ adult (yày to be big)
- phûu chïaw chaan ผู้เชี่ยวชาญ expert (chïaw chaan to be skilled)
3.3.3.3 bay (‘a sheet of paper’) + VERB

- bay ráp róŋ ใบเสร็จ  guarantee (róŋ to guarantee)
- bay sányaa ใบสัญญา  contract (sányaa to promise)
- bay anúyāat ใบอนุญาต  permit (anúyāat to permit)
- bay kháp khìi ใบขับขี่  driving (kháp khìi to drive)
- bay sét ráp ใบเสร็จบันเงิน  receipt (sét ráp ף alan finish – receive – money)

3.3.3.4 rooŋ (‘a large building’) + NOUN or VERB

- rooŋ rót โรงรถ  garage (rót car)
- rooŋ ɲaŋ โรงงาน  factory (ɲaŋ work)
- rooŋ nāŋ โรงหนัง  cinema (nāŋ film, movie)
- rooŋ rem โรงแรม  hotel (rem to stay overnight)
- rooŋ rian โรงเรียน  school (rian to study)

3.3.3.5 kaan (‘matters of . . .’) + NOUN; kaan (‘act of . . .’) + VERB

- kaan bāan การบ้าน  homework (bāan house, home)
- kaan fay fáa การไฟฟ้า  Electricity Authority (fay fáa electricity)
- kaan ɲuŋ การเงิน  finance (ɲuŋ money)
- kaan māŋ การเมือง  politics (māŋ city, country)
- kaan ráksāa การรักษา  care, preservation (ráksāa to care for)
- kaan sūksāa การศึกษา  education (sūksāa to study)
kaan chûay  การช่วยเหลือ  assistance (chûay lîa to assist)
kaan dôn  การเดินทาง  travel (dôn thaaŋ to travel)

The pattern kaan + VERB in many instances corresponds to the English gerund, or verbal noun, and it occurs commonly in written Thai:

kaan kin  การกิน eating (kin to eat)
kaan rôp  การรบ fighting (rôp to fight)
kaan rian  การเรียน studying (rian to study)
kaan phûut  การพูด speaking (phûut to speak)

In normal spoken Thai, however, the English gerund construction is more naturally conveyed simply by the verb without kaan:

kin taam râan aahän phût  กินตามอาหารผุง
Eating in restaurants is expensive.

rian nântsûn mây sanûk  เรียนหนังสือไม่สนุก
Studying is not fun.

phûut phaasâa thay yâak  พูดภาษาไทยยาก
Speaking Thai is difficult.

3.3.3.6 khwaam (used to form abstract nouns ) + VERB

khwaam râk  ความรัก love (râk to love)
khwam rûu  ความรู้ knowledge (rûu to know)
khwam khît  ความคิด idea (khît to think)
khwam sâmret  ความสำเร็จ success (sâmret to complete)
khwam sûk  ความสุข happiness (sûk to be happy)
3.3.4 Co-ordinate compounds

Two or more nouns can occur together to make a new noun in a ‘co-
ordinate compound’ where the second noun does not modify the first:

phāo mêt  พ่อแม่ parents (father – mother)
phīi nang  พี่น้อง brothers and sisters (older sibling – younger
            sibling)
sēa phāa  เสื้อผ้า clothes (upper garment – lower garment)

Often such compounds involve a four-syllable pattern, which may involve
one or more of the following features: duplication of the first and third
elements, internal rhyme, alliteration or the insertion of a meaningless
syllable to preserve the rhythm.

piûo yâa taa yaay  ปู่ย่าตายยาย  grandparents
            (paternal grandfather – paternal grandmother – maternal
            grandfather – maternal grandmother)
3.4 Noun phrases and classifiers

When a noun is accompanied by one or more modifying words, such as ‘three cars’, ‘that car’ or ‘the red car’, it is called a noun phrase. Noun phrases in Thai frequently involve the use of a class of words called classifiers.

Classifiers are an obligatory component of noun phrases containing numerals. In both English and Thai, uncountable nouns, such as rice, beer and silk may be counted by the kilo, the bottle or the metre; in Thai these measure words are regarded as classifiers. Thai differs from English in that it uses classifiers for countable nouns such as ‘friends’, ‘dogs’ and ‘books’, where English simply places the number before the noun. A rare exception in English is ‘cattle’ which are counted by the ‘head’; ‘head’ functions like a Thai classifier. Every noun in Thai is counted by a specific classifier; thus khon is used for counting people, tua for animals and lêm for books:

**phran sōt khon**
เพื่อนสองคน
two friends (friends – two – classifier)

**mäa hâa tua**
หมาห้า
five dogs (dogs – five – classifier)

**nântsâm sip lêm**
หนังสือสิบเล่ม
ten books (books – ten – classifier)
Some of the most common classifiers, and the nouns they are used with, are:

- **an** อัน: small objects
- **baan** บาน: doors, windows, mirrors
- **bay** ใบ: fruit, eggs, leaves, cups, bowls, slips of paper, documents
- **chabàp** ฉบับ: letters, newspapers, documents
- **chanít** ชนิด: types, kinds, sorts (of things)
- **chin** อัน: pieces (of cake, meat, cloth, work)
- **chút** ชุด: sets of things
- **chûak** เซ็ต: elephants
- **dîak** ดอก: flowers, keys
- **duaŋ** ดวง: stamps, stars, lamps, lights, hearts
- **fâng** ฟอง: eggs
- **hêŋ** แห่ง: places
- **hîo** ห่อ: packages, bundles
- **hîŋ** ห้อง: rooms
- **khabuan** ขบวน: trains, processions
- **khan** คัน: vehicles, spoons, forks
- **khon** คน: people (except monks and royalty)
- **khôô** ช่อง: items, clauses, points (e.g. in a contract or formal statement)
- **khûu** คู่: pairs (e.g. shoes, socks, married couples, but not trousers)
- **khrââŋ** เครื่อง: telephones, TVs, radios, computers, etc.
- **lam** ลำ: boats, aeroplanes
- **lâŋ** หลัง: houses
- **lêm** เล่ม: books, knives
- **lîêt** หลอด: light bulbs, tubes (e.g. toothpaste)
- **lûuk** ลูก: fruit, balls
- **mêt** เม็ด: seeds, pills, buttons
 classifiers such as kilo, inch and month, and containers such as bottle, bowl and bag also function as classifiers.

Classifiers occur not only with cardinal numbers, but also with other quantifiers (ordinal numbers, indefinite quantifiers and ‘how many?’), demonstratives (‘this’, ‘that’, ‘these’, ‘those’ and ‘which?’) and adjectives.

### 3.5 Word order in noun phrases

The following list is not exhaustive but covers the most common patterns of noun phrase:

#### 3.5.1 NOUN + CARDINAL NUMBER + CLASSIFIER

For cardinal numbers, see 13.1.

**lûuk sàam khon**

three children
bān sīi láŋ
บ้านสี่หลัง
four houses
nâŋsêu hôk lêm
หนังสือหกเล่ม
six books

The word núŋ (one) can occur either before the classifier or after it; when it occurs before the classifier it functions as the numeral ‘one’, and when it occurs after the classifier it can be treated as the indefinite article ‘a’, describing the noun:

lûuk núŋ khon
ลูกหนึ่งคน
one child
lûuk khon núŋ
ลูกคนหนึ่ง
a child

3.5.2 NOUN + QUANTIFIER + CLASSIFIER

For quantifiers, see 13.12; note that some quantifiers do not occur with classifiers.

farâŋ bâng khon
สำรับบางคน
some ‘farangs’ (Westerners)
plaa thûk chanît
ปลาทุกชนิด
every kind of fish
côtnây międz kii châbâp
จดหมายไม่เกินฉบับ
not many letters

3.5.3 NOUN + CLASSIFIER + ORDINAL NUMBER

For ordinal numbers, see 13.3.

lûuk khon thîi sāam
ลูกคนที่สาม
the third child
NOUN + CLASSIFIER + DEMONSTRATIVE

Demonstratives are words like นิ (‘this/these’), น่าน (‘that/those’), น่อน (‘that/those over there’) and the question word น้ำย? (‘which’):

 låuk khon níi
ลูกคนนี้
this child

sûa tua nán
เสื้อตัวนี้
that blouse

båan læn nóon
บ้านหลังนี้
that house over there

nàngsùa læm náy?
หนังสือเล่มไหน
date book?

The noun is often dropped in spoken Thai when the context is unambiguous, as in the response below:

aw sûa tua náy?
เอาเสื้อตัวนี่
Which blouse do you want?

– tua nán
– ตัวนั้น
– That one.

The classifier is also often dropped in spoken Thai:

sûa nán mây sûay
เสื้อนี่ไม่สวย
That blouse isn’t pretty.
3.5.5 **NOUN + CARDINAL NUMBER + CLASSIFIER + DEMONSTRATIVE**

lûuk sãam khon níi
ลูกสามคนนี้
these three children

sàa sôcô tua nán
เสื้อสองตัวนั้น
those two blouses

3.5.6 **NOUN + ADJECTIVE**

aahâan phèt
อาหารเผ็ด
spicy food

nángûè kho̍k
หนังถือก่า
an old book

bàn yày
บ้านใหญ่
a big house

3.5.7 **NOUN + ADJECTIVE + CLASSIFIER + DEMONSTRATIVE**
	nángûè kho̍k lêm nán
หนังถือเก่าเล่มหนึ่ง
that old book

bàn yày lâng nán
บ้านใหญ่หลังหนึ่ง
that big house

3.5.8 **NOUN + ADJECTIVE + CARDINAL NUMBER + CLASSIFIER (+ DEMONSTRATIVE)**

nángûè kho̍k sôcô lêm (nîi)
หนังถือเก่าสองเล่ม(นี้)
(these) two old books
bân yày hàa lâng (nán)
(those) five big houses

3.5.9 NOUN + ADJECTIVE + CLASSIFIER + ORDINAL NUMBER

nâŋsâñ kâw lêm thîi sâôô
the second old book
bân yày lâng thîi sâam
the third big house

3.5.10 NOUN + CLASSIFIER + ADJECTIVE

This pattern is used to distinguish the noun referred to from other members of the same class:

sâa tua mây
the new shirt
nâŋsâñ lêm kâw
the old book

3.5.11 NOUN + NOUN

Some nouns can be used adjectivally to modify the preceding noun:

tâmruât phûu sôç sûân
the investigating police officer
(policeman – one who – investigate)
khâarâatchakaan chán phûu yày
a high-ranking civil servant
(civil servant – rank – senior person)
3.5.12 NOUN + (kh込んだ) + POSSESSOR

In possessive phrases, kh込んだ ('of') is optional and is very frequently omitted:

bān (kh込んだ) chān
บ้าน(ของ)ชื่น
my house

lūuk (kh込んだ) khāw
ลูก(ของ)ชาย
his child
4.1 Personal pronouns: basics

Thai has many more personal pronouns than English; age, social status, gender, the relationship between the speakers, the formality of the situation and individual personality all play a part in helping a Thai to decide the most appropriate way to refer to him/herself and address and refer to others in any situation.

Kin terms (aunt, older brother), status/occupation terms (teacher, doctor) and personal names or nicknames are also commonly used as personal pronouns.

As a starting point for learners, the personal pronoun system can be simplified to the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pronoun</th>
<th>Thai</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>phōm</td>
<td>ผม</td>
<td>I/me (male)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chán</td>
<td>ฉัน</td>
<td>I/me (female; informal)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dichán</td>
<td>ดิฉัน</td>
<td>I/me (female; formal)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>raw</td>
<td>เรา</td>
<td>we/us</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>khun</td>
<td>คุณ</td>
<td>you (sing. and plur.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thān</td>
<td>ท่าน</td>
<td>you (sing. and plur.); he/him, she/her, they/them. To address or refer to people of significantly higher social status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>khāw</td>
<td>เข้า</td>
<td>he/him; she/her; they/them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>man</td>
<td>มัน</td>
<td>it</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Note that male and female speakers use a different word for ‘I/me’, while a single third person pronoun in Thai covers ‘he/him’, ‘she/her’, ‘they/them’. Usage of these and other pronouns is discussed in more detail in the next section.

Pronouns have a single form for subject and object:

\[ \text{phôm ช่อง khâw} \]
I like him/her/them.

\[ \text{khâw ช่อง phôm} \]
He/she/they like(s) me.

The plural reference of a pronoun can be clarified or made explicit by (a) a number or other quantifier expression or (b) the pluralizer word phûak (‘group’):

\[ \text{raw สาม khon} \]
the three of us

\[ \text{khun thâง sàng (khon)} \]
the two/both of you

\[ \text{khâw thâng lāay} \]
all of them

\[ \text{phûak raw} \]
we, us, ‘us lot’

Pronouns are frequently omitted when it is clear from the context who is speaking, being addressed or being referred to:

\[ \text{pay phûng nîi} \]
I'm/we're/he's/she's/they're going tomorrow. (lit. go tomorrow)

\[ \text{ช่อง máy?} \]
Do you/do they/does he/she like it? (lit. like + question particle)
In these and many of the other examples in this book, an arbitrary choice of pronoun is supplied in the English translation. Since pronouns reflect relative status and intimacy, a speaker can, by omission, avoid the possibility of using an inappropriate pronoun. But the omission of pronouns is not simply a strategy for the cautious to avoid linguistic *faux pas*; it is also a means of denying or avoiding the behavioural or attitudinal expectations of intimacy or deference implicit in the use of any pronoun.

### 4.1.1 More personal pronouns

Thai will use a much wider range of pronouns than those given in the previous section. Some of these are given below with an indication of whether they are specifically male (M) or female (F) pronouns and the context in which they are used; certain first person pronouns are normally ‘paired’ with a specific second person pronoun. Note that some pronouns (e.g. THAN and THAO) function as both second and third person pronouns:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pronoun</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>phôm</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>1st person; general pronoun that can be used in most situations, ranging from polite to intimate; not used with young children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kraphôm</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>1st person; highly deferential.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dichán</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>1st person; very formal, often avoided because it creates distance between speaker and addressee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chán</td>
<td>M/F</td>
<td>1st person; commonly used by female speakers as a less formal, more friendly variant of dichán; also used by males as an expression of intimacy, when it is paired with thao, and when speaking to children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>khâaphacâw</td>
<td>M/F</td>
<td>1st person pronoun used formally in public statements and official documents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>raw</td>
<td>M/F</td>
<td>1st person plural; also used as 1st person singular pronoun in informal speech by both males and females.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pronouns</td>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>1st/2nd person pronoun used by children talking to adults; literally means 'rat'; used by girls and young women to superiors, for example, female students to teachers, secretaries to bosses, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nûu</td>
<td>หญ ้</td>
<td>M/F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kuu</td>
<td>ภู</td>
<td>M/F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>úà</td>
<td>อี</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>khâa</td>
<td>ชาย</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ay</td>
<td>ไอ</td>
<td>M/F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kan</td>
<td>กัน</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>khun</td>
<td>คุณ</td>
<td>M/F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thàn</td>
<td>ทาน</td>
<td>M/F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thôó</td>
<td>เธอ</td>
<td>M/F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1st person pronoun used mainly by males as a male-bonding pronoun in informal situations, such as drinking and brothel visits; also used to show anger; paired with มณี (มณี).

1st person pronoun, from Teochiu dialect of Chinese; used mainly by males with close friends as an informal pronoun; paired with หลั่ (หลั่).

1st person pronoun; used mainly by males with close friends as an informal pronoun; paired with อ (อ).

1st person pronoun; from English 'I'; informal, paired with ยู (ยู).

1st person pronoun; used among close male friends; paired with เด (เด).

2nd person, sing. and plur.; polite, formal use among equals; also used as a polite title before names, kin terms and certain occupations.

2nd/3rd person, sing. and plur.; to address or refer to people of significantly higher social status; also used as a deferential title with certain high status positions.

2nd/3rd person, sing. and plur.; as a 2nd person pronoun it is paired with ichten and signals a relationship of closeness; as a 3rd person pronoun it usually refers to a female.
4.1.2 Kin terms as personal pronouns

Kin terms are commonly used as pronouns. A father, for example, will refer to himself as ผู้พ่อ (‘father’) rather than ต่อ (‘I’) when talking to his son and address his son as ลูก (‘child’) rather than คุณ (‘you’):

**ผู้พ่อไม่ชอบ**

I (father speaking) don’t like it.

**ลูกไปไหน?**

Where are you (parent addressing child) going?

Kin terms can be used as first, second or third person pronouns; thus, depending on the context, the sentence ผู้พ่อม่วงเหลือง can mean (a) I (father speaking) am drunk; (b) You (addressing father) are drunk; or (c) He (referring to father) is drunk.

The use of kin terms extends to include those who are not blood relations; by addressing an elderly man as ลุง (‘uncle’) or a friend or colleague as พี่ (‘older brother/sister’) the speaker immediately creates an atmosphere of congeniality. Thus พี่ has a particularly wide range of use, which includes wives addressing their husbands, service-industry workers addressing customers and complete strangers striking up a conversation with someone older.
Kin terms are often followed by personal names or nicknames (see 4.1.3). They can also be preceded by the polite title khun as a sign of further respect; thus children may address and refer to their parents as khun phó and khun mêe (or collectively, as khun phó khun mêe) and address a younger friend of their father as khun aa (‘uncle/aunt’).

The kin terms most commonly used as personal pronouns are:

- phó  
  father

- mê  
  mother

- phói  
  older brother/sister

- nhammad  
  younger brother/sister

- lūuk  
  child

- lāan  
  grandchild; niece/nephew

- pāa  
  aunt (older sister of parents)

- luq  
  uncle (older brother of parents)

- nāa  
  aunt/uncle (younger brother/sister of mother)

- aa  
  aunt/uncle (younger brother/sister of father)

- pūu  
  grandfather (father’s father)

- yāa  
  grandmother (father’s mother)

- taa  
  grandfather (mother’s father)

- yaay  
  grandmother (mother’s mother)

### 4.1.3  Personal names as personal pronouns

Personal names or nicknames are also commonly used as personal pronouns. Using one’s name or more commonly, nickname instead of an ‘I’ word is characteristic of female speech but much less common among men. When used as second or third person pronouns, names and nicknames can be preceded by khun or a kin term, such as phói, as a sign of deference:

tyclopedia: sâap khâ  
(Toi speaking) don’t know.
Are you (addressing Suwannee) free?

(Khun) Uan has gone home.

Is (older sister) Su going too?

4.1.4 Occupation and status terms as personal pronouns

A number of occupation terms are commonly used instead of pronouns. In the medical and education worlds the following occupation terms are used not only as second or third person pronouns, when addressing or referring to individuals, but also as first person pronouns to mean ‘I’:

- **aacaan** อาจารย์  teacher, university lecturer
- **khruu** ครู  teacher
- **môo** หมอ  doctor
- **phayabaan** ผญบาล  nurse

Note that when addressing teachers or doctors, the polite title **khun** commonly precedes **khruu** and **môo**.

Taxi drivers, however, do not refer to themselves as **thêksii**; the following occupation terms are used only as second and third person pronouns:

- **krapâw** กระจ่าง  bus conductor
- **sâamliôo** สามล้อ  pedicab driver
- **thêksii** แท็กซี่  taxi driver
- **tûk tûk** ดูกลูก  motorized pedicab driver

The occupants of certain high-ranking positions, such as ambassadors, director generals, rectors, ministers and prime ministers are often addressed and referred to using the deferential title **thân** before their position, or an abbreviated form of it:

- **thân thûut** ท่านทูต  Ambassador
- **thân âthibôdiî** ท่านอธิบดี  Director General
Monks and monarchs: sacred pronouns

When speaking to monks or royalty, further complicated sets of pronouns are used, which vary according to the ecclesiastical or royal rank of the individual. The learner needs to be aware that an ordinary monk will address a non-monk as yoom and will refer to himself as àattamaa. The non-monk should use the polite formal first person pronouns phôm, (males) or dichán (females) and address or refer to the monk as lûaq phîí or lûaq taa (for older monks), lûaq phi or lûaq náa (for younger monks), or simply by the deferential second person pronoun, thán:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pronoun</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Usage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>àattamaa</td>
<td>أنا</td>
<td>(monk speaking)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yoom</td>
<td>คุณ</td>
<td>you (monk speaking)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lûaq phîí</td>
<td>คุณ/คุณหญิง</td>
<td>you/he (layman addressing/referring to a monk)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lûaq phi</td>
<td>คุณ/คุณหญิง</td>
<td>you (layman addressing/referring to a monk)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Using the complex system of royal pronouns correctly is a daunting prospect even for the vast majority of educated Thais. At the simplest level, one should refer to oneself as khâaphraphútthacâw (‘Your Majesty’s servant’) when addressing the King or other high-ranking members of royalty, and use tàayfaalaoçthúliiphrabàat as a second person pronoun to the King and tàayfaalaoçphrabàat to other high-ranking members of royalty; both terms can be translated as ‘dust under sole of royal foot’. Members of royalty, unlike monks, do not use special pronouns when talking to ordinary people.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pronoun</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Usage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>khâaphraphútthacâw</td>
<td>匣子รัธาคภิ</td>
<td>I (to King)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tàayfaalaoçthúliiphrabàat</td>
<td>匣子รัธาคภิ</td>
<td>you (to King)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tàayfaalaoçphrabàat</td>
<td>匣子รัธาคภิ</td>
<td>you (to high-ranking royalty)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reflexive pronouns

The reflexive pronoun, tua ('body') is used with first, second and third persons. It occurs in such verbs as:

- **ciam tua** เจียมตัว to be self-effacing
- **khāay tua** ขายตัว to sell oneself
- **khayāay tua** ขายยังตัว to expand
- **khōo tua** ชอบตัว to excuse oneself
- **lēn tua** เล่นตัว to play hard to get
- **l̂ɔm tua** ล้มตัว to forget oneself
- **prāp tua** ปรับตัว to adapt oneself
- **rūu tua** รู้ตัว to be aware
- **sanhā tua** เสนอตัว to put oneself forward
- **sīa tua** เสียตัว to lose one’s virginity
- **sīa salà tua** เสียสมชาติ to sacrifice oneself
- **sōn tua** สอบตัว to hide oneself
- **tēŋ tua** แต่งตัว to get dressed
- **triam tua** เตรียมตัว to prepare oneself
- **thōc tua** ทองตัว to be self-effacing
- **thōu tua** ทองตัว to be aloof

The verb ‘to kill oneself/commit suicide’ is irregular, translating literally as ‘kill – body/self – dead’:

- **khāa tua taay** ฆ่าตัวตาย to commit suicide

For a smaller category of verbs, the reflexive pronoun must be followed by the emphatic pronoun eeŋ ('self'):

- **chūay tua eeŋ** ช่วยตัวเอง to help oneself
- **duu lęe tua eeŋ** ดูแลตัวเอง to look after oneself
- **mānn cay tua eeŋ** มั่นใจตัวเอง to be self-confident
- **mōc tua eeŋ** มองตัวเอง to look at oneself
The idea of doing something ‘by oneself’ uses either ดูย ('by') with ตัวเอง or ดูย ตัวเอง; the latter is less common in speech and carries a slightly formal or literary flavour:

**phôm sâm rõt dûay tua eeŋ**
แปลออกมาด้วยตัวเอง
I mended the car by myself.

**raw tham dûay tua eeŋ**
เราทำด้วยตัวเอง
We did it by ourselves.

**khâw rian dûay ton eeŋ**
เข้าเรียนด้วยตนเอง
He studied by himself.

### 4.3 Emphatic pronoun

The emphatic pronoun eeŋ (‘self’) is used with first, second and third persons; it occurs in the following patterns, each conveying a slightly different shade of emphasis:

#### 4.3.1 PERSONAL PRONOUN + eeŋ + VERB

**phôm eeŋ tham**
ผอนเองทำ
I myself did it.

#### 4.3.2 PERSONAL PRONOUN + VERB + eeŋ

**phôm tham eeŋ**
ผ่านเอง
I did it myself.
4.3.3 PERSONAL PRONOUN + eeŋ + pen khon + VERB

phôm eeŋ pen khon tham
ผมเองเป็นคนทำ
I myself was the one who did it.

4.3.4 tua + PERSONAL PRONOUN + eeŋ + VERB

tua phôm eeŋ tham
tัวผมเองทำ
I myself did it.

eeŋ also occurs after demonstratives to convey the sense of ‘the very same (one)’, ‘precisely’:

phån khon nîi eeŋ
เพื่อนคนนี้เอง
this very friend

wan nán eeŋ
วันนั้นเอง
that very day

dìaw nîi eeŋ
dี๋วันนี้เอง
right now

sâam rông bàat thàwnán eeŋ
สามร้อยบาทเย็นนี้เอง
just three hundred baht

4.4 Reciprocal: ‘each other’

The reciprocal pronoun ‘each other/one another’ is expressed by the pattern SUBJECT + VERB (PHRASE) + kan (‘together’):

kháw rák kan
เขาเรารัก
They love each other.

raw tông chúay kan
เราจะช่วยกัน
We must help one another.
4.5 Possessive pronouns

The possessive pronouns ‘mine’, ‘yours’, ‘his’, etc. are formed using khować (‘of’) + PERSONAL PRONOUN:

khować chán
จองหนิน
Mine.

khować khun sūay
จองคุณส่าย
Yours is pretty.

rót nán khować kháw
รถนั่นของเข้า
That car is his.

4.6 Demonstrative pronouns

There are three demonstrative pronouns, nii (‘this one’), nán (‘that one’) and nòon – sometimes pronounced nûun – (‘that one over there’):

nii mây sūay
นี่ไม่สวย
This one isn’t pretty.

nòon khować khray?
โน่นของใคร
Whose is that one over there?

Demonstrative pronouns also occur in these common idiomatic expressions:

nii yaggay
นี่ยังไง
Here you are (when giving someone something).

nán ná si
นั่นนะสิ
Exactly! That’s right!

tīr nán lè
แต่นั้นแหละ
even so; nevertheless
Interrogative pronouns

For the use of interrogative pronouns (listed below) in questions, see 12.2:

- khray? ใคร  who?
- aray? อะไร  what?
- mûarây? เมื่อไร  when?
- thîi này? ที่ไหน  where?
- này? ไหน  which?
- yaŋgay? อย่างไร  how?
- thâwrây? เท่าไร  how much?

Indefinite pronouns

Interrogative pronouns also act as the indefinite pronouns, 'somebody', 'something', 'somewhere', etc.

4.8.1 ‘Somebody’, ‘anybody’, ‘nobody’

khray as an indefinite pronoun means ‘somebody’, ‘anybody’, ‘whoever’;
mây mii khray (‘there is not anyone’) means ‘nobody’:

phôm khuy kàp khray khon nûŋ
ผมขุ่นใครคนหนึ่ง
I chatted to somebody.

chán mây dây phop khray
ฉันไม่ได้พบใคร
I didn’t meet anybody.

mii khray ca kin mây?
มีใครกินไหม
Is anybody going to eat?

khray sèt pay dâay
ใครสิ้นรียิ่งไปได้
Whoever is finished can go.
Nobody knows.

4.8.2 ‘Something’, ‘anything’, ‘nothing’

*aray* as an indefinite pronoun means ‘something’, ‘anything’, ‘whatever’, *mây mii aray* ('there is not anything') means ‘nothing’:

khâw yàak sêu aray bâaŋ yàaŋ
She wants to buy something.

khun yàak kin aray máy?
Do you want to eat anything?

phôm mây dây phûut aray
I didn’t say anything.

mây mii aray nâa sôn cay
There is nothing interesting.

4.8.3 ‘Whenever’

*muaray* as an indefinite pronoun means ‘whenever’; it can occur either before or after the verb in the first clause:

kin mûaray kô thông sia
Whenever I eat it, I get diarrhoea.

mûarây wâa thoo maa hâa
Whenever you are free, phone me.

4.8.4 ‘Somewhere’, ‘anywhere’, ‘nowhere’

*thîi näy* as an indefinite pronoun means ‘somewhere’, ‘anywhere’, ‘wherever’; note that when it immediately follows the verb *pay* (‘to go’) the word *thîi* is frequently dropped:

khân yàak thîi näy sêu aray bâaŋ yàaŋ
She wants to go somewhere.

khun yàak kî thîi näy kinh aray máy?
Do you want to eat anywhere?

phôm mây dây phûut thîi näy
I didn’t say anywhere.

mây mii thîi näy nêa sôn cay
There is nowhere interesting.
I want to go and live somewhere quietish.

Do you want to go anywhere?

I don’t want to go anywhere.

**4.8.5 ‘Whichever’**

 nåy as an indefinite pronoun means ‘whichever one’; it always follows a classifier and normally occurs with kō dáay (4.8.7):

phôm ca sêu an nåy kō dáay thii máy phẹt

I’ll buy whichever one is not expensive.

**4.8.6 ‘However’**

yaŋŋay as an indefinite pronoun means ‘however’, ‘whatever way’; it always follows a verb:

tham yaŋŋay kō phlāat thûk thii

However I do it, I always make a mistake.

**4.8.7 Indefinite pronouns with kō dāay**

Indefinite pronouns occur before kō dāay to show amenability or indifference, as in expressions such as ‘whoever/whenever/whatever you like’. Note that the vowel in dāay is long although it is written in Thai script as a short vowel:

sàŋ aray kō dāay

Order whatever you like.
bôn khray kô dâay บอกใครก็ได้
Tell whoever you like.

raw phóp kan mëarây kô dâay  เราพบกันเมื่อไรก็ได้
We’ll meet whenever you like.

raw pay nây kô dâay เราไปไหนก็ได้
We can go anywhere you like.

sôu an nây kô dâay ซื้ออยู่ไหนก็ได้
Buy whichever one you like.

kin yàmây kô dâay กินอย่างไรก็ได้
You can eat it however you like.

hây thâwrây kô dâay ให้เท่าไรก็ได้
You can give however much you like.

4.9 Relative pronouns

A single relative pronoun thîi is used to refer to people, places and things:

kháw pen khon thîi càay เขาเป็นคนที่จ่าย
He is the one who paid.

bân thîi kháw yùu lék บ้านที่เขาอยู่เล็ก
The house where they live is small.

klûay thîi kháw sôu pheèë กล้วยที่เขาซื้อเพื่อ
The bananas which she bought are expensive.

mû can be used interchangeably with thîi but it is a rather formal-sounding word and much less common in spoken Thai:

chââng mû mìi sôu praphêët . . . ช้างมีสองประเภท . . .
Elephants, of which there are two kinds, . . .
an also functions rather like a relative pronoun, in a formal, stylised linking of noun and adjective (or stative verb); it cannot link a noun and an action verb:

\[ \text{róṭ} \text{ an } \text{sūy } \eta\text{am} \]
锣安斯尤安
a beautiful car

\[ \text{lōok} \text{ an } \text{kwāg } \text{yây} \]
锣安挎挨宜
the wide world

\[ \eta\text{aan} \text{ an } \text{nàk } \text{nása} \]
额安额拿那
a heavy task
Thai is a verb-oriented language, often using verbs where English uses nouns (3.3.3.5) or prepositions. Verbs have a single form: they are not inflected for number or tense. Thus pay can mean ‘go’, ‘went’, ‘will go’, etc.; ambiguity can be avoided by the addition of time expressions, such as ‘yesterday’ or ‘next week’ or auxiliary verbs and particles (5.3), but often the context alone is sufficient to clarify the situation. A common feature of Thai is verb serialization (5.13).

5.1 The verb ‘to be’

Thai uses several different verbs to translate English ‘is/are’, ‘was/were’, etc; the most important are pen, khuu, mii and yuu.

5.1.1 pen

When pen means ‘to be’ it is always followed by a noun or noun phrase; it cannot be followed by an adjective (see 5.2):

kháw pen pháan  
เขาเป็นเพื่อน  
He is a friend.

máat pen khon thay  
แม่เป็นคนไทย  
My mother is Thai.

phií siaw pen khruu  
พี่สาวเป็นครู  
Her sister is a teacher.
When pen means ‘to be’, unlike other verbs, it cannot be negated by placing the negative word mây immediately before it. Instead, the negative form ‘is not’ is either mây chây or mây dây pen; of these, the former is neutral in tone, while the latter conveys the sense of contradicting a spoken or unspoken assumption:

kháw mây chây khon ameerikan
He isn’t American.

mây chây phôm
It wasn’t me.

kháw mây dây pen phîgan
He’s not a friend.

For a summary of different usages of pen, see Appendix 2.

5.1.2  khoû

khoû means ‘is equal to’ or ‘namely’ and it is used when giving explanations, clarifications and definitions; it is also used as a hesitation device. khoû does not occur in the negative:

sâam bûak kàp sîi khoû cêt
Three plus four is seven.

mii panhâa sâam yàa khoû . . .
There are three problems, namely . . .

kham muang khoû phaasãa thîi khoon chiangmây phûut
‘Kham Muang’ is the language people in Chiangmai speak.

khoû yàa khoû cêt
It’s like this, right!
In some instances, such as introductions and identifying people in photographs, pen and khuu are interchangeable:

nîi khusu/pen sâamii chân
นี้คือสามี
This is my husband.

sômchaay pen/khuu khray?
สมชายคือใคร
Who is Somchai?

Note, however, that pen, not khuu, is used in the contrastive construction mão chây ..., pen ... (‘it’s not ..., it’s ...’):

mão chây yàa nân, pen yàa nîi
ไม่เหมือนนั้น เป็นอย่างนี้
It’s not like that, it’s like this.

mão chây fhèen pen nhóg sàaw
ไม่ใช่แฟน เป็นน้องสาว
She is not his girlfriend. She is his younger sister.

5.1.3 mii

mii (‘to have’) is also used to translate ‘there is/there are’; often, especially in written Thai, it occurs after the topic (9.1):

mii nák rian sìi r óó khon
มีนักเรียนสี่คน
There are four hundred pupils.

mão mii weelaa
ไม่มีเวลา
There isn’t time.

khon thay thîi phûut phaasåa farañsëet dáay dîi mii nhóg
คนไทยที่พูดภาษาฝรั่งเศสได้มีน้อย
There are few Thais who can speak French well.

(people – Thai – who – speak – language – French – can – well – there – are – few)
5.1.4  **yùu**

*yùu* (‘to be situated at’) is used to describe the location of things:

**bāan khun yùu thîi nāy?**
บ้านคุณอยู่ที่ไหน
Where is your house?

**yùu nāy tūu yen**
อยู่ในตู้เย็น
It’s in the fridge.

5.2  **Stative verbs**

Adjectives in Thai also function as stative verbs (verbs which describe a state rather than an action). Thus *lék* is both the adjective ‘small’ and the verb ‘to be small’:

**bāan lék**
บ้านเล็ก
a small house/The house is small.

**sàa sūay**
เสื้อสวย
a pretty blouse/The blouse is pretty.

**aahāan phetqì**
อาหารแพง
expensive food/The food is expensive.

Adjectives occur only rarely with the verb *pen* (‘to be’); the following idiomatic expressions are exceptional:

**pen hùa** เบื้องหัว to be concerned

**pen sòot** เบื้องสือ to be single, unmarried

**pen yày** เบื้องใหญ่ to be in charge of

5.3  **Verb compounds**

Many verbs, such as *tèng ńaan* (‘to get married’), are made up of two words and are called verb compounds. Verb compounds in Thai can consist of (a) VERB + NOUN; (b) NOUN + VERB; or (c) VERB + VERB.
5.3.1 VERB + NOUN

khâw cay เข้าใจ to understand (to enter + heart)
dii cay ดีใจ to be happy (good + heart)
tɛŋ ηaan แต่งงาน to marry/be married (to arrange + work/party)
tham ηaan ทำงาน to work (to do + work)

5.3.2 NOUN + VERB

cay dii ใจดี to be kind (heart + good)
cay yen ใจเย็น to be calm (heart + cool)
pàak râay ปากร้าย to be malicious (mouth + bad)
hùa khîŋ หัวแข็ง to be stubborn (head + hard)

5.3.3 VERB + VERB

plîan plîaj เปลี่ยนแปลง to change (change + change)
priap thîap เปรียบเทียบ to compare (compare + compare)
òt yàak อดอยาก to be starving (go without + want)
duu lîs เดินเลย to look after (see + watch)
tôk lôŋ ตกลง to agree (fall + descend)
dûaŋ lîn เดินเล่น to go for a walk (walk + play)
phûut lîn พูดเล่น to joke (speak + play)

Verb compounds are negated by the pattern mây + VERB COMPOUND (11.1):

phôm mây priap thîap
ผมไม่เปรียบเทียบ
I'm not comparing.

5.4 Resultative verbs

A number of verbs, such as nûn lâp ‘to sleep’ (lie down + sleep) and mûaŋ hên ‘to see’ (look at + see) resemble verb compounds as they consist
of two verbs. They differ in that the second verb describes a state that results from the action of the first verb; thus, sleep results from lying down and seeing from looking. Verb compounds and verb + resultative verb constructions are negated differently (11.1, 11.2).

làp and hên occur as resultative verbs only with màan and màk respectively. Other verbs have a much less restricted role as resultative verbs. These include the completive verbs, sêt ('to finish'), còp ('to complete'), mùt ('to be all used up/gone'), the directional verbs khùn ('to rise'), loŋ ('to descend'), khâw ('to enter') and òòk ('to leave') (see 5.5), and words such as than ('to be in time') and thùuk ('to be correct, accurate').

- **chán tham aahān sêt lëew**
  ฉันทำอาหารเสร็จแล้ว
  I've finished cooking.

- **khâw àan náŋsōŋ còp lëew**
  เขาถามหนึ่งสิ้นจบแล้ว
  He's finished the book.

- **phôm chây ɡn mût lëew**
  ผมใช้เงินหมดแล้ว
  I've spent all my money.

- **khun ca pay than máy?**
  คุณจะไปที่ไหน?
  Will you get there in time?

Resultative verbs are negated by the pattern, VERB (PHRASE) + máy + RESULTATIVE VERB (11.2):

- **chán m tên aray mày hên**
  ฉันมองอะไรไม่เห็น
  I can't see anything.

5.5 **Directional verbs**

The verbs pay ('to go') and maa ('to come') are used after a number of verbs or verb phrases as ‘direction markers’ to indicate whether the action of the verb is directed towards or away from the speaker. They commonly follow such verbs as daan ('to walk'), klâp ('to return'), yâay ('to move home'), thoor(sap) ('to telephone'), aw/phaa ('to take'), plian ('to
change’), and sōŋ (‘to send’). Some verbs conveying a sense of loss, such as hāy (‘to disappear’) and luum (‘to forget’) occur only with pay:

raw yáay maa yúu kruŋ théep táŋ têe chán yāŋ dêk
We moved (here) to Bangkok when I was still a child.

wan sàw nàa raw cà khàp rót pay hūa hīn
Next Saturday we’ll drive to Hua Hin.

phrû nii khâw cà aw nàŋsoŋ maa hây duu
Tomorrow he’ll bring the book to show me.

khun cà phaa lûuk sàw pay dûay lîw?
You’re taking your daughter with you, then?

chán lûem pay lîw
I’ve forgotten.

mâa cháaw nii chán thoo(rasàp) pay khûy kàp phîi sàw
I phoned your sister this morning.

Note, however, that in the expression, ‘I’ll ring you back’, the directional verb is maa:

yen yen chán ca thoo(rasàp) maa mây
I’ll ring you back in the evening.

pay and maa sometimes occur in the pattern VERB + pay + VERB + maa, where the same verb is repeated, to convey the idea of the action occurring repetitively back and forth:

phôm dêen pay dêen maa sip nàathii
I walked back and forth for ten minutes.

raw khûy pay khûy maa thâng khwâen
We chatted (back and forth) all night long.

khâw chêep plian pay plian maa
He likes chopping and changing.
Other common directional verbs are khun ('to rise'), loŋ ('to descend'), khâw ('to enter') and ñok ('to leave'):

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{khâw piin khun tônmaay} & \quad \text{He climbed up the tree.} \\
\text{chán wîŋ loŋ banday} & \quad \text{I ran down the stairs.} \\
\text{raw dœ̂n khâw hâøng} & \quad \text{We entered the room.} \\
\text{khâw riîp ñok pay} & \quad \text{He hurried out.}
\end{align*}
\]

In negative sentences directional verbs are not negated; note, however, that khun, loŋ, khâw and ñok also function as resultative verbs (11.2):

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{khâw yók mây khun} & \quad \text{He can't lift it.} \\
\text{chán kin mây loŋ} & \quad \text{I can't eat it.} \\
\text{phöm phûut mây ñok} & \quad \text{I can't put it into words.} \\
\text{phöm sây mây khâw} & \quad \text{I can't put it in.}
\end{align*}
\]

5.6 Modal verbs

Modal verbs are auxiliary verbs which express such ideas as possibility, probability, ability, necessity, volition and obligation. Most Thai modal verbs can be followed by the particle ca; they are negated according to one of three different patterns (11.3).
5.6.1  Possibility and probability

The main modal verbs used for expressing possibility and probability are:

- àat (ca) อาจ(จะ)  may/might
- khoŋ (ca) คง(จะ) will probably, sure to
- yĕm (ca) ยอม(จะ) likely to
- mák (ca) มาก(จะ) tends to, usually
- hĕn (ca) เหมือน(จะ) seems that

They all occur before the main verb and are negated by the pattern MODAL VERB (+ ca) + mây + VERB (PHRASE):

- raw àat (ca) pay duu nāŋ เรามาไปดูหนัง
  We may go to see a film.
- kháw khoŋ (ca) mây maa เขาคง(จะ)ไม่มา
  He probably won’t come.

5.6.2  Ability and permission

The word ‘can’ can be translated by three Thai modal verbs – dâay, pen and wāy. All three verbs occur after the main verb and are negated by the pattern VERB (PHRASE) + mây + MODAL VERB.

5.6.2.1  VERB (PHRASE) + dâay

dâay conveys the sense of both ability and permission:

- raw klâp maa phrûŋ nīi dâay เราเดินมาข้างนี้ได้
  We can come back tomorrow.
- phôm chûay kháw mây dâay ผมช่วยเธอไม่ได้
  I can’t help her.
- khūŏ yûm rót khun dâay mây? ขอรถเก็บคุณได้ไหม
  Can I borrow your car?
The following idomatic expressions are also commonly used when talking about possibility:

- **pen pay dâay**  เป็นไปได้  It's possible.
- **pen pay mà́y dâay**  เป็นไปไม่ได้  It's impossible.
- **pen pay dâay mà́y?**  เป็นไปได้มั้ย  Is it possible?

Note that dâay, although written with a short vowel in Thai, is pronounced with a long vowel.

**5.6.2.2 VERB (PHRASE) + pen**

*pen* conveys the sense of knowing how to do something:

- **kháw phûut phaasãa thay pen**  เขาพูดภาษาไทยเป็น  He speaks/can speak Thai.
- **phôm tham aahãan mà́y pen**  ผมทำอาหารเป็น  I can’t cook.
- **khun khàp rót pen mà́y?**  คนขับรถเป็นไหม  Can you drive?

**5.6.2.3 VERB (PHRASE) + wây**

*wây* conveys the sense of being physically able to do something:

- **klay pay chán dën mà́y wây**  ไกลไป ถึงเดินไม่ไหว้  It's too far. I can’t walk.
- **rawa nàk ná yôk wây mà́y?**  วางน้ำตก ยกไปไหม  Be careful, it’s heavy. Can you lift it?

**5.6.3 Necessity: ‘must’ and ‘need’**

Necessity can be expressed by the following modal verbs which all occur before the main verb:

- **(ca) têng**  (ต้อง) must
təŋkaan (ca)  ต้องการ(จะ)  need
campen (ca)  จ้าเป็น(จะ)  necessary to
campen təŋ  จ้าเป็นต้อง  necessary to
təŋkaan (ca), campen (ca) and campen təŋ are negated by the pattern mây + MODAL VERB + VERB (PHRASE).

(c) təŋ can be negated in two ways, but with different meanings: (a) (ca) mây təŋ + VERB (PHRASE) ('there is no need to . . .'); and (b) (ca) təŋ mây + VERB (PHRASE) ('must not . . .'):

khun təŋ chúay kháw nòy
คุณต้องช่วยเขาหน่อย
You must help him a bit.

raw təŋ mây lèrsom
เราต้องไม่ลืม
We must not forget.

phôm mây təŋ pay
ผมไม่ต้องไป
There's no need for me to go/I don't need to go.

mây təŋ lák
ไม่ต้องหัก
There's no need. (when declining an offer)

mây campen
ไม่จำเป็น
It's not necessary.

campen təŋ tham hãy sèt wan níi
จำเป็นต้องที่จะเสร็จวันนี้
It's necessary to finish it today.

khun mây campen təŋ càay ɣón
คุณไม่จำเป็นต้องจ่ายเงิน
There's no need for you to pay any money.

5.6.4  Obligation

Obligation is expressed by khuan (ca) (‘should/ought’) or nàa (ca) (‘should/ought’) before the main verb. Both are most commonly negated by the pattern mây + MODAL VERB (+ ca) + VERB (PHRASE):
You should’ve told me in advance.

We ought not to return late.

The idea of wanting to do something is expressed by yàak (ca) (‘want to, would like to’) which occurs before the main verb. Negative sentences follow the pattern mây + yàak (ca) + VERB (PHRASE):

chán yàak (ca) klàp bân
I’d like to go home.

kháw mây yàak khuy kàp phôm
She doesn’t want to talk to me.

Whether an action occurs in the future or the past (time), and whether it is a completed, continuous, or habitual action (aspect), can, when necessary, be clarified by using auxiliary verbs or particles.

Actions that occur in the future can be described using the pattern ca + VERB (PHRASE):

phrûn nîi kháw ca mây maa
Tomorrow he won’t come.

raw ca pay kô samûy
We shall go to Koh Samui.
**5.7.2 Completed actions: VERB (PHRASE) + ₁éew**

**Attained states: STATIVE VERB + ₁éew**

Completed actions can be described by the pattern VERB (PHRASE) + ₁éew (‘already’):

**kháw pay tham ₂aan ₁éew**
เข้าไปทำงานแล้ว
He has gone to work.

**raw kin khâaw ₁éew**
เรานกข้าวแล้ว
We have eaten already.

**rót mee maa ₁éew**
รถถึงแล้ว
The train has arrived/Here comes the train.

₁éew occurs with stative verbs to indicate that the specified state or condition has been attained:

**thùuk ₁éew**
ถูกแล้ว
That's correct.

**phòc ₁éew**
พอแล้ว
That's enough.

**dii ₁éew**
ดีแล้ว
That's fine.

Note that some non-stative verbs also occur with ₁éew to convey the sense of a state being attained:

**khâw çáy ₁éew**
เข้าใจแล้ว
(Now) I understand.

**fôn tòk ₁éew**
ฝนตกแล้ว
It's (started) raining.
5.7.3 **Continuous actions: kamlaŋ + VERB (PHRASE) + yùu**

Continuous actions, whether in the present or past, can be described by the pattern kamlaŋ + VERB (PHRASE) + yùu:

chan kamlaŋ ñaan nàggəŋe yùu
นั่นกำลังอ่านหนังสืออยู่
I am/was reading.

Alternatively, either yùu or kamlaŋ may be dropped:

5.7.3.1 **kamlaŋ + VERB (PHRASE)**

raw kamlaŋ ñin khâaw
เรากำลังกินข้าว
We are/were eating.

5.7.3.2 **VERB (PHRASE) + yùu**

khâw duu thi thii yùu
เข้าดูทีวี
He is/was watching TV.

5.7.4 **Actions about to happen: kamlaŋ ca + VERB (PHRASE)**

Actions about to happen, whether in the immediate future or when narrating events in the past, are described by the pattern kamlaŋ ca + VERB (PHRASE):

mëê kamlaŋ ca triam aahāan
แม่กำลังจะเตรียมอาหาร
Mum is/was about to prepare the food.

raw kamlaŋ ca ñin khâaw
เรากำลังจะกินข้าว
We are/were about to eat.

phôm kamlaŋ ca pay
แม่กำลังจะไป
I am/was about to go.
5.7.5 **Actions that have just happened: **phasis + VERB (PHRASE)

Actions that have just happened are described by the pattern phasis + VERB (PHRASE):

- **chan phasis sâr ròt mây**
  ฉันเพิ่งซื้อรถใหม่
  I have just bought a new car.

- **phôm phasis hèn khâw**
  ผมเพิ่งเห็น
  I have just seen him.

- **khâw phasis rûu**
  เขาเพิ่งรู้
  He has just found out/learned.

5.7.6 **Single and habitual actions in the past: **khaoy + VERB (PHRASE)

The pattern khaoy + VERB (PHRASE) is used to describe an action that (a) has occurred on at least one occasion in the past, or (b) that has occurred habitually in the past; it can occur with lêw for added emphasis. When preceded by the negative word mây it means ‘never’ and often occurs in the pattern mây khaoy . . . maa kôm (‘never . . . before’):

- **chan khaoy pay thîaw chiasmây**
  ฉันเคยไปที่เชียงใหม่
  I’ve been to Chiangmai.

- **phôm khaoy duu lêw**
  ผมเคยเห็นแล้ว
  I’ve seen it already

- **raw khaoy yûu thîi kruothêep**
  เราเคยอยู่ที่กรุงเทพ
  We used to live in Bangkok.

- **chan mây khaoy kin thurian**
  ฉันไม่เคยกินทุเรียน
  I’ve never eaten durian.

- **phôm mây khaoy hèn maa kôm**
  ผมเคยเห็นมาก่อน
  I’ve never seen it before.
When khao occurs in questions, it means ‘have you ever . . .?’; a ‘yes’ answer is khao, a ‘no’ answer, mây khao:

khao pay thîaw phuukèt máy?  
Have you ever been to Phuket?

khao/mây khao  
Yes/No.

5.7.7 Negative past tense: mây dây + VERB (PHRASE)

The pattern mây dây + VERB (PHRASE) is used to describe actions that did not take place in the past; it cannot be used with stative verbs:

raw mây dây pay  
We didn’t go.

chán mây dây bock khâw  
I didn’t tell him.

Note that it should not be assumed that the positive past tense is formed by dây + VERB (PHRASE); this pattern occurs only rarely.

For other uses of mây dây + VERB (PHRASE), see 5.1.1, 11.4.

5.7.8 past continuous tense: VERB (PHRASE) + maa + (dâay) + TIME EXPRESSION + lêew

Actions that began in the past and continue through to the present can be described by the pattern, VERB (PHRASE) + maa + (dâay) + TIME EXPRESSION + lêew:

raw nâñ gît fay maa (dâay) sêo chûamoong lêew  
We have been sitting on the train for two hours.

khâw rian phàasa thay maa (dâay) lây pîi lêew  
He has been studying Thai for many years.

For use of dâay to express duration of time, see Appendix 2.
5.7.9 Changed states: STATIVE VERB + kh̀n/loŋ

The verbs kh̀n (‘to ascend’) and loŋ (‘to descend’) are used with pairs of contrasting stative verbs to indicate an increase or decrease in state; they are similar to English ‘up’ in ‘heat up’, ‘speed up’, etc. and ‘down’ in ‘cool down’, ‘slow down’, etc.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ûan kh̀n} & \quad \text{อ้วนขึ้น} \quad \text{to get fatter} & \text{phòm loŋ} & \quad \text{ผอมลง} \quad \text{to slim down} \\
\text{rew kh̀n} & \quad \text{เร็วขึ้น} \quad \text{to speed up} & \text{cháa loŋ} & \quad \text{ช้าลง} \quad \text{to slow down} \\
\text{dìi kh̀n} & \quad \text{ดีขึ้น} \quad \text{to improve} & \text{yèe loŋ} & \quad \text{แย่ลง} \quad \text{to worsen} \\
\text{màak kh̀n} & \quad \text{มากขึ้น} \quad \text{to increase} & \text{nîy loŋ} & \quad \text{น้อยลง} \quad \text{to decrease}
\end{align*}
\]

Note that kh̀n and loŋ also occur with verbs of motion as direction markers (5.5).

5.7.10 VERB (PHRASE) + wáy

The verb wáy occurs after a verb of action, or verb phrase, to convey the idea that the action is being done for future use or reference:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{chàn ca kèp wáy kin phrû nîi} & \quad \text{หรี่จะเก็บไว้กินพรุ่งนี้} \quad \text{I'll keep it to eat tomorrow.} \\
\text{fàak kh̀n wáy thú nîi dàay máy?} & \quad \text{ฝากของให้นี้ให้คืน} \quad \text{Can I leave my things here?} \\
\text{raw còc wáy lêw} & \quad \text{เราจองตั๋วไปแล้ว} \quad \text{We've booked tickets already.} \\
\text{khàw sùm wáy àan wan láŋ} & \quad \text{เขาซื้อหนังวันหลัง} \quad \text{He bought it to read another day.} \\
\text{aw wáy wan láŋ} & \quad \text{เอาไว้วันหลัง} \quad \text{Let's put it off to another day.}
\end{align*}
\]
5.7.11 VERB (PHRASE) + aw

The verb aw occurs after a verb of action or verb phrase to convey the idea that the subject is doing something for himself; often aw is followed by wáy. The beginner is best advised to simply memorise examples from the speech of native speakers rather than to attempt to create sentences of their own using this pattern.

phôm triam aw wáy lêew
ผมเตรียมเอาไว้แล้ว
I’ve prepared things.

khun kèp aw wáy lêew chây máy?
คุณเก็บเอาไว้แล้วใช่ไหม?
You’ve kept it, right?

chán khít aw eeŋ
ฉันคิดเอง
I thought so myself.

daw aw sí khá
เดาเอาวิ่ง
Have a guess!

5.7.12 VERB (PHRASE) + sǐa/sá

sǐa, often shortened to sá, occurs widely after a verb phrase; it cannot be translated and is extremely difficult for the foreign learner to use correctly other than in pre-memorised expressions. One sense of sǐa/sá is 'too bad it happened that way':

kháw maa sāay pay sá lêew
เขามาสายไปสายแล้ว
He came too late.

raw àat ca rúucák kan dii koon pay sá lêew
เราอยากจะกันเดี๋ยวก่อนไปสายแล้ว
Maybe we know each other too well.

kham wâa sǐa kháw cây yâak sá dúay
คำว่า เสีย เขาใจยากเสียดาย
The word sǐa is difficult to understand.

73
It also occurs in the pattern `mûarây ca + VERB (PHRASE) + sá thii`, to show irritation or impatience that something has not happened:

\[
mûarây ca sét sá thii? \\
\text{เมื่อไรจะเสร็จสิ้นที่} \\
\text{When are you going to be finished?}
\]

\[
mûarây fôn ca yût tòk sá thii? \\
\text{เมื่อไหร่จะหยุดตกเลี้ยงที่} \\
\text{When will it stop raining?}
\]

### 5.8 Passives

The passive construction is used much less commonly in Thai than in English. It is generally restricted to sentences with a negative connotation, where the subject is a victim of something unpleasant, such as being beaten, fined, robbed, arrested, criticised, gossiped about, cheated, attacked, shot, and so on. The passive is formed using the passive-marker `thùuk`, in the pattern `SUBJECT + thùuk + (AGENT) + VERB (PHRASE):

\[
\text{chán thùuk yuŋ kàt} \\
\text{ฉันถูกจับ} \\
\text{I've been bitten by a mosquito.}
\]

\[
\text{maalii thùuk rót chon} \\
\text{มาลีถูกขวาง} \\
\text{Malee was hit by a car.}
\]

\[
\text{kháw thùuk tamrùat càp} \\
\text{เขาถูกต่าวระวังจับ} \\
\text{He was arrested by a policeman.}
\]

\[
\text{raw thùuk khamooy} \\
\text{เราถูกขโมย} \\
\text{We were robbed.}
\]

\[
\text{phèan thùuk yìn taay} \\
\text{เพื่อนถูกยิงตาย} \\
\text{My friend was shot dead.}
\]

Much less common than `thùuk`, but used identically is the passive-marker `doon`:

\[
\text{kháw doon tìi} \\
\text{เขาโดนเดี่ย} \\
\text{He was beaten.}
\]
English passive sentences that carry a neutral or positive connotation can often be rendered by the pattern SUBJECT + dây ráp (‘received’) + VERB (PHRASE):

raw dây ráp chàon pay . . .
We were invited to . . .

phòm dây ráp anûyaaat . . .
I was permitted to . . .

khâw dây ráp lêak pen . . .
He was chosen to be . . .

The pattern SUBJECT + dây ráp + NOUN is also commonly translated by the passive in English:

khâw dây ráp itthiphon càak . . .
He was influenced by . . .

khâw dây ráp kaan sêksaa càak ameerika
He was educated in America.

khôô sanhôô dây ráp khwaam hên chôôp
The proposal was approved.

English passive expressions like ‘it is well known that . . .’, ‘it is generally accepted that . . .’, and so on are formed using the pattern pen thii + VERB + kan + wâa . . .:

pen thii sàap kan düi wâa . . .
It is well known that . . .

pen thii yôom ráp kan dooy thùa pay wàa . . .
It is generally accepted that . . .
Verbs of utterance, mental activity and perception with wâa

Verbs of utterance (‘say, whisper, call’, etc.), mental activity (‘think, remember, hope’, etc.) and perception (‘see, understand, know’, etc.) are followed by wâa + SUBORDINATE CLAUSE. wâa is similar in function to English ‘that’ (say that, think that, know that), but unlike ‘that’, which is optional in English, wâa should, at least in the early stages of learning, be regarded as compulsory:

khít wâa ca klàp phrû nîi
I think (that) I’ll return tomorrow.

wàñ wâa ca mây phèt kóñ pay
I hope (that) it’s not too spicy.

rúusèk wâa mây mò
I feel (that) it’s not appropriate.

Some of the most common verbs that are followed by wâa are:

- bòôk บอก to say, tell
- cam dây จำได้ to remember
- chûa เชื่อ to believe
- dây yìn ได้ยิน to hear
- hên เห็น to see, think
- klua ก๊กว to be afraid
- khàw cay เช้าใจ to understand
- khît คิด to think
- nèc cay แน่ใจ to be certain
- pen hùaญ to be concerned, worried
- phûut พูด to say, speak
- rûu รู้ to know (facts) (informal)
- rûusèk รู้สึก to feel
**Verbs of emotion with thii**

Verbs of emotion (‘to be angry, sorry, excited’, etc.) are generally followed by thii + SUBORDINATE CLAUSE. thii is similar in function to English ‘that’ (sorry that, angry that, happy that), but unlike ‘that’, which is optional in English, thii is compulsory:

\[\text{phôm sìa cay thii mây dây pay} \]

I'm sorry (that) I didn't go.

\[\text{kháw kròot thii chán sùr} \]

He's angry (that) I bought it.

\[\text{raw dii cay thii nàa rùn phàan pay léew} \]

We're pleased (that) the hot season is over.

**Causatives**

Causative constructions in Thai are formed using either (a) tham + VERB; (b) háay + VERB (PHRASE); or (c) tham háay + VERB (PHRASE). The nature of of the subject (whether it is human or non-human) and object (whether it is animate or inanimate), and the degree of intention, determine the appropriate construction.

**Subject (human or non-human) + tham + (inanimate object) + verb**

tham (‘to make, do’) combines with a number of verbs, such as tòk (‘to fall’) and hāay (‘to disappear’) to express unintended causation:

\[\text{kháw tham thûay tòk} \]

She dropped the cup.
I've lost the book.

Some common examples of verbs which occur in this pattern are:

- **tham . . . tok** (to fall) ทำ . . . ตก to drop something
- **tham . . . tek** (to be broken) ทำ . . . แตก to break something
- **tham . . . pun** (to be dirty) ทำ . . . เลี้ยง to make something dirty
- **tham . . . sia** (to be spoiled) ทำ . . . เสีย to spoil something
- **tham . . . lon** (to fall) ทำ . . . หล่น to make something fall off
- **tham . . . lut** (to slip loose) ทำ . . . หลุด to let something slip
- **tham . . . hok** (to spill) ทำ . . . หัก to spill something
- **tham . . . hak** (to break off) ทำ . . . หัก to make something break off

**5.11.2 SUBJECT (human) + hay + (animate OBJECT) + VERB (PHRASE)**

*hay* can convey a range of meanings, from the zero coercion of ‘to let someone do something’, to the more forceful ‘to have someone do something’ and ‘to make someone do something’:

- **mẹt hay phöm rian banchii** แม่ให้ผมเรียนบัญชี
  My mother had me study accountancy.

- **kháw hay chán kláp maa duan nàa** เขาให้คนล้มมาดื่มน้ำ
  They got me to come back next month.

- **phốc háy lûuk pay dúay** พ่อให้ลูกไปด้วย
  Father let his children go with him.

*Hay* occurs as the first element in a number of common compound verbs which convey a sense of causation:

- **hay . . . duu** (let/have + see) ให้ . . . ดู to show
- **hay . . . kọt** (let/have + happen) ให้ . . . เกิด to cause, create
- **hay . . . châw** (let/have + rent) ให้ . . . เช่า to let
- **hay . . . yuùm** (let/have + borrow) ให้ . . . ซื้อ to lend
hay khaw duu ngay
ให้เขาเห็น
Show him/let him see.

raw hay phan chaw ban raw
เราพาเพื่อนเข้าบ้านเรา
We let our house to a friend.

phom may hay luuk yamm roth
ผมไม่ให้ลูกเห็น
I don't let my children borrow my car.

Hay may be preceded by another verb specifying the method of causing someone to do something (e.g. by requesting, telling, ordering, etc.). Verbs which commonly precede hay include bok ('to tell'), khao ('to request'), yam ('to allow'), anuyat ('to allow'), sau ('to order'), yawat ('to want to') and tan ('to warn'). Word order in such constructions is SUBJECT (human) + SPECIFYING VERB + hay + (animate OBJECT) + VERB (PHRASE):

phom bok hay khaw suw
ผมบอกให้เขาซื้อ
I told him to buy it.

khaw khao hay chan pay rap
เขากำหนดให้เรากลับมาเร็ว
He asked me to go and collect him.

raw yawat hay khun klap maa rew rew
เรารอเพื่อนคุณกลับมาเร็ว ๆ
We wait for you to come back soon.

chan tan hay khun maa koon weelaa
ฉันเตือนให้คุณมาตอนเวลา
I warned you to come early.

Note, however, the order of object and hay can be reversed with the verbs bok ('to tell'), khao ('to request'), anuyat ('to allow'), sau ('to order') and tan ('to warn'):

phom bok khaw hay suw
ผมบอกให้เขาซื้อ
I told him to buy it.

khaw khao chan hay pay rap
เขาขอผมให้ไปรับ
He asked me to go and collect him.
5.11.3 SUBJECT (human or non-human) + tham hay + (OBJECT) + VERB (PHRASE)

This pattern conveys a sense of clear intention, coercion or non-accidental causation by the subject:

câw nàathîi tham hay phôm sìa weelaa màak
jeam haa thaa thad sii laabak
The official made me waste a lot of time.
aakàat ùn ùn tham hay khâw rúusèk sabaay
aak haa thaa thad sii sii sii sii
Warm weather makes her feel good.
trùat kaan bâan tham hay khruu pùat hûa
trûat khaan thaa thad sii thaa thad sii
Marking homework gives the teacher a headache.

For negative causatives, see 11.9.

5.12 ‘To give’: direct and indirect objects

The order of objects with the verb hay ('to give') is SUBJECT + hay + DIRECT OBJECT (+ kêe) + INDIRECT OBJECT. The preposition kêe ('to, for') is frequently omitted, and in some instances, such as ‘Have you fed the dog yet?’, it must be omitted:

chan hay nangsâw (kêe) khâw
dunñ nei naa sâlo(ge)khà
I gave him the book.
phôo hay ọn (kêe) lûuk
phow noiñ (ge)luuk
The father gave his children money.
khun hay aahâan màa ré yaŋ? 
cûñ haa phar naa pher yîng
Have you fed the dog yet? (you – give – food – dog – yet?)

If the direct object is quantified, the quantifier follows the indirect object:

chan hay nangsâw (kêe) khâw sâam lêm
dunñ nei naa sâlo(ge)khà sàam lêm
I gave him three books.
If the direct object is qualified (e.g. by a relative clause), the qualifier follows the direct object, but the preposition $k$ becomes obligatory:

\[
\text{chán hây nángµthîi chán chôp kë kháw}
\]
\[
\text{I gave him books which I like.}
\]

\[
\text{phôc hây ñan hâa phan bát nán kë lûuk}
\]
\[
\text{The father gave his children the five thousand baht.}
\]

The indirect object (i.e. me) in sentences like ‘he taught me Thai’, ‘she passed me the letter’ and ‘they brought me flowers’ follows the pattern, \text{VERB} + \text{DIRECT OBJECT} + hây + \text{INDIRECT OBJECT}:

\[
\text{kháw sòc phaasaâ thay hây phôm}
\]
\[
\text{He taught me Thai.}
\]

\[
\text{kháw sòc còtmáay maa hây phôm}
\]
\[
\text{She passed me the letter.}
\]

\[
\text{kháw aw dçkmáay maa hây phôm}
\]
\[
\text{They brought me flowers.}
\]

5.13 Verb serialization

Verb serialization, in which a number of verbs sharing the same subject follow one after the other, with no intervening conjunctions or prepositions, is extremely common in Thai; and for beginners, learning to ‘string’ two or three verbs together comfortably is a key strategy in trying to reproduce authentic-sounding Thai. A random glance through examples in this book will show just how prevalent such patterns are.

Serial verb constructions can describe a sequence of consecutive actions:

\[
\text{kháw pay sòe maa kîn}
\]
\[
(\text{he – go – buy – come – eat})
\]
\[
\text{He went out to buy something and brought it back to eat.}
\]
Or a number of simultaneous actions:

kháw riip wîŋ khâam pay
(he – hurry – run – cross – go)
He hurriedly ran across.

Many learners understandably panic at the sight of a long string of verbs such as this, which seems at first sight to be an awesome serial verb construction:

tôŋ riip klàp pay rîak hây maa bôök

The problem in sentences like this is not so much the verbs that appear as the pronouns that have been omitted; once these are restored – or understood from the context – it becomes apparent that it is not one single serial verb construction and things become much more manageable:

(khun) tôŋ riip klàp pay rîak hây (kháw) maa bôök (chân)
You must hurry back and summon him to come and tell me.
As mentioned in the previous chapter, the categories ‘verb’ and ‘adjective’ overlap in Thai and many of the words that are considered to be adjectives in English are called stative verbs when describing Thai. For simplicity, however, the term ‘adjective’ is used throughout this chapter.

Adjectives do not occur with the verb pen (‘to be’) (5.1.1); they follow the noun they modify and in noun phrases they often occur with a classifier. The most common patterns of noun phrase in which an adjective occurs are listed in 3.5.6–3.5.10.

When a noun is modified by two adjectives (e.g. a large, red book) the normal word order in Thai is NOUN + ADJECTIVE + CLASSIFIER + ADJECTIVE:

- น้ำจืดสีน้ำเงิน
  น้ำจืดสีน้ำเงิน
  the large, red book (book – red – classifier – big)

- สาวสวยอุดม
  สาวสวยอุดม
  the beautiful, rich girl (girl – beautiful – classifier – rich)

- แม่แก่สีดำ
  แม่แก่สีดำ
  the old, black dog (dog – old – classifier – black)

In this pattern, the first adjective identifies the general category (red books, beautiful girls, old dogs) while the classifier + second adjective specifies the individual case.
### 6.1 Compound adjectives

As with nouns and verbs, compounding is a common way of creating new adjectives. The most productive adjectival prefixes are **cay** (‘heart’), **nâa** (‘worthy of’) and **khîi** (‘having the characteristic of’); of more limited usage are **châ** (‘given to/good at’) and **hûa** (‘head’). **Cay** (‘heart’) also occurs as an adjectival suffix.

- **cay dii** ใจดี kind (heart + good)
- **cay yen** ใจเย็น calm (heart + cool)
- **cay rôøn** ใจร้อน impatient, impetuous (heart + hot)
- **cay khêp** ใจเคย narrow-minded (heart + narrow)
- **nâa sôn cay** น่าสนใจ interesting (sôn cay – to be interested in)
- **nâa bûa** น่าเบื่อ boring (bûa – to be bored)
- **nâa làùum** น่าลืม forgettable (làùum – to forget)
- **nâa klua** น่ากลัว frightening (klua – to be afraid)
- **khîi kiat** ขี้เกอร์ lazy (kiat does not exist in isolation)
- **khîi aay** ขี้อาย shy (aay – to be embarrassed)
- **khîi làùum** ขี้ลืม forgetful (làùum – to forget)
- **khîi nîaw** ขี้หัวใจ mean, stingy (nîaw – to be sticky)
- **châø phûut** ช่างพูด talkative (phûut – to speak)
- **châø khít** ช่างคิด given to thinking (khít – to think)
- **châø såêkêet** ช่างสังเกต observant (såêkêet – to observe)
- **châø thîaø** ช่างโต้เถียง argumentative (thîaø – to argue)
- **hûa dii** หัวดี clever (head + good)
- **hûa khêp** หัวแข็ง stubborn, headstrong (head + hard)
- **hûa sûûø** หัวสูง pretentious (head + high)
- **hûa nôãk** หัวนอก educated abroad (head + outside)
- **hûa kàw** หัวเก่า conservative, old-fashioned (head + old)
Modification of adjectives

The meaning of adjectives can be modified by the addition of words such as ‘not’, ‘very’, ‘rather’, ‘somewhat’, and so on. A few adjectival modifiers occur before the adjective, while the majority occur after the adjective:

6.2.1 MODIFIER + ADJECTIVE

không khác ca ค่อนข้าง rather
mấy ไม่ not
mấy khói ... thàwrày ไม่ค่อย ... เท่าไร not very

bàan mày khói yày thàwrày บ้านไม่ค่อยใหญ่เท่าไร
The house isn’t very big.

6.2.2 ADJECTIVE + MODIFIER

cà taay จะตาย very (informal)
càŋ จริง really
cìŋ cìŋ จริง ๆ truly
dii  ดี  nice and . . .

koon pay  เกินไป  too

kwàa  กว่า  more

khùn  ขึ้น  increasingly

loŋ  ลง  decreasingly

lîa koon  เหลือเกิน  excessively

màak  มาก  very

mîan kan  เหมือนกัน  fairly

nàk  นั้น  very

pay này  ไปหน่อย  a little bit too

phco  พ่อ  enough

phco chây  พ่อซื้อ  enough

phco (phco) kan  พ่อ (ฯ) กัน  equally

phco sômkhuan  พ่อสมทบ  enough

thâw (thâw) kan  เท่า (ฯ) กัน  equally

thii diaw  ที่เดียว  indeed

thii sùt  ที่สุด  most

phaasāa phóm mây dìi phco ภำษำแม่ยี่พ่อ  
ภาษาแม่ยี่พ่อ

My language isn’t good enough.

Two modifiers can modify the same adjective:

khùc khàaŋ ca phóm pay này  
ขึ้นข้างจะเพื่อไปหน่อย

a little too much on the expensive side

hùr nîi ūn dìi cîr cîr  
หูรีหนึ่งครั้ง ๆ

This room is really nice and warm.
### 6.3 Special intensifiers

Certain adjectives are followed by specific intensifiers, which in the absence of a suitable equivalent in English (e.g. *brand new*, *pitch black*, *fast asleep*, etc.), can be translated as ‘very’. Such intensifiers, used in moderation, can add a more lively flavour to descriptions and are a useful addition to the more advanced learner’s vocabulary. Note that some adjectives (e.g. cold, red) have more than one specific intensifier, while some specific intensifiers can be used with more than one adjective.

#### 6.3.1 General

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Thai</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Thai</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>asleep</td>
<td>หลับอยู่</td>
<td>bewildered</td>
<td>งงตก</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>big</td>
<td>ใหญ่บดบด/</td>
<td>dark</td>
<td>มืดดื่อก้อ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bright</td>
<td>สว่างจ้า</td>
<td>dull, insipid</td>
<td>จืดจิ้ด</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>clear</td>
<td>ใส่จำจว</td>
<td>cold</td>
<td>เย็นเชื้อนเย็น</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>correct</td>
<td>ถูกต้อง</td>
<td>crazy</td>
<td>บ้า+ชามัด</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>crowded</td>
<td>แน่นเช็ค</td>
<td>different</td>
<td>ต่างกันสิบล้าน</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dry</td>
<td>แห้งแตก</td>
<td>equal</td>
<td>เทาที่นเขียน/แปะ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>expensive</td>
<td>แพงหลิว</td>
<td>far</td>
<td>ไกลลิบล้ว</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fat</td>
<td>อ้วนปี</td>
<td>fast</td>
<td>เร็วๆ/เร็วๆร้อง</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjectives and adjectival constructions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>flat</td>
<td>名牌 + เทียบเท่า/เท่ แบบเทียบเท่า/เท่</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>frequent, in close succession</td>
<td>ที่เทียบ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>full</td>
<td>เต็มเยี่ยด/เปรียบ/เทียบ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>full (food)</td>
<td>อีมกลิ่น</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hard</td>
<td>เขี้ยว</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>heavy</td>
<td>หนักถึง</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hot</td>
<td>ร้อนจัด</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>humid, moist</td>
<td>ชุ่มชื้น</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>identical</td>
<td>เหมือนกันเท่า/เที่ยง</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lost</td>
<td>หายต่อ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>loud</td>
<td>ดังเปรี้ยว/สัน</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>modern</td>
<td>ทันสมัย</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>new</td>
<td>ใหม่</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>old</td>
<td>เก่า</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pointed</td>
<td>แหลมเปรี้ยบ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>round</td>
<td>กลมดิกลิ่น</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sharp</td>
<td>คมเจ็บ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>silent</td>
<td>เสียบเจ็บ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>similar</td>
<td>เสมอเกือบที่เท่า/เที่ยง</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>small</td>
<td>เสมอเท่ากับ/เที่ยง</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>skilful</td>
<td>คล่องเรือ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>straight</td>
<td>เสียบตรง</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stupid</td>
<td>ไอจัด</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tall</td>
<td>สูงจัด</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| thick | หนาปีก/เต🌔
**6.3.2 Colours**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Colour</th>
<th>Thai Words</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>black</td>
<td>dam + píi</td>
<td>dark grey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>dam + khlāp</td>
<td>dark grey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>green</td>
<td>khāw + khācii</td>
<td>light green</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>khāw + prēt</td>
<td>light green</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>khāw + ãtû</td>
<td>light green</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>red</td>
<td>ðæi + cët</td>
<td>red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ðæi + ñet</td>
<td>red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ðæi + prēt</td>
<td>red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>white</td>
<td>khāaw + chúa</td>
<td>white</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>khāaw + chúak</td>
<td>white</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yellow</td>
<td>ðæi + þoy</td>
<td>yellow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ðæi + prēt</td>
<td>yellow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ðæi + cþoy</td>
<td>yellow</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**6.3.3 Flavours**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Flavour</th>
<th>Thai Words</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bitter</td>
<td>khōm + píi</td>
<td>bitter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bland</td>
<td>ñeēt + chûet</td>
<td>bland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>salty</td>
<td>khem + píi</td>
<td>salty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sour</td>
<td>prlaw + cíit</td>
<td>sour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>spicy</td>
<td>phêt + cíi</td>
<td>spicy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sweet</td>
<td>wāan + ciap</td>
<td>sweet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>wāan + cþoy</td>
<td>sweet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>wāan + châm</td>
<td>sweet</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**6.4 Reduplication**

Reduplication (the repetition of a word, either in part or full) is another common means of modifying the meaning of adjectives in Thai. The two
main forms of adjectival reduplication are simple repetition of the adjective and repetition of the adjective with tonal change.

6.4.1 Simple repetition of the adjective

One function of this type of reduplication is to make the meaning less precise, corresponding approximately to the adjectival suffix -ish in English:

- sıı̂ dıı̂ dıı̂  sıı̂ dıı̂ dıı̂  a reddish colour
- bāan lék lék  bāan lék lék  a smallish house
- aahān phèt phèt  aahān phèt phèt  spicy-ish food

This type of reduplication sometimes indicates that the preceding noun is plural:

- phûu yıı̂ suı̂ay suı̂ay  phûu yıı̂ suı̂ay suı̂ay  pretty girls
- nāŋıı̂ diı̂ diı̂  nāŋıı̂ diı̂ diı̂  good books

6.4.2 Repetition of adjective with tonal change

The meaning of an adjective is intensified by reduplication when the first element is pronounced with an exaggerated high tone, regardless of the normal tone of the word; this exaggerated high tone is particularly apparent when reduplicating a word with a high tone like rōn ('hot') where the first element is pitched considerably higher and is usually accompanied by an exaggerated lengthening of the vowel. This type of reduplication tends to be a feature of female rather than male speech:

- arónıı̂ arónıı̂  arónıı̂ arónıı̂  Ever so tasty!
- bēa bēa  bēa bēa  So bored!
- phëı̂ pheı̂  phëı̂ pheı̂  Really expensive!

Sometimes the reduplication adds a third element, with the exaggerated high tone on the middle syllable:

- diı̂ diı̂ diı̂  diı̂ diı̂ diı̂  So good!
Comparison of adjectives

The basic comparative construction employs the pattern ADJECTIVE + kwàa (‘more than’):

khâaw nàa pèt ar’ý kwàa
Duck rice is tastier.

rót tooyootàa thûuk kwàa rót bens
Toyotas are cheaper than Mercedes.

khàa khrûaŋ bin phrèng kwàa pii thîi lëew
The air fare is more expensive than last year.

câa khon thám dii kwàa thám eeg
Paying someone to do it is better than doing it yourself.

Degrees of comparison

The basic comparative construction, ADJECTIVE + kwàa, can be modified by the addition of degree adverbs, such as màak (‘much, a lot’), yô (‘much, a lot’), nitnày (‘a little’):

sanûk kwàa yô
a lot more fun

klay kwàa nitnày
a little bit further

phrèng kwàa sàøë thâw
twice as expensive
6.5.2 Equal comparisons

6.5.2.1 \( X + \text{ADJECTIVE} + \text{thâw kàp} \) (‘as much as’) + \( Y \)

This is the most common pattern and is used both for numerically quantifiable and non-quantifiable comparisons:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{lûuk sùu thâw kàp phrâc} & \\
\text{The son is as tall as his father.}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{nakhøn phanom klay thâw kàp n∨ngkhaay} & \\
\text{Nakhorn Phanom is as far as Nongkhai.}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{pay rót fay thùuk thâw kàp pay rót mee} & \\
\text{Going by train is as cheap as going by bus.}
\end{align*}
\]

6.5.2.2 \( X + \text{kàp} \) (‘with’) + \( Y + \text{ADJECTIVE} + \text{thâw (thâw) kan/ phûc (phûc) kan} \) (‘equally’)

This pattern is a variation on 6.5.2.1:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{phûc kàp lûuk sùu thâw kan} & \\
\text{Father and son are as tall as each other.}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{nakhøn phanom kàp n∨ngkhaay klay thâw kan} & \\
\text{Nakhorn Phanom and Nongkhai are as far as one another.}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{pay rót fay kàp pay rót mee thùuk thâw kan} & \\
\text{Going by train and going by bus are as cheap as each other.}
\end{align*}
\]

6.5.2.3 \( X + \text{ADJECTIVE} + \text{mûan} \) (‘similar’) + \( Y \)

Non-quantifiable adjectives can also occur in this pattern.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{lûuk sàw sùuy mûan mût} & \\
\text{The daughter is as beautiful as her mother.}
\end{align*}
\]
Chinese food is as tasty as Thai food.

While the pattern $X + \text{kàp} ('with') + Y + \text{ADJECTIVE} + \text{m '\\\n\text{\"an kan}}$ is possible, it is ambiguous since $\text{\m \"an kan}$ can mean 'fairly . . .' and is therefore best avoided:

$m \text{\'e kàp lùuk s\text{\"aw s\text{\"ay m \\"an kan}}$

แม่กับลูกสาวสวยเหมือนกัน
Mother and daughter are as beautiful as each other.

or

Mother and daughter are fairly good looking.

$X + \text{ADJECTIVE} + \text{m \text{\'ay ph\text{\'e}}} ('not lose to') + Y$

$\text{plaa pr\text{\'iaw w\text{\'an ar\text{\'y m \text{\'ay ph\text{\'e k\text{\'en k\text{\'ay}}}'}}$

ปลาปริหานหวานอร่อยไม่แพ้ง่าย
The sweet and sour fish is as tasty as the chicken curry.

$lùuk s\text{\"aw p\text{\'aak r\text{\'aay m \text{\'ay ph\text{\'e m \\text{\'e}}}$

ลูกสาวเปรียวไม่แพ้แม่
The daughter has as sharp a tongue as her mother.

### Interrogative comparisons

Questions involving comparisons follow the pattern QUESTION WORD + ADJECTIVE + kwàa kan?:

$\text{thii n\text{\'aay k\text{\'lay kw\text{\'aay kan?}$

ที่ไหนไกลกว่ากัน
Which is further?

$\text{kh\text{\'ray k\text{\'eeng kw\text{\'aay kan?}$

ใครกล้ากว่ากัน
Who is the cleverer?

$l\text{\'em n\text{\'aay th\text{\'uuk kw\text{\'aay kan?}$

เล่มไหนถูกกว่ากัน
Which book is cheaper?
6.5.4 Negative comparisons

Basic negative comparison can be made by the pattern X + sūu + Y + mây dâay (‘X can’t beat Y’):

aahāan farà sūu aahāan thay mây dâay

⇒ Western food isn’t as good as/can’t beat Thai food.

More specific negative comparisons using adjectives (e.g. Western food is not as spicy as Thai food) are often reversed to produce a positive comparison (Thai food is spicier than Western food).

6.5.5 Excessives

Excessive (‘too . . .’) constructions follow the pattern ADJECTIVE + (kāan) pay (‘too much’) with kāan frequently omitted, especially in conversational Thai:

klay (kāan) pay

⇒ It’s too far.

rōtū thāaw kháp (kāan) pay

⇒ The shoes are too tight.

This pattern, with kāan normally omitted, can be modified by the addition of the degree adverbs (7.6), nōy (‘a little’), nītny (‘a little bit’) or mâak (‘a lot’):

klay pay nōy

⇒ a little too far

chāa pay nītny

⇒ a little bit too late

phrēep pay mâak*

⇒ much too expensive
In response to the question, *pheèŋ pay rú plàaw?* ‘Is it too expensive?’, as an initiating sentence, ‘That’s much too expensive’, the normal word order would be *pheèŋ māak pay*.

### 6.5.6 Superlatives

Superlative constructions follow the pattern ADJECTIVE + *thîi sùt* (‘most’):

- **thøø pen nák ránq daån̄ thîi sùt khâwø thay**  
  เธอเป็นนักร้องที่สุดของไทย  
  She is Thailand’s most famous singer.

- **an nãy thûuk thîi sùt?**  
  อันไหนถูกที่สุด  
  Which is the cheapest one?

- **mây bûk dii thîi sùt**  
  ไม่บอกถึงสุด  
  Best not to tell.

- **thîi sâmðkan thîi sùt khøø . . .**  
  ที่สำคัญที่สุดคือ . . .  
  The most important thing is . . .
Chapter 7

Adverbs and adverbial constructions

7.1 Adverbs of manner

Adverbs of manner are indistinguishable in form from adjectives; thus dìi means both ‘good’ and ‘well’ and cháa both ‘slow’ and ‘slowly’.

For simplicity, the term ‘adjective’ is used in this chapter when describing the structure of adverbial phrases.

Verbs are modified according to the following main patterns:

1. VERB (PHRASE) + ADJECTIVE
2. VERB (PHRASE) + REDUPLICATED ADJECTIVE
3. VERB (PHRASE) + ADVERBIAL PHRASE
4. VERB (PHRASE) + dày + ADJECTIVE
5. VERB (PHRASE) + hày + ADJECTIVE

7.1.1 VERB (PHRASE) + ADJECTIVE

In the simplest adverbial constructions, the verb or verb phrase is followed by an adjective:

kháw dìin cháa
เขาเดินช้า
He walks slowly.

khun phùut chát
คุณพูดช้า
You speak clearly.

khun khàp rót rew
คุณขับรถเร็ว
You drive quickly.
She arranged the room nicely.

7.1.2 VERB (PHRASE) + REDUPLICATED ADJECTIVE

As noted in the previous chapter (6.4), reduplication often moderates the meaning of an adjective:

kháw cát hông sǔay
She arranged the room nicely.

kháw sùng thúuk thúuk
He bought cheap(ish)ly.

kháw đòn cháa cháa
He walks slow(ish)ly.

chán ca pay rew rew níi
I'm going shortly.

Reduplication is also commonly used in commands, either with or without háy (see 7.1.5); commands can be made more polite by the addition of nòy at the end:

maa rew rew
Come quickly!

yùu gùap gùap
Stay quiet!

phûut đaŋ đaŋ nòy
Speak up!

Sometimes, however, it is difficult to distinguish any real difference in meaning between a single and reduplicated form; in cases where the reduplicated form is preferred, it seems to be because it creates a rhythm that is more pleasing to the ear:

chán kliat ciŋ ciŋ
I really hate him.
Reduplication, sometimes with a different vowel in the second syllable, is also used as an onomatopoeic device, to imitate, for example, sounds of laughter, rain and animal cries:

kháw húa ró khik khik
She giggled.

máw rócë miaw miaw
The cat miaowed.

fón tök siaŋ pë pë
The rain pitter-pattered.

### 7.1.3 VERB (PHRASE) + ADVERBIAL PHRASE

Another common way of forming adverbial constructions involves the use of ‘adverb formers’ of which the most common are yàa (‘like, as’), dooy (‘by’), düay (‘with’) and pen (‘is, as’); yàa is followed by a verb or verb phrase, dooy by a verb or noun phrase, and düay and pen by a noun phrase:

#### 7.1.3.1 VERB (PHRASE) + yàa + VERB (PHRASE)

kháw phûut yàa mây suphâap
He spoke impolitely.

kháw yím yàa mii khwaam sük
She smiled happily.

#### 7.1.3.2 VERB (PHRASE) + dooy + VERB PHRASE

kháw phûut dooy mây khít kòn
He spoke without thinking.
He could accept the criticism readily/easily.

He did it without hope of anything in return.

We can do it ourselves without having to depend on other people.

For examples of VERB (PHRASE) + dooy + NOUN PHRASE, see 8.4.

VERB (PHRASE) + duay + NOUN PHRASE

He worked with difficulty.

For further examples, see 8.4.

VERB (PHRASE) + pen + NOUN PHRASE

They pay daily.

She divided it into small pieces.

When describing how well someone can do something, the adjective follows the auxiliary verb dāay:

He speaks fluently.

You write nicely.
mẹ tham aahān dāay arwy
แม่ทำอาหารโดยรอบ
Mum is a good cook. ('cooks food tastily')

### 7.1.5 VERB (PHRASE) + Hãy + ADJECTIVE

When giving commands as to how someone should do something, the causative verb hãy can be used before the adjective:

- **kin hãy mòt**
  กินให้หมด
  Eat everything up!

- **tham hãy sèt**
  ทำให้เสร็จ
  Finish it off!

- **tèn tua hãy riaprɔcy**
  แต่งตัวให้เรียบร้อย
  Dress respectfully!

- **khian hãy dii**
  เขียนให้ดี
  Write nicely!

### 7.2 Modification of adverbs

Adverbs are modified in the same way as adjectives (see 6.2). A small number of modifiers occur in the pattern VERB (PHRASE) + MODIFIER + ADJECTIVE:

- **phôm rian mái kẹt**
  ผลเรียนไม่เก่ง
  I don't do well in my studies.

- **khâw phûut mái khɔy chât**
  เขาพูดไม่ออกชัด
  He doesn’t speak very clearly.

- **tham aahān khɔòn khâaŋ ca sanuk**
  ทำอาหารคนจะสนุก
  Cooking is quite fun.
Other adverbial modifiers follow the pattern VERB (PHRASE) + ADJECTIVE + MODIFIER:

- khun phûut rew màak
 คุณพูดเร็วมาก
  You speak very quickly.

- kháw têng tua riaprísy khûn
 เขาแต่งตัวเรียบร้อย
  He dresses more respectably.

### 7.3 Comparison of adverbs

The comparison of adverbs follows the same pattern as that of adjectives (6.5), but with a verb preceding the adjective.

The basic comparative form is VERB (PHRASE) + ADJECTIVE + kwàa:

- khun tham aahàan arëy kwàa chán
 คุณทำอาหารอร่อยกว่าฉัน
  You are a better cook than me. (you – make food – more tasty than – me)

- kháw phûut thay dâay chát kwàa phôm
 เขาพูดไทยได้ดังกว่าผม
  He speaks Thai more clearly than me.

### 7.3.1 Equal comparisons can be expressed as follows.

#### 7.3.1.1 \[ X + \text{VERB (PHRASE)} + \text{ADJECTIVE} + \text{thâw kàp} + Y \]

- chán rian nák thâw kàp phîi
 ฉันเรียนหนักที่กว่าพี่
  I study as hard as my sister.

#### 7.3.1.2 \[ X + \text{kàp} + Y + \text{VERB (PHRASE)} + \text{ADJECTIVE} + \text{thâw (thâw)} \text{kan/phòc (phòc) kan} \]

- chán kàp phîi rian nák thâw (thâw) kan
 ฉันกับพี่เรียนหนักกว่า (กัน) กัน
  I and my sister study as hard as each another.
Adverbs and adverbial constructions

7.3.1.3 X + VERB (PHRASE) + ADJECTIVE + mān + Y

Her daughter dresses as beautifully as a film star.

7.3.2 The excessive construction is VERB (PHRASE) + ADJECTIVE + (kān) pay:

khun phûut rew (kān) pay
คุณพูดเร็วเกินไป
You speak too quickly.

7.3.3 The superlative construction is VERB (PHRASE) + ADJECTIVE + thîi sùt:

thîr râng phrî thîi sùt
เธอร้องเพราะที่สุด
She is the best singer.

7.3.4 ‘As . . . as possible’

The ‘as . . . as possible’ construction can be expressed in two ways, the first involving the repetition of the adjective and the second using the verb tham (‘to do’) instead of the repeated adjective.

7.3.4.1 VERB (PHRASE) + yâaŋ + ADJECTIVE + thîi sùt + (thâw) thîi ca + ADJECTIVE + dâay

khâw wîŋ yâaŋ rew thîi sùt (thâw) thîi ca rew dâay
เขาวิ่งอย่างรวดเร็วที่สุด(เท่า)ที่จะวิ่งได้
He ran as quickly as possible.

7.3.4.2 VERB (PHRASE) + yâaŋ + ADJECTIVE + thîi sùt + (thâw) thîi ca + tham + dâay

phôm ca tham yâaŋ dîi thîi sùt (thâw) thîi ca tham dâay
ผมจะทำอย่างละเอียด(เท่า)ที่จะทำได้
I shall do it as well as possible.
Adverbs of time

Since verbs do not indicate tense in Thai, adverbs and adverbials (adverb phrases) are essential to specify when events take place.

Common adverbials of time include:

**Present:**
- dîaw níi (ติ้งวันนี้) now, at this moment
- tòon níi (ตอนนี้) now
- pàtcuban níi (ปัจจุบันนี้) nowadays
- thúk wan níi (ทุกวันนี้) these days

**Past:**
- mëa khaon (เมื่อก่อน) before, formerly
- tòon nán (ตอนนั้น) at that time
- mëa kíi níi (เมื่อคืนนี้) a minute ago

**Future:**
- phrûn níi (พรุ่งนี้) tomorrow
- wan làŋ (วันหลัง) another day, some other day
- khráŋ nåa (ครั้งหน้า) next time

These adverbial phrases can occur either before or after the verb phrase:

- tòon níi khâw máy wâang ตอนนี้เขาไม่ว่าง
  He is not free at the moment.
- mëa khaon châm máy châp เมื่อก่อนฉันไม่ชอบ
  Before, I did not like it.
- phród pay yíam wan làŋ ผมไปเยี่ยมวันหลัง
  I’ll go to visit her another day.

A more extensive list of time expressions appears in 14.7.

Two important adverbs of time which do have a fixed position are yâp ('still') and léew ('already'). yâp occurs immediately before the verb or verb phrase and léew immediately after:

- châm yâp hîw ยังยิ่งหิว
  I’m still hungry.
Adverbs of frequency

The following adverbs of frequency occur only after a verb or verb phrase:

- บ่อย บ่อย (often)
- เสมอ (always)
- อย่างต่อเนื่อง (continuously)
- เบี่ยงเบี่ยง (regularly)
- ประจำ (periodically)

We visit Thailand often.

She always makes spicy food.

I go to see the doctor periodically.

The words ทั่วไป (‘normally, usually’) and ปกติ (‘normally, usually’) both occur more commonly at the beginning of a clause or sentence:

- ทั่วไป ไม่ดื่มแอลコฮอล์ (Normally I don’t drink alcohol.)
- ปกติ มีคนมาก (Usually there are a lot of people.)

Other expressions of frequency, such as บางครั้ง (‘sometimes’), ทุกวัน (‘daily’), อาทิตย์ละสองครั้ง (‘twice a week’), can occur either before the subject of a sentence or at the end of a sentence:
Sometimes I feel bored.

I feel bored sometimes.

### 7.6 Adverbs of degree

The following adverbs of degree occur only after a verb or verb phrase:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Thai</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>màak</td>
<td>มาก</td>
<td>a lot, very much, really</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bāaŋ</td>
<td>บาง</td>
<td>somewhat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>māan kan</td>
<td>เหมือนกัน</td>
<td>somewhat; fairly/reasonably</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nītnɔy</td>
<td>นิดหน่อย</td>
<td>a little (bit)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nɔy</td>
<td>น้อย</td>
<td>a little</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

kháw maw màak
เขามามาก
He’s really drunk.

chán hıˇw nītnɔy
ดีนิดหน่อย
I’m a bit hungry.

thon nɔy nà
ทนน้อยนะ
Be a little patient!

māan kan is widely used to express qualified or polite agreement or enthusiasm – although this usage is curiously ignored in most dictionaries. It commonly occurs in the pattern kṑ ... + VERB (PHRASE) + māan kan when a negative response would be tactless:

aaçaan sɒːn dìi máy?
อาจารย์สอนให้ไหม?
Is he a good teacher?

- kṑ ... dìi māan kan
- กี่ ... ตีเหมือนกัน
- Well ... yes.
While màak and nitnòy also occur as quantifiers (13.12), it is important to distinguish between the adverb bàaŋ and the similar-sounding quantifier, baan; the fact that both are often glossed as ‘some’ in dictionaries is a common source of confusion for the learner.

As a quantifier, baan (‘some’) is always followed by a classifier, although it is not always preceded by a noun:

- **chán châpp kin aahàan khêek baan yàaŋ**
  - I like some kinds of Indian food.

- **baan khon dîi baan khon mây dîi**
  - Some people are good, some are bad.

Bàaŋ normally modifies a verb and conveys the sense of ‘to some extent’ or ‘somewhat’; it also occurs with Wh- questions, where it anticipates a plural answer (12.2.13). Bàaŋ never occurs with classifiers:

- **khâw phûut phaasaâ thay dâay bàaŋ**
  - He speaks some Thai.

- **phoôn lênn dâay bàaŋ**
  - I can play a bit/somewhat.

- **chán yàak pay kin aahàan khêek bàaŋ**
  - I’d like to eat some Indian food.

- **khâw phûut ciŋ bàaŋ mây ciŋ bàaŋ**
  - (he – speak – true – somewhat, not – true – somewhat)
  - Some of what he says is true, some isn’t.

- **hât phûut khwaam ciŋ bàaŋ sî**
  - Try telling the truth!

**khun phóp kâp khray bàaŋ?**
- Who did you meet?
One curious usage of bàañ is in the expression bàañ kõ . . . bàañ kõ . . . ('some . . . and some . . .'), which is identical in meaning to baañ khon:

\[
\text{bàañ kõ dii bàañ kõ máy dii} \\
\text{บางทีดี บางทีไม่ดี} \\
\text{Some people are good, some are bad.}
\]

\[
\text{bàañ kõ chëáp bàañ kõ máy chëáp} \\
\text{บางทีชอบ บางทีไม่ชอบ} \\
\text{Some like it, some don't.}
\]
An important function of prepositions is to indicate location. This chapter introduces the major location markers and then looks at a few of the different ways of dealing with the English prepositions ‘to’, ‘for’, ‘by’, ‘with’ and ‘from’.

### 8.1 Location: thii and yuu

The most basic location words are formed using the preposition thii (‘at’) followed by the demonstratives, nii, nân or nôon:

- thii nii ที่นี่ here
- thii nân ที่นั่น there
- thii nôon ที่นี่นั่น over there

In a simple sentence stating the location of something, thii follows the verb yuu (‘to be situated at‘):

- yuu thii nii อยู่ที่นี่
  Here it is/It's here.
- bâan yuu thii nôon บ้านอยู่ที่นั่น
  The house is over there.

thii is optional after the verb yuu, and frequently omitted:

- chan yuu mûng thay naan ฉันอยู่ในไทยนาน
  I have lived in Thailand a long time.
He is at home in the evenings.

8.1.1  **khâŋ + PREPOSITION**

The following prepositions can all be prefixed by khâŋ (‘side’):

- **nay**  นี่  in
- **nâck** นอก  outside of
- **bon** บน  on, on top of; upstairs
- **lââŋ** ล่าง  underneath; downstairs
- **nâa** น่า  in front of
- **lââŋ** หลัง  behind
- **khâaŋ** ข้าง  by the side of

However, when a noun or noun phrase follows the preposition, khâŋ is usually dropped:

- **yûu nay rôt**
  อุ้ยในรถ
  It’s in the car.

- **yûu lââŋ bân**
  อุุยหลังบ้าน
  It’s behind the house.

But if no noun follows the preposition, khâŋ cannot be dropped:

- **yûu khâŋ nâck**
  อุุยข้างนอก
  It’s outside.

- **yûu khâŋ bon**
  อุุยข้างบน
  It’s on top/upstairs.

Note that as a prefix khâŋ is written with a long vowel symbol but pronounced with a short vowel.
8.1.2 phaay + PREPOSITION

Several of the prepositions above (8.1.1) can be prefixed by phaay (‘side, part’):

phaay nay ภายนอก within, internal
phaay nāk ภายนอก outside, external
phaay tāay ภายนอก under, inferior position
phaay nā ภายนอก ahead, in the future
phaay lāŋ ภายนอก afterwards, later on

phaay nay cèt wan ภายในเจ็ดวัน within seven days
phaay tāay itthiphon khōŋ khāw ภายใต้การอิทธิพลของเขาม under his influence

8.1.3 thaaŋ + right/left

thaaŋ (‘way’) prefixes the words for sāay (‘left’) and khwāa (‘right’) when describing locations; muu (‘hand’) may optionally be added to the end of the phrase:

yùu thaaŋ khwāa อยู่ทางขวา
It’s on the right.

yùu thaaŋ sāay muu อยู่ทางซ้ายมือ
It’s on the left-hand side.

8.1.4 Non-prefixed prepositions

Common location prepositions which do not take any prefix include:

rawāŋ ระหว่าง between
khlay ใกล้ far
klāy ใกล้ near
Neither motion towards a place (I went to Thailand), nor indirect object with ‘to give’ (see 5.12) require prepositions in Thai; speaking to someone, uses the preposition kàp (‘with’):

**phŏm dàen thaaŋ pay m̀saŋ thay**  
I travelled to Thailand.

**kh̀aw h̀ay nàng sùan chán**  
He gave the book to me.

**chán yàak ca phùut kàp khàw**  
I’d like to speak to him.

### 8.3 ‘For’

The Thai words most commonly used to translate ‘for’ are h̀ay, phàa, sàmrap and sùan. While the distinctions are sometimes elusive and there is some overlap in usage, some broad principles can be applied.

#### 8.3.1.1 h̀ay

h̀ay is used to express the idea of doing something for somebody, or getting someone to do something for you:

**phŏm sàu nàng sùn h̀ay khun**  
I bought a book for you.

**phŏm ca bòok (khàw) h̀ay (khun)**  
I’ll tell him for you.

**chùay pìt pràtû h̀ay (chán) ǹy**  
Please shut the door for me.
phāa can be translated as ‘for the sake of’ and often conveys an idea of altruism or self-sacrifice. Note also, low-tone phāa which is used when inviting someone to do something on one’s behalf in expressions like ‘Have one (e.g. a beer) for me’:

thúk sī thúk yāā phām tham phāa khun
Everything I do is for you.

chán tham sāan phāa anaakhót khraaw raw
I am working for our future.

khāw sī thā tua phāa prathêt châat
He sacrificed himself for the nation.

raw sān aahāan phāa bōricàak
We bought food for donating.

kin phāa dúay nā
Eat some for me, too, OK?

sāmrap means both ‘for’ and, at the beginning of a sentence, ‘as for’, ‘as far as . . . is concerned’:

nī sāmrap khun
This is for you.

sāmrap aahāan yen raw ča pay kin khāaw nōok
As far as the evening meal is concerned, we will eat out.

sūan also means ‘as for’ and is used to introduce a statement:

sūan phōm khit wāa māy dīi lāay
As for me, I don’t think it is good at all.
Two other common uses of ‘for’ in English are to express duration of time (I have studied Thai for three years) and to give reasons (I am angry with him for gossiping about me). Duration of time requires no preposition in Thai (14.7.5); reason clauses are introduced by thîi:

\[ \text{phôm rian phaasãа thay sãam pîi lëew} \]

 ผมเรียนภาษาไทยสามปีแล้ว

I have studied Thai for three years.

\[ \text{raw pay sõng wan thãwnán} \]

 เราไปสองวัน呐น

We are only going for three days.

\[ \text{chân kròot kháw thîi (kháw) nînthaâ chán} \]

 ฉันก่ออาสา(เขา)ปีหน้า

I am angry with him for gossiping about me.

\[ \text{khôc thôot thîi phôm maa cháa} \]

 ขอโทษที่ phạmฉัน

I am sorry that I'm late.

---

8.4  ‘By’

The two Thai words most commonly used to translate ‘by’ are dooy and dúay; both are used to indicate the means of doing something:

\[ \text{chân pay dooy rót mee*} \]

 ฉันไปโดยรถเมล์

I went by bus.

\[ \text{raw bin pay maa thîi dooy sàay kaan bin thay} \]

 เราบินโดยเครื่องเดินทางที่ประเทศไทย

We flew to Thailand by Thai Airways.

\[ \text{khun tham dúay/dooy withii này} \]

 คุณทำด้วย/โดยวิธีไหน

How did you do it? (you – do – by – method – which?)

\[ \text{khun tham dúay maa lëew?} \]

 คุณทำด้วยมือหรือ

You did it by hand, then?

*Note, however, that while dooy can be used with all means of transportation, in practice it is commonly avoided. Instead, travelling somewhere as a passenger in a vehicle is expressed by the pattern nàŋ ('to sit') + VEHICLE + pay/maa + PLACE:
I went to Chiangmai by bus.

To indicate that someone drove the vehicle, nâ is replaced by an appropriate verb meaning ‘to drive’ – khâp (for cars), khìi (for motorcycles, horses, bicycles) or thìip (for pedal trishaws):

**phôm khâp rót maa**
I came by car (as the driver)/I drove here.

**raw khìi m̀oàyàsày pay hùa hìn**
We went to Hua Hin by motorcycle/We motorcycled to Hua Hin.

‘By’ in English is also used to indicate (i) the agent in a passive sentence (He was hit by a car: 5.8); (ii) place (It is by the television); and (iii) time limitation (I must finish by Friday). As a location word, ‘by’ can be translated as klây klây (‘near’) or khâ khâa (‘next to, beside’); time limit can be conveyed by k̀on (‘before’) or phaay nay (‘within’):

**yùu klây klây/khâ khâa thii wii**
It is by the TV.

**chán t̀ëg tham hây sèt k̀on/phaay nay wan sùk**
I have to finish it by Friday.

### ‘With’

‘With’ in English is used mainly to indicate (i) accompaniment (I went with a friend) and (ii) instrument (She hit her husband with a stick). Accompaniment, in Thai, is conveyed by kàp:

**chán pay kàp phèan**
I went with a friend.

Instrument is less clear-cut. dùay can be used in the pattern SUBJECT + VERB (PHRASE) + dùay + INSTRUMENT, but it often sounds unnatural; instead, many native speakers favour the pattern SUBJECT + cháy (to use) + INSTRUMENT + VERB (PHRASE):
She hit her husband with a stick/She used a stick to hit . . .

We shall have to eat with our hands.

And ƙàp is also sometimes used to indicate instrument in the expressions ƙàn ƙàp taa (‘to see with one’s own eyes’) and ƙàŋ ƙàp huƙu (‘to hear with one’s own ears’).

**8.6  ‘From’**

‘From’ can most frequently be translated by càak:

**khàw maa càak chiagmày**

He comes from Chiangmai.

**chàn dày cótmày càak mèt**

I got a letter from my mother.

**raw nàŋ ròt mee càak hùn pay kruŋthêep**

We went from Hua Hin to Bangkok by bus.

When ‘from’ identifies the beginning of a period of time, tàŋtêe (‘since’) is used, either in the pattern tàŋtêe + TIME WORD + thêu (‘till’) + TIME WORD, or tàŋtêe + TIME WORD + maa:

**tàŋtêe chàaw thêŋ yen**

from morning till evening

**tàŋtêe pii sàŋg phàn hà dây sìi sip maa**

from the year 2540/since 2540

**tàŋtêe wan nàŋ maa**

from that day
Chapter 9

Clauses and sentences

9.1 Word order and topicalisation

Word order in a sentence generally follows the pattern SUBJECT + VERB + OBJECT:

subject verb object

พ่อ ซื้อ รถยนต์
Father bought a car

chn เลิก คุณ
The teacher didn’t come.

In spoken Thai it is common for the subject noun to be followed immediately by its pronoun; the beginner needs to be alert to distinguish this noun-pronoun apposition from similar-looking possessive phrases (3.5.12):

พ่อซื้อ รถยนต์
(father – he – buy – car)
Father bought a car.

ครูเขาไม่มา
(teacher – he – not – come)
The teacher didn’t come.
However, either subject or object, or even both, may be omitted when they are understood from the context. In the following sentence, for example, neither subject, direct object nor indirect object are stated, leaving just a ‘string’ of four verbs (5.13):

**tɔŋ riŋ pay sóu háy**
ต้องรีบไปซื้อให้
(must – hurry – go – buy – give)
I must rush off and buy some for her.

Another common pattern, known as topicalisation, involves placing a word or phrase other than the subject at the beginning of the sentence, so that it becomes the ‘topic’ of the sentence (i.e. what the sentence is ‘about’).

**sɔː kâw ca aw pay bɔricàak prɔŋ nii**
เสื้อจะเอาไปบริจาคพรุ่งนี้
(clothes – old – will – take – donate – tomorrow)
I'll give away the old clothes tomorrow.

**aahàan thîi lêa raw ca kîn prɔŋ nii**
อาหารที่เหลือเราจะกินพรุ่งนี้
(food – which – remains – we – will – eat – tomorrow)
We'll eat the food that is left over tomorrow.

**farà thîi tɔŋ nàan kàp khon thay dìaw nii mîi yê**
ผู้จัดแห้งงานกับคนไทยที่แย่เวลานี้
(Westerners – who – marry – with – Thais – now – there are – many)
Now there are lots of Westerners who are married to Thais.

**phûuyị́ŋ khon nán (phôm) khit wàa pen khon yìipùn**
ผู้หญิงคนนั้น(ผู้หญิง)คิดว่าเป็นคนญี่ปุ่น
(girl – classifier – that – (I) – think – that – is – person – Japanese)
I think that girl is Japanese.
In spoken Thai, the particle なん is often used at the end of the topic phrase (10.3.1.5).

In written Thai, the topic is often introduced by สู้ (‘as for’), สัมรัพ (‘as for’) or รูญ (‘about, concerning’); the end of a long topic clause is often marked by นัน and the verb in the following clause introduced by ก่อ (‘so, therefore, well, then’):

สู้ หร้ำ กัน คิน กระทื มที่ใด อาหาร ข้าว เกิด ดี

As for the food and accommodation, it was alright.
(as for – food – eating – with – place to stay – well, then – acceptable)

_nan ผืม และ อยู่ นัน น้ำ บ่า คิ้ง

The book I'm reading is really boring.

## 9.2 Subordinate clauses

Subordinate clauses frequently occur before the main clause. Some subordinate and main clauses are linked by paired conjunctions, one at the beginning of each clause. ก่อ (see 9.1), although often optional, is used extensively in introducing the main clause. Some common examples of paired conjunctions are:

- ถ้า (ห้ากว่า) ... ก่อ ... if ... then ... (9.2.1)
- กัน ที่ ... ก่อ ... the fact that ... , so ... (9.2.2)
- อยู่ เมื่อ ว่า ... แต่ ... although ... , but ... (9.2.3)
- นึก ค้าก (น้ำเลือว) ... ยัง ... apart from (that) ... , still ... (9.2.5)
- ผ่าน ... แต่ ... no sooner ... than ... (9.2.6)
- ... แต่ ... ผ่าน no sooner ... than ... (9.2.6)
**9.2.1 Conditional clauses: ‘if’**

Conditional sentences can be formed by the pattern, 
\[ \text{thāa} \ldots \text{kō} + \text{VERB} \]  
(‘If ... then ...’); alternative words for ‘if’ are \[ \text{thāa hàak wāa, hàak wāa, hàak tēè wāa} \]:

\[ \text{thāa hàak wāa fṑn tōk chā̀n kō (ca) mây pay} \]

If it rains, I’m not going/If it had rained, I wouldn’t have gone, etc.

Often, however, the ‘if’ word is omitted, and in abrupt speech, even kō, too:

\[ \text{fṑn tōk (kō)} \text{ mây pay} \]

If it rains, I’m not going/If it had rained, I wouldn’t have gone, etc.

The conditional clause and main clause may be linked by \[ \text{lā kō} \] (or \[ \text{lā kōō} \), with a lengthened vowel on the second syllable), in which case the verb normally follows:

\[ \text{(thāa khun) mây rī̀p lā kōō mây than} \]

If you don’t hurry, you won’t be in time.

**9.2.2 Reason clauses: ‘the fact that/because’**

Reason clauses commonly involve the expression, kaan thī̀i (‘the fact that’), which can be used in two patterns.

**9.2.2.1 kaan thī̀i \ldots \text{kō} + \text{phrō wāa} \ldots (‘The fact that ... is because ...’)***

In this pattern, the consequence is stated first and the reason or cause given in the second clause:

\[ \text{kaan thī̀i phṑm klā̀p dēk kō phrō wāa pay thī̀aw kāp phān} \]

The fact that I’m home late is because I went out with friends.

\[ \text{kaan thī̀i khā̀w mây yṑm bin pay kō phrō wāa khā̀w klua} \]

The fact that he won’t agree to fly is because he is scared.
9.2.2.2 kaan thîi . . . kô + VERB (‘the fact that/because . . . so . . .’)

In this pattern, the reason or cause is stated in the first clause and the consequence or conclusion follows in the second:

kaan thîi fôn tòk nàk raw kô maa cháa này
การที่ฝนตกยาวนานมาก
Because it was raining heavily, we were a bit late.

kaan thîi kháw kin môt kô mây dây mâay khwaam wâa ar déy
การที่เขาไม่ด้วยไม่สามารถวางแผนได้
The fact that he ate it all doesn’t mean it tasted good.

In both patterns it is not unusual for kaan to be dropped and the sentence to begin with thîi:

thîi phoˇm phûut yàa nân kô phró wâa krôot
ที่ฝนตกยาวนานเกินกว่ากรุณา
The fact that I spoke like that was because I was angry.

thîi kháw ya nôm klàp maa chán kô tông rôc
ที่เขาอยู่ไกลเมื่อครบก็ตรง
Because he hasn’t come back yet, I shall have to wait.

‘Owing/due to . . .’ sentences, follow a similar pattern but are prefaced by nêàq câak , or the rather more formal-sounding nêàq (maa) câak kaan thîi . . . (‘owing to the fact . . .’):

nêàq câak rôt tît màak thàw kô khoŋ maa châa
เนื่องจากรถติดมากเขาคงมา
Due to the heavy traffic jams, he will probably be late.

In written Thai cun is commonly used instead of kô:

kaan thîi yâng mây mii khàaw cun mây sàamâat bûk dâay
การที่ยังไม่มีการจ้างไม่สามารถบอกได้
Because there is still no news, it is therefore impossible to say.

9.2.3 Concessive clauses: ‘although’

Concessive clauses concede or admit a fact and begin with either (thûng) mîe wâa (‘although’) or thûng thîi (‘although’); the main clause counters or contradicts that fact and frequently begins with têe (kô) (‘but’):
Although I put a lot of fish sauce in, it still doesn’t taste good.

Although I love her, she doesn’t love me.

Although it’s raining, we’re still going.

Another kind of concessive clause is formed by the pattern, **mây wâa ca** (‘regardless, no matter’) + VERB + QUESTION WORD; the main clause may be introduced by **kô**:

**mây wâa ca phtêng khêe náy kô yâŋ rúusük khúm**
Regardless of how expensive it was, I still think it was worth it.

**mây wâa ca dông pay náy kô câ hên têe khon náa bêng**
No matter where you walk, you see only people with sullen faces.

**mây wâa ca bôck kii khrâng khâw kô khoŋ mây yùcch fâng**
No matter how many times you tell him, he won’t listen.

### 9.2.4 Purpose clauses: ‘in order to’

Purpose clauses often begin with **phûa** (thîi) ca (‘in order to’):

**khâw kín aahàa thûuk thûuk phûa** (thîi) ca prâyàt tû̀n
He eats cheap food in order to economise.

**phôm tham yâŋ nân phûa** (thîi) ca chûay phêân
I did that in order to help a friend.

**raw ca dông thàaŋ klaŋ khùŋ phûa ca dây mây sìa weelaa**
We’ll travel overnight so as not to waste time.
Additive clauses: ‘apart from’

A common pattern for giving additional information is **น้อยค้าก **... ลีว ... ยัง ... (ดูย) (**apart from ... still ... (too)**):

**น้อยค้าก ชียงใหม่ ลีว ราว ยัง ปาย ลำปาง ดูย**

Apart from Chiangmai, we went to Lampang, too.

**น้อยค้าก น่าน ลีว ยัง มี สาม ิถิ่น ถิ่น ลา ย่าา**

Apart from using a lot of petrol, the repair costs are expensive, too.

Time clauses

Some common time clause expressions include:

**พอ ... ปุ่ม (กี่) ...**  no sooner ... than ...

... **ปุ่ม** ... **ปั๊ป**  no sooner ... than ...

เมื่อ ... (กี่) ... when (past) ...

เวลา ... (กี่) ... when ...

หลังจากที่ ... (กี่) ... after ...

ก่อนที่ ... (กี่) ... before ...

ขณะที่ ... (กี่) ... while ...

tอ่อนที่ ... (กี่) ... while ...

ไม่ร่วมที่ ... (กี่) ... while ...

No sooner does he sit down in front of the TV than he falls asleep.

No sooner do I (start to) eat than I feel full.
When I was a student, I smoked a lot.

Before withdrawing the money, I'll have to discuss it with my husband.

While I was chatting on the phone, someone called me.

9.3 Direct and indirect speech

Both direct and indirect speech are introduced by ᵇᵃᵃ (5.9). When pronouns are omitted in the second clause, direct and indirect speech become identical in form. ᵇᵃᵃ plays the role of inverted commas in direct speech and ‘that’ in indirect speech:

kháw bück ᵇᵃᵃ (kháw) ca mây pay

He said that he’s not going.

kháw bück ᵇᵃᵃ (phom) ca mây pay

He said, ‘I’m not going.’

For indirect questions, see 12.4.

9.4 Imperatives

A simple verb or verb phrase is the most basic form of command. This can sound abrupt and is normally softened by adding the mild command particle sí or thá at the end of the sentence, or the more insistent particle síi (10.3). Commands can be further softened by the use of polite particles (10.1):

duu sí

Look!

pit pratuu sí khá

Shut the door, please.
Commands can also be expressed by the patterns VERB (PHRASE) + REDUPLICATED ADJECTIVE (7.1.2) and VERB + häufig + ADJECTIVE (7.1.5):

phûut dïi dïi
พูดดี ๆ
Speak nicely!

càt häufig riapròoy
จัดให้เรียบร้อย
Arrange things tidily!

First person imperatives (‘Let’s . . .’) can be expressed by the pattern, VERB (PHRASE) + thèè:

pay kin khá¤ nhèck thèè
ไปกินข้าวตอและ
Let’s go and eat out!

cò is an imperative which appears in written instructions, as for example, at the top of an examination paper:

cò tòø kham thàam
จงตอบคำถาม
Answer the (following) questions.

See also negative imperatives (11.8) and requesting someone to do/not do something (15.4.4, 15.4.5).

9.5 Exemplification

Examples are commonly enclosed within the ‘wrap-around’ pattern chên . . . pen tôn (‘for example, . . .’); however, either chên or pen tôn may be omitted:

tàø tham lâay yàaø chên sàk phàa hûng khàaw tàt yàa pen tôn
tàø 꾸었��ยาย ותี่ซี่ เติม ตอ บรรเทาปอนตัน
I have to do lots of things, such as washing, cooking and cutting the grass.

‘To give an example’ is yòk (‘to raise’) tua yàaø (‘example’):

khêø yók tua yàaø làmø
ขอยกตัวอย่างหนึ่ง
Let me give an example.
9.6 Exclamatory particles

| わっ | あわ | Contradicting, chiding; disappointment: **Hey!; Oh!** (Is that so?). |
| や | や | Surprise: **Eh?; What?** |
| ウー | ウー | Thinking or wondering: **Ermm . . .** |
| ハョイ | ハョイ | Calling attention: **Hey! Hold on a minute!** |
| メ | メ | Surprise: **Goodness!** |
| どお ほー | どお ほー | Surprise: indignation; **Wow! Oh yeah?** |
| あ | あ | Realization: **Ah! (Now I understand).** |
| ター | ター | Shock, horror: **Good Lord!** More common in female speech; variations include **ターザー, ターサー, ターサー** and **ターサー サー**. |
| うい | うい | Pain or mishap: **Ouch!; Oops!** |
Sentence particles occur at the end of an utterance and serve a grammatical or communicative function. They can be divided into three main groups: (a) question particles; (b) polite particles; and (c) mood particles.

### 10.1 Question particles

Question particles are relatively straightforward. They are few in number and all occur at the end of an utterance to transform it into a question which requires a ‘yes/no’ answer. They are dealt with in 12.1.

### 10.2 Polite particles

Polite particles are added to the end of an utterance to show respect to the addressee. The most common are khráp, used by males at the end of statements and questions, khâ used by females at the end of statements and khá, also used by females, but at the end of questions:

- **pay náy khráp?**
  ไปไหนครับ
  Where are you going? (male asking)
- **kláp báan khâ**
  กลับบ้านคะ
  I’m going home. (female responding)
- **arjy máy khá?**
  อร่อยไหมคะ
  Is it tasty? (female asking)
- **arjy khráp**
  อร่อยครับ
  Yes. (male responding)
Polite particles are also used as response particles to mean ‘yes’ or, when preceded by the negative particle máy, ‘no’.

Polite particles are used after someone’s name to call their attention; the female particles khá and cá are sometimes pronounced khāa and cáa respectively, the change of tone and vowel-lengthening signalling the speaker’s closeness or desired closeness to the person she is addressing.

khun māe khāa?
คุณแม่呀
Mummy? (daughter speaking)
– cáa
– จ้า
– Yes? (mother responding)

The most common polite particles are as follows.

**10.2.1** khráp (ครับ)

Used by male speakers only, at the end of both statements and questions as a sign of politeness; used after a name to attract that person’s attention; used in isolation as a response when one’s name is called (when the vowel is often lengthened to khráap); used in isolation as a ‘yes’ response (12.1.2; 12.1.4); used, often repetitively, to reassure speaker of one’s attention, for example on the telephone (khráp ... khráp ... khráp); used after máy to mean ‘no’. In Bangkok speech the r is typically lost and khráp becomes kháp.

**10.2.2** khráp phōm (ครับเพลี)

Used by male speakers only; interchangeable with khráp (above) except it is not used in isolation with the negative máy; usage has only become widespread in the last decade or so, and may be just a passing fad. Often used humorously as a sign of exaggerated deference or politeness.

**10.2.3** khá (คะ)

Used by female speakers only, at the end of questions as a sign of politeness; used after a name to attract that person’s attention; used in isolation as a response when one’s name is called; used in polite requests after the particle sí.
10.2.4  khâ (kh̄a)
Used by female speakers only, at the end of statements as a sign of politeness; used in isolation as a response when one’s name is called (when the vowel is often lengthened to khâa); used in isolation as a ‘yes’ response (12.1.2; 12.1.4); used to reassure speaker of one’s attention (khâ . . . khâ . . . khâ) when the vowel may also be lengthened to khâa; used after mây to mean ‘no’.

10.2.5  khâa (kh̄a)
Used by female speakers only after a name to attract the person’s attention; can also be used in isolation as a response when one’s name is called.

10.2.6  há/hâ (h̄a)
Used by male speakers as an informal substitute for khráp; used by female speakers as an informal substitute for khâ; male pronunciation is characterised by a distinctive final glottal stop not associated with female usage.

10.2.7  hâ (h̄a)
Used by female speakers as an informal substitute for khâ.

10.2.8  cá (c̄a)
Used by adult male and female speakers at the end of questions when talking to children, servants or people of markedly lower social status; used as a ‘sweet-talk’ question particle between males and females or as a ‘best friends’ question particle between females; used after the name of a child, servant or inferior to attract that person’s attention; used in polite requests after the particle sí.

10.2.9  câ (c̄a)
Used by adult male and female speakers at the end of a statement when speaking to children, servants and people of inferior status; between males and females denotes anything from easy familiarity to ‘sweet talk’; between females signals ‘best friends talk’; used as a response when one’s name is called (when the vowel is often lengthened to câa); used in isolation as a ‘yes’ response; used to reassure speaker of one’s attention (câa . . .
câa . . . câa) when the vowel is normally lengthened; used after may to mean ‘no’.

10.2.10 câa (š)  
Used by older or senior male and female speakers after a younger or junior person’s name to attract that person’s attention (e.g. parents or adults calling children); similarly used between equals as a sign of affection; can also be used in isolation as a response, more typically by females, when one’s name is called.

10.2.11 wá/wâ/wóoy (ʁ/)  
An impolite or informal particle, used to indicate rudeness, anger and aggressiveness when speaking to strangers, or intimacy with close friends of equal status; wá is used with questions and wâ/wóoy with statements; more common in male speech but can be used by females; it is the particle favoured by baddies on the big screen, used by drinking friends as the evening progresses, and the one to snarl in the expression tham aray wá? (‘What the hell are you doing?’) if you have the misfortune to encounter an intruder in your house.

10.2.12 yá/yâ (ʁ/)  
An impolite or informal particle, similar to wá/wâ (above), but restricted in usage to female speakers.

10.2.13 phâyâkhâ (ʁ/)pheekhâ (ʁ/)  
When speaking to royalty, male speakers use phâyâkhâ and female speakers pheekhâ.

10.3 Mood particles  
Mood particles represent a major obstacle for the serious learner. Their function is often conveyed in English purely by intonation, so they cannot easily be translated; to complicate matters, one particle may have several variant forms, involving a change in tone or vowel length, with each form reflecting a subtle difference. Many basic language courses deliberately omit mood particles for the sake of simplicity and it is possible to avoid
using them and get by quite adequately. But without mood particles, statements often sound incomplete, abrupt or even impolite. They are best learnt by imitation; everyday conversation, television, dialogue in novels and interviews in newspapers and magazines all provide a ready supply of examples, although the written form of a particle does not always reflect its normal pronunciation. This section discusses some of the most common particles; for a more detailed treatment, see Brown (1969) and Cooke (1989).

10.3.1 dûay (ดาว)

This particle is typically used in polite requests, apologies and cries for help:

khœîøóøò dûay
ขยกราโต๊ะ ชาว
Sorry!

chék bin dûay
เช็คบิน ชาว
Can I have the bill, please?

chûay dûay
ช่วยด้วย ชาว
Help!

10.3.2 (ล่า)

A contracted form of lêew (‘already’), one use of lâ is to indicate that a state has been reached (5.7.2):

phêê lá
พอจะ ล่า
That’s enough.

thùuêk lá
อุ่นจะ ล่า
That’s right/correct.

dii lá
ดีละ ล่า
That’s fine.

aw lá
เอาละ ล่า
OK!; Right, then!
It can also be used to indicate that a situation is about to change (probably representing a contraction of ca ... léew ‘to be about to . . . ’):

**phòhm klàp bâan lá**
ผมกลับบ้านละ
I’m going home.

**pay lá**
ไปละ
I’m leaving.

**ca kìn lá**
จะกินละ
I’m going to eat.

Another use is with iik (‘again’) to show mild irritation:

**maa iik lá**
มาอีกละ
He’s back again.

**sômchaay iik lá**
สมชัยอีกละ
It’s Somchai again.

### 10.3.3 là (ละ)

This particle occurs commonly in questions, as a way of pressing for an answer; in the following two examples, it is common to hear là reduced to à:

**thàmmay là?**
ทำไมละ
Why?

**pay nây là?**
ไปไหนละ
Where are you going?

Sometimes the particle conveys a sense of irritation, similar to English ‘why on earth . . . ?’:

**thàmmay têng pay bôck khâw là?**
ทำไมต้องไปบอกเธอละ
Why on earth did you have to go and tell her?
Where on earth have you gone and hidden it?

It is also used in the pattern léew ... là (‘And how about . . .?, What about . . .?’) to change the focus or topic of conversation:

**léew khun là?**

แล้วคุณละ

And how about you?

**léew phrû niî là?**

แล้วพรุ่งนี้ละ

And how about tomorrow?

### 10.3.4 *ná* (นะ)

This particle often serves to make a sentence milder or less abrupt by seeking approval, agreement or compromise. Commands are similarly made milder and convey a sense of coaxing and urging; *ná* often corresponds to the use of ‘. . ., OK?’ or ‘. . ., right?’ in English:

**pay là ná**

ไปนะ

I’m going now, OK?

**chán máy wâa ná**

ฉันไม่ว่านะ

I don’t mind, OK?

**yàa bòk thoø ná**

อย่าบอกเธอนะ

Don’t tell her, OK?

*ná* is also used when requesting someone to repeat a piece of information, similar to English ‘What was that again?:

**aray ná?**

อะไรนะ

Pardon? What was that again?

**khray ná?**

ใครนะ

Who was that again?
**khun kláp m̀arày ná?**

When was that again, that you're going back?

Note also the use of ná as a question particle when seeking agreement (see 12.1.4).

### 10.3.5 ná/nâ (น่า/น่า)

This particle is used when persuading somebody to do something or accept an idea when they are reluctant (cf. Come on, . . .):

**yàa pay nâa**

อย่าไปนะ

Oh, come on, don't go.

It is also used to highlight the topic of a sentence, in much the same way that some speakers of English use ‘right’:

**phûuyì nhó kò pen yàaŋ nân**

ผู้หญิงจะเป็นอย่างนั้น

Women, right, are like that.

**t̀oon khruu s̀cen yiù r̀a phôm fang mài rùu rêmû loyy**

ตอนครูสอนอยู่บนแท่งไฟไม่รู้จะอยู่

When the teacher is teaching, right, I don’t understand a word.

### 10.3.6 nêy (หน่อย)

Polite request particle, basically meaning ‘just a little’; used to minimise the degree of imposition on the listener; similar in function to thii but used much more widely; commonly occurs in requests that begin with kh̀ô̂̄ or chûay:

**phûut cháa cháa nêy dàay mài?**

พูดช้าๆ หน่อยได้ไหม

Could you speak slowly, please?

**kh̀ô̂̄ duu nêy**

ขอหน่อย

Could I have a look, please?

**chûay pit thii wii nêy**

ช่วยปิดที่หน่อย

Please turn the TV off.
**10.3.7** นํ้าย (ไง)

Often used as a response to a statement or question to show that the respondent thinks the answer is self-evident:

- **kháw máy ยุ่ม khâa man**
  เขาไม่ยอม safeguards
  He wouldn’t kill it.
  - **kõ pen บ้าปญญา ล่ะ**
  - ถ้าเป็นไปได้จะ
  - Well, it’s sinful, of course.

- **sêa ชัน หาย pay นำ**?
  เลื้อนหายไปไหน
  Where’s my blouse disappeared to?
  - **นิ่ม น้ําย ยุ่น troŋ nii eeŋ**
  - ยุ่น อยู่ตรงนี้เอง
  - Here it is. Right here.

It is also used in the Thai equivalent of ‘here you are’, used when giving something to someone:

- **นิ่ม น้ําย ล้า กิร์ป/ข่า**
  นี่ให้ตรงบริเวณ
  Here you are!

**10.3.8** รัก/ลัก (หรือ)

Occurs most commonly at the end of negative statements to contradict the addressee’s statement or belief:

- **máy ทิ้ง ลัก**
  ไม่ต้องหรอก
  There’s no need. (when declining an offer)

- **ผิดกิร์ป**
  แพงจรับ
  It’s expensive.
  - **มáย ผิดลัก ข่า**
  - ไม่แพงหรอกคะ
  - No it isn’t.
In positive statements it can convey a qualified or somewhat hesitant acceptance of the addressee’s statement or belief:

**kõ ciŋ lǒk**
ก้องชิงหลวง
That’s true (but . . .)

**khāw phûut thay kēŋ**
เขาพูดใหญ่
He speaks Thai well.
- kõ kēŋ lǒk tê yaŋ khîn mây pen
  - ก้องหลวง เธ่ยแข้นไม่เป็น
- Yes . . . but he can’t write yet.

It can also be used to express sarcasm:

**pen phôc tua yàaŋ lǒk**
เป็นพอตัวอย่างหลวง
He’s a model parent!

or mild annoyance:

**phôm phûut dâay eeŋ lǒk**
ผมพูดอย่างหลวง
I can speak for myself.

**10.3.9**

This particle is most commonly used in commands. When pronounced with a short vowel and followed by a polite particle it does not convey any sense of abruptness and is widely used in polite requests (‘Do sit down, please’); more insistent requests and commands are conveyed when the particle is pronounced with a falling tone and longer vowel (‘Sit down!’):

**chêen nâŋ sì khá**
ชีนนั่งซิกะ
Please sit down.

**duu sì khráp**
ดูชี้รับ
Look!, Take a look!

**phûut iik thii sì khá**
พูดให้ซิกะ
Please say that again.
Sit down! (and listen)

Shut the door! (I've told you once already)

Another use of this particle is to emphasise a positive response to a question:

Shall we go?
– pay sii
– Yes, let's.

Do you want to try it?
– yàak sii
– Yes, I would.

It is also used to contradict negative statements:

He probably won’t come.
– maa sii
– Oh yes, he will!

I don’t speak English well.
– kêg sii
– Oh yes, you do!

A mild, ‘urging’ particle, used in suggestions, invitations, requests and mild commands; can often be conveyed in English by ‘you’d/we’d better’
‘...’, ‘why don’t you/we...’, ‘go ahead and...’, ‘let’s...’, depending on the context; when it is used to urge someone to do something, a reason is often given, too; when joint activity is being suggested, it is often preceded by kan (‘together’); often reduced to hè in informal speech.

kláp bāan thè dûk lèw
กับบ้านแล้ว ดูแล้ว
You’d better go home. It’s late.

pay kin kan thè
ไปกินกันเถอะ
Let’s go and eat.

dıaw hè
dีอาจจะ
Steady on!/Not so fast!

10.3.11 thii (ที)
Polite request particle, basically meaning ‘just this once’; used to minimise degree of imposition on listener; similar in function to nêy but much more restricted in use; note the idiomatic khô thii:

khô thôot thii
ขอโทษที
Sorry!

khô phûut thii
ขอพูดที
Can I say something/get a word in?

chûay pit thii wii thii
ช่วยปิดทีเร็วที
Please turn the TV off.

khô thii
ขอที่
Don’t!
Negative words in Thai are (a) mây (‘not, no’), widely used in negative sentences and negative responses to questions; (b) mí, a variant of mây; (c) yàa (‘don’t’) and (d) hâam (‘to forbid’), both used in negative commands and prohibitions; (e) plâaw (‘no’), a negative response which contradicts the assumption in the question; and (f) yaŋ (‘not yet’), used only as a negative response to . . . rû yaŋ? questions (12.1.6).

11.1 Negating main verbs

Verbs are generally negated by the pattern mây + VERB (PHRASE):

- **chán mây pay**
  ตั้นไม่ไป
  I’m not going.

- **aahān mây arỳy**
  อาหารไม่อร่อย
  The food isn’t tasty.

Verb compounds (5.3) also follow this pattern:

- **chán mây plîan plêŋ**
  ตั้นไม่เปลี่ยนแปลง
  I’m not changing

- **chán mây duu lêe khâw**
  ตั้นไม่ดูแลเขย
  I don’t look after her.

For negation of ‘to be’, see 5.1.
11.2 Negating resultative verbs

Combinations of verb + resultative verbs (5.4) are superficially similar to verb compounds, but are negated by the pattern VERB + (OBJECT) + mây + RESULTATIVE VERB:

raw นวด mây làp
เวราณอนไม่หลับ
We didn’t sleep.

kháw ห้าม mây ค้อ
เข้าหานิ่งจ้อย
He can’t find it.

chán khit mây ง้อ
นั่นคิดไม่ออก
I can’t work it out.

kháw แอน mây kháw cay/mây rúu rōnt
eเข้าหานิ่งเข้าใจ/ไม่รู้เรื่อง
He doesn’t understand. (what he is reading)

phóm faŋ mây than
ผมฝงไม่ทัน
I can’t keep up. (they’re speaking too fast)

bōk mây thùuk
บอกไม่ถูก
It’s hard to say.

chán duu นาง mây còp
ถ้าดูหนังไม่จบ
I didn’t see the film through to the end.

lôuk kin khâaw mây mòt
ลูกเกิดข่าวไปหมด
My kids don’t eat up all their rice.

The word yạŋ can be added, either immediately before mây, or immediately before the main verb, to convey the sense that the action has not yet produced the intended result:

chán duu นาง yạŋ mây còp/chán yạŋ duu นาง mây còp
ถ้าดูหนังยังไม่จบ/ถ้ายังดูหนังยังไม่จบ
I haven’t yet finished watching the film.
He hasn’t yet finished work.

11.3 Negating auxiliary verbs

There are three patterns for negating auxiliary verbs; note that ต้อง (must) can occur in both patterns, but with different meanings:

11.3.1 ผิด + AUXILIARY VERB + ผิด (PHRASE)

A relatively small number of verbs follow this pattern, the most common being:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AUXILIARY VERB</th>
<th>ผิด + VERB (PHRASE)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>เคย (khøøy)</td>
<td>ผิด + ผิด (ผิด)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ควร (khuan)</td>
<td>ผิด + ผิด (ผิด)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>น่า (nåa)</td>
<td>ผิด + ผิด (ผิด)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>อยาก (yàak)</td>
<td>ผิด + ผิด (ผิด)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ต้อง (ต้อง)</td>
<td>ผิด + ผิด (ผิด)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

EX: ไม่เคยกิน

I’ve never eaten it.

EX: คุณไม่ควรจะซื้อ

You shouldn’t have bought it.

EX: เราไม่อยากจะกลับบ้าน

We don’t want to go home.

EX: คุณไม่ต้องบอกเขา

You don’t have to tell him/There’s no need to tell him.

11.3.2 AUXILIARY VERB + ผิด + VERB (PHRASE)

Auxiliary verbs which follow this pattern include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AUXILIARY VERB</th>
<th>ผิด + VERB (PHRASE)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>จะ (ca)</td>
<td>ผิด + ผิด (ผิด)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>อาจ (àat)</td>
<td>ผิด + ผิด (ผิด)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

EX: ต้องทำให้เขา

You must tell him.

EX: ไม่ต้องบอกเขา

There’s no need to tell him.
VERB (PHRASE) + máy + AUXILIARY VERB

This pattern occurs with the modal verbs expressing ability and permission, pen, dâay and wây (5.6.2):

kháw phûut thay máy pen
He can't speak Thai.

khun pay máy dâay
You can't go.
I can’t stand it.

11.4 *mây día* + VERB (PHRASE)

The pattern, *mây día* + VERB (PHRASE) is used in the following cases.

11.4.1 To form a negative past with verbs of motion, action, utterance, etc.

It is not used with stative verbs or pre-verbs (5.7.7):

- **raw mây día s˚ną**
  เราไม่ได้ซื้อ
  *We didn’t buy it.*

- **phéan mây día maa**
  เพื่อนไม่ได้มา
  *My friend didn’t come.*

11.4.2 To contradict an assumption

It does not indicate any particular tense and may refer to past or present:

- **b˚an y˚u kru˚thep l˚u?**
  บ้านอยู่กรุงเทพฯหรือ
  *Your house is in Bangkok, then?*
  - **pl˚aw m˚y día y˚u kru˚thep**
  - ไปแล้ว ไม่ได้อยู่กรุงเทพฯ
  - No, it’s not in Bangkok.

- **kh˚w pen f˚n l˚u?**
  เขาเป็นแฟนหรือ
  *She’s your girlfriend, then?*
  - **pl˚aw m˚y día pen**
  - ไปแล้ว ไม่ได้เป็น
  - No, she’s not.
You taught English, then?
– plàaw mây dây s̀wà
– เปล่า ไมได้สอน
– No, I didn’t.

To negate the verbs chàu ('to be named') and pen ('to be').
See 5.1:
kháw mây dây chàu t̀y
เข้าไม่ได้ชื่อ
Her name isn’t Toi.
phòm mây dây pen khou ameerikan
ผมไม่ได้เป็นนักเมธีกัน
I’m not an American.

mây chây + NOUN

mây chây + NOUN negates phrases consisting of the verb pen ('to be') + NOUN (5.1); it is often interchangeable with mây dây pen + NOUN.
nîi mây chây bànn kháw
นี่ไม่ใช่บ้าน
This isn’t his house.
chàn pen khouu mây chây m̀c
ฉันเป็นครูไม่ใช่หมอ
I’m a teacher, not a doctor.
kháw mây chây phòan
เขาไม่ใช่เพื่อน
He’s not a friend.

‘It is neither . . ., nor . . .’, is expressed by the pattern NOUN 1 + k̀ m̀y chây + NOUN 2 + k̀ m̀y ch̀aw:
phàk k̀ m̀y chây phònłamàay k̀ m̀y ch̀aw
ผักกี่ไม่ใช่ ผลไม่กี่ไม่เชิง
It’s neither vegetable, nor fruit.
mây mii (‘there are not’) is placed before a noun to form the negative quantifier ‘not any’ and ‘no’:

mây mii rót mee
ไม่มีรถแล้ว
There aren’t any buses.

mây mii phèn maa yíam chán
ไม่มีเพื่อนมาเยี่ยมฉัน
No friends came to visit me.

mây mii is also used to negate the indefinite pronouns khray (‘anyone’) aray (‘anything’) and thîi nây (‘anywhere’):

mây mii khray rúu
ไม่ใครรู้
No one knows.

mây mii aray kàot khènn
ไม่อะไรเกิดขึ้น
Nothing happened.

mây mii thîi nây thîi mô
ไม่มีที่ไหนที่เหมาะสม
There’s nowhere suitable.

**11.7 Modifying negatives: intensifying and softening**

Negative statements are intensified or softened by using a ‘wrap-around’ construction in which the verb occurs between the negative word and the modifier: mây + VERB (PHRASE) + INTENSIFIER/SOFTENER.

Common negative intensifiers are:

mây . . . løay ไม่ . . . เลย not at all . . .

mây . . . nê ไม่ . . . แม่ not . . . for sure

mây . . . dèt khàat ไม่ . . . เต็มที่ absolutely not . . .

chán mây chốp løay ฉันไม่ชอบเลย
I don’t like it at all.
kháw mây maa nêez
ekəmməm
He is not coming for sure.

A more elaborate pattern is mây . . . mée têe + CLASSIFIER + diaw (‘not . . ., not even a single . . .’):

phôm mây rûucâk khray mée têe khon diaw
mëm môrëjítêi rosəmətën sëiəə
I don’t know even a single person.

kháw mây sôn cay mée têe nit diaw
gei mi sëmiəmətën sëiəə
He is not even the slightest bit interested.

Common softeners are:

mây (khêy) . . . thâwrây
mây (khêy) . . . nák
mây (sûu) . . . nák

mây (khêy) sanûk thâwrây
mây khêy also commonly occurs without thâwrây or nák:

chán mây khêy chêwp
mëm mëkëmərəbb
I don’t like it very much.

11.8 Negative imperatives

Negative commands follow the pattern, yâa (‘Don’t’) + VERB (PHRASE), or hâam (‘It’s forbidden to . . .’) + VERB (PHRASE); both can be made more emphatic (‘absolutely not, under no circumstances, don’t ever . . .’) by adding pen an khàat or dét khàat after the verb or verb phrase, or modified in various other ways by the addition of mood particles (10.3). See also 15.4.5.

yâa/hâam bôk kháw (ná)
ōyə/ təməmələxə (nəz)
Don’t tell him (right?).
Don’t ever, under any circumstances, ring me again.

The pattern, yàa phòng + VERB (PHRASE) conveys the sense that it is the wrong time for doing something:

yàa phòng pit té ná
Don’t turn the air-conditioning off just yet, OK?

yàa phòng bòk kháw ná
Don’t tell him just yet, OK!

yàa phòng
Not now!

11.9 Negative causatives

Causative constructions (5.11) are negated according to the following patterns.

11.9.1 SUBJECT (human/non-human) + mây + tham + (inanimate OBJECT) + VERB

khó ñyam ná y ca mây tham sìa
I won’t damage it.

phòm mây dáy tham tèk khráp
I didn’t break it.

Note that mây dáy is used instead of mây to negate actions in the past (5.7.7).

11.9.2 SUBJECT (human) + mây + hây + (animate OBJECT) + VERB (PHRASE)

kháw mây hây phanrayaa tham  rağmen
He doesn’t let his wife work.
The father doesn’t let his children come home late.

We didn’t let him come.

When hay is preceded by a specifying verb, such as bòok (‘to tell’), the negative can take two distinct forms and meanings, depending on whether it is the specifying verb or hay which is being negated.

11.9.3 SUBJECT (human) + specifying verb + máy + hay + (animate OBJECT) + VERB (PHRASE)

kháw bòok máy hay chán chay nôn màak
He told me not to spend a lot of money.

mía tían máy hay kháw kláp bàn dèk
His wife warned him not to come home late.

phèp màam máy hay chán kin làw
My father forbids me to drink alcohol.

húa náà pàtìsèet máy hay phôm làa pùay
My boss refuses to let me take sick leave.

Alternatively, the object can occur after the specifying verb and before máy hay:

kháw bòok chán máy hay chay nôn màak
He told me not to spend a lot of money.

phèp màam chán máy hay kin làw
My father forbids me to drink alcohol.

Note that in negative causative constructions pàtìsèet (‘to refuse’) and hàam (‘forbid’) occur with máy hay (and not hay on its own), creating an apparent ‘double negative’ (‘refuse not to let’, ‘forbid not to let’). It
should also be noted that **hâam** can occur without **hây**, both in simple causative sentences and in negative imperatives (11.8):

**phêc hâam chán kin lâw**

My father forbids me to drink alcohol.

**hâam pêt pratuu**

Don't open the door!

**11.9.4** SUBJECT (human) + **mây** + specifying verb + **hây** + (animate OBJECT) + VERB (PHRASE)

**mèt mêy anûyàat hây lûuk pay roög rian**

The mother does not allow her children to go to school.

**chán mêy ycom hây khâw tham yaaŋ nân**

I don’t let him do that.

**khâw mêy dây tuan hây raw rawa khâmooy**

He didn’t warn us to watch out for burglars.

**11.9.5** SUBJECT (human or non-human) + **mây** + **tham hây** + (OBJECT) + VERB (PHRASE)

**rût tít yuŋ kêt mêy tham hây chán dëat rôn**

Traffic jams and mosquito bites don’t bother me.

**tûn sâay mêy tham hây pay tham nân cháa**

Getting up late doesn’t make me late for work.

**11.10** Negative questions

Negative questions (‘You didn’t . . . did you?’) are formed according to the following patterns:

(a) **mây** + VERB + ̀ì̀̀a?
(b) **mây** + VERB + chây mêy?
(c) SUBJECT + VERB + mêy chây ̀ì̀̀a?
Note that the question word máy? (12.1.1) is not used in negative questions.

Negative questions present a problem for English speakers in that yes/no answers are reversed in Thai: where in English, we say ‘No (I didn’t)’ and ‘Yes (I did)’, Thai has ‘Yes (I didn’t)’ and ‘No (I did)’. In replying to negative questions, providing additional clarification to a yes/no response (shown in brackets in the examples) can pre-empt misunderstandings:

\[
\text{khun máy súu lês?}  \\
\text{คุณไม่ซื้อหรือ}  \\
\text{You’re not buying it, right?}  \\
- \text{khråp (máy súu)/súu sìi khâ}  \\
- \text{กรุ๊ป (ไม่ซื้อ)/ซื้อไม่}  \\
- \text{No (I’m not)/Yes, I am.}
\]

\[
\text{khun máy rúu chây máy?}  \\
\text{คุณไม่รู้ไหม}  \\
\text{You don’t know, right?}  \\
- \text{chây (máy rúu)/máy chây (rúu)}  \\
- \text{ใช้ (/ไม่รู้)/ไม่ใช่ (/รู้)}  \\
- \text{No (I don’t)/Yes (I do).}
\]

\[
\text{nîi rót không khun máy chây lês?}  \\
\text{นี่รถของคุณไม่ใช่หรือ}  \\
\text{This is your car, isn’t it?}  \\
- \text{chây (không phöm)/máy chây}  \\
- \text{ใช้ (/ของผม)/ไม่ใช่}  \\
- \text{Yes (it’s mine)/No.}
\]

For negative why? questions (‘why didn’t you ..?’) see 12.2.7.

\section{Negative conditional clauses}

Negative conditional clauses (‘unless, otherwise if . . . not’) are introduced by máy yàa nán (‘otherwise’), often shortened to máy yàa nán or máy qán, michânná (‘otherwise’) or simply máy; as in positive conditional clauses (9.2.1), the word thàa (‘if’) is frequently omitted:

\[
\text{máy yàa nán raw ca pay râp}  \\
\text{ไม่อย่างนั้นเราจะไปรับ}  \\
\text{Otherwise we’ll go and pick (her) up.}
\]

\[
\text{michânná phôm máy pay}  \\
\text{ไม่จะนั่งมาไม่ไป}  \\
\text{Otherwise I’m not going.}
\]
mây yàak pay kô mày têŋ
ไม่อยากไปก็ไม่ต้อง
If you don’t want to go, (you) don’t have to.

mây bôk kô chûay mày dàay
ไม่บอกก็ช่วยไม่ได้
Unless (you) tell (me), (I) can’t help.

mây chây wan níi kô têŋ pen prûŋ níi
ไม่เช่นนั้นก็ต้องเป็นพุธนี้
If not today, then it must be tomorrow.

### 11.12 Saying ‘no’

The negative answer to a yes/no question is determined by the question particle. Thus, for example, a ‘no’ answer to a question that ends in . . . mày? is mày + VERB (PHRASE), while for a question ending in . . . lêew rû yaŋ?, it is yaŋ. Yes/no answers are dealt with in more detail in 12.1, but the following table provides a basic summary of the most likely negative responses:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions ending in:</th>
<th>NO answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>. . . mày?</td>
<td>mày + VERB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>. . . lô?</td>
<td>mày (+ POLITE PARTICLE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>. . . chây mày?</td>
<td>mày chây</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>mày chôëŋ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>. . . lêew rû yaŋ?</td>
<td>yaŋ (+ POLITE PARTICLE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>yaŋ mày + VERB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>. . . rû plàaw?</td>
<td>mày + VERB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>plàaw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>. . . ná?</td>
<td>mày + VERB</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Note also the more qualified ‘no’ response, máy chào (‘not really, not exactly, I wouldn’t say that’):

น่าจะฆ่ามากยัง?

Was it very boring?
– Không chào
– ไม่เป็นเชิง
– Well, not exactly.

11.13 Useful negative expressions

- máy pen ray ไม่เป็นไร never mind!
- máy mii thaa ไม่มีทาง no way!
- máy mii wan ไม่มีวัน never!
- máy mii panhãa ไม่มีปัญหา no problem!; without question
- chào máy dâay ไม่ใช่ได้ (it’s) no good
- máy pen râa ไม่เป็นเรื่อง (it’s) nonsense
- máy khâw râa ไม่ใช่เรื่อง (it’s) irrelevant
- máy aw nãy ไม่เอาไหน (it’s) useless, good-for-nothing
- pen pay máy dâay เป็นไปไม่ได้ (it’s) impossible
- máy kiaw ไม่เกี่ยว (it’s) irrelevant

khâw phûut máy pen râa เขาพูดไม่เป็นเรื่อง
He’s talking nonsense.

khâw pen khon máy aw nãy เขาเป็นคนไม่เอาไหน
He’s a good-for-nothing.

11.14 Two further negatives: mí and hãa . . . máy

Two other negative forms to be aware of, which are most likely to be encountered in written Thai, are mí, a polite, rather formal variant of
mây, and the ‘wrap-around’ expression, hāa + VERB (PHRASE) + mây, which can seriously mislead the unsuspecting learner:

khâw tham dooy mi dây wâŋ prayôot aray
He did it without hoping for any benefit.

khâw hâa dây côp mahâawîtthayaalay mây
He did not graduate from university.
Chapter 12

Questions

12.1 Yes/no questions

Statements are transformed into questions that require a simple yes/no answer by adding the question particles, máy?, lọ?, chậy máy?, ná?, rú plàaw? or rú yâŋ?, to the end of the statement:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>statement</th>
<th>question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>aahāan yìipùn phẹẹg</td>
<td>aahāan yìipùn phẹẹg máy?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>อาหารญี่ปุ่นแพง</td>
<td>อาหารญี่ปุ่นแพงไหม</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese food is expensive.</td>
<td>Is Japanese food expensive?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kháw pen phên</td>
<td>kháw pen phên chây máy?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>เข่าเป็นเพื่อน</td>
<td>เข่าเป็นเพื่อนไหม</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He’s a friend.</td>
<td>He’s a friend, is he?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is no single word for ‘yes’ and for ‘no’; the appropriate way of saying yes/no is determined by the question particle used.

12.1.1... máy? questions

mây? is an information-seeking question particle used in neutral questions which do not anticipate either a positive or negative response. Answers to simple máy? questions are formed as follows:

Yes: VERB

No: máy + VERB

klay máy?

Is it far?
If the question includes more than one verb, the first verb is normally used in responses:

- **yàak pay duu nang mây?**
  - **Would you like to go and see a film?**
  - **yàak/mây yàak**
  - **Yes/No.**

Although the question particle **mây?** is written in Thai script as if it had a rising tone, in normal speech it is pronounced with a high tone. Note that **mây?** when used alone does not occur in negative questions (11.10).

### 12.1.2 ... ใ�/รู้? questions

**ใ�?** is a confirmation-seeking question particle used in questions which make an assumption and seek confirmation of that assumption. Answers to **ใ�?** questions are formed as follows:

**Yes:**  
- **khráp/khâ** (+ VERB)  
  or  
  VERB + **khráp/khâ**

**No:**  
- **mây** + VERB  
  or  
  **plâaw** + **khráp/khâ** (+ **mây** + VERB) *

*Note **plâaw** conveys a stronger sense of denying the assumption made in the question; to avoid abruptness, it may be followed by a further clarifying statement.

- **kháw chêep ใ�?**
  - **He likes it, does he?**
  - **khráp chêep**
  - **Yes.**
  - **mây chêep/plâaw khâ mây chêep ใ�?**
  - **No./No, he doesn’t like it at all.**
chây máy? questions are similar to lâo? questions (12.1.2) in that they seek confirmation of the assumption made in the question. Answers to chây máy? questions are formed as follows:

Yes:  chây
No:  máy chây

mêk pen khôn thay chây máy?
Your mother is Thai, isn't she?
– chây/mây chây
– ใช่/ไม่ใช่
– Yes/No.

châi máy? also commonly occurs in negative questions (11.10).

ná? is an agreement-seeking question particle used in questions which invite agreement with the preceding statement (e.g. It's a nice day today, isn't it?), rather than to confirm whether or not the statement is true; it is commonly used in conversation-initiating questions. (For other uses of ná, see 10.3.) Answers to ná? questions are formed as follows:

Yes:  khráp/khâ
     or
     VERB + khráp/khâ
No:  máy + VERB + khráp/khâ

wan níi rôø ná?
It's hot today, isn't it?
– khâ (khráp)/rôø khâ (khráp)
– ค่ะ(ครับ)/รู้นะคะ(ครับ)
– Yes.

mây rôø khâ (khráp)
– ไม่รู้นะคะ(ครับ)
– No.
12.1.5 . . . rú plàaw? questions

rú plàaw? questions, although not as brusque as the English translation (‘. . . or not?’) suggests, demand a straight ‘yes’ or ‘no’ answer. Answers to rú plàaw? questions are formed as follows:

If the question refers to the present or future:

Yes: VERB

No:  mây + VERB
     or
     plàaw (+ mây + VERB)

khun ca pay rú plàaw?
คุณจะไปหรือเปล่า
Are you going (or not)?
– pay/mây pay
– ไป/ไม่ไป
– Yes/No.

kháw bèa rú plàaw?
เขาเห็นหรือเปล่า
Is he bored (or not)?
– bèa/mây bèa or plàaw mây bèa
– เบ้อ/ไม่เบ้อ or เปล่า ไม่เปล่า
– Yes/No.

If the question refers to the past, stative verbs (5.2) behave differently to other verbs:

Yes:  VERB + líèw
       or
       STATIVE VERB (+ khráp/khá)

No:  mây dây + VERB
     or
     plàaw + khráp/khá (+ mây dây + VERB)
     or
     mây + STATIVE VERB
     or
     plàaw + khráp/khá (+ mây + STATIVE VERB)
khun bɔ̀k khâw, rú plàaw?
คุณบอกหรือเปล่า
Did you tell him (or not)?
– bɔ̀k lêew/mây dây bɔ̀k
– บอกแล้วไม่ได้บอก
– Yes/No.

khun bêa rú plàaw?
คุณเบื่อหรือเปล่า
Were you bored (or not)?
– bêa/mây bêa or plàaw khrâp (khâ) mây bêa.
– เบื่อ/ไม่เบื่อ หรือ เปลี่ยงรับ(ครั้ง) ไม่เล็ก
– Yes/No.

As an alternative to rú plàaw? (‘... or not?’) questions can also be formed using rú mây; answers follow the same pattern as for rú plàaw? questions:

khun ca pay rú mây?
คุณจะไปหรือไม่
Are you going or not?

Note that rú in rú plàaw? and rú yâŋ? (12.1.6) is spelt as if it were pronounced rûu.

12.1.6  ... (léew) rú yâŋ? questions

(léew) rú yâŋ? questions ask whether something has happened yet; the word léew (‘already’) is often omitted in spoken Thai. Answers to (léew) rú yâŋ? questions are formed as follows, with the negative response yâŋ often expanded to avoid sounding too abrupt:

Yes: VERB + léew
No: yâŋ khrâp/khâ expanded by either
    yâŋ mây dây + VERB
    or
    yâŋ mây + STATIVE VERB

kin khàaw (lêew) rú yâŋ?
กินข้าว(แล้ว)หรือยัง
Have you eaten yet?
– kin lêew/yâŋ khrâp(khâ) yâŋ mây dây kin
– กินแล้ว/ยังรับ(ครั้ง) ยังไม่ได้กิน
– Yes/No, I haven’t.
phoc (léew) rú yaŋ?
ผล(แล้ว)หรือยัง
Is that enough?
 – phoc léew/yaŋ yaŋ mây phoc
 – ผลแล้ว/ยัง ยังไม่พอ
 – Yes/No.

(léew) rú yaŋ? questions are also used to ask whether someone is married or has children:

khun têŋ gaaŋ (léew) rú yaŋ?
คุณแต่งงาน(แล้ว)หรือยัง
Are you married?
 – têŋ léew/yaŋ khráp yaŋ mây têŋ
 – เหล่า(ยัง)หรือยัง ยังไม่แต่ง
 – Yes/No, I'm not.

khâw mii luûk (léew) rú yaŋ?
เขาหลุก(แล้ว)หรือยัง
Do they have any children?
 – mii léew/yaŋ khráp yaŋ mây mii
 – มีหลุก(ยัง)หรือยัง ยังไม่มี
 – Yes/No, they don’t.

Note that rú is spelt as if it were pronounced rûu.

[12.1.7] ca ... rú yaŋ? questions

Superficially similar to (léew) rú yaŋ? questions (see 12.1.6) are those that have the pattern ca + VERB + rú yaŋ? This construction refers not to past actions, but conveys the meaning ‘Do you want to ... yet?’ or ‘Are you ready to ... yet?’ Answers to ca + VERB + rú yaŋ? questions are formed as follows:

Yes: VERB
or
cá + VERB + léew

No: yaŋ khráp/khâ
or
yaŋ mây + VERB
Wh- questions

In English the Wh- question words (who?, what?, where?, why?, when?, which?, how?) normally occur at the beginning of the question. In Thai the position of some question words varies according to their grammatical function in the sentence, while others have a fixed position.

Most Wh- questions are answered by substituting the response word in the position in the sentence that the question word occupies.

Many of the Wh- question words also function as indefinite pronouns (‘anyone’, ‘anything’, etc., see 4.8).

12.2.1 Who? questions

The position of the question word khray? (‘who?’) is determined by its grammatical function in the sentence; if the question pattern is VERB + khray?, then the answer will be (VERB) + PERSON, while if the question is khray? + VERB (PHRASE), the answer will be PERSON + (VERB (PHRASE)):

khun pay kàp khray?
คุณไปกับใคร
Who are you going with?
– (pay) kàp phèn
– ไปกับเพื่อน
– With a friend.
12.2.2 Whose? questions

Whose? questions are formed by the pattern NOUN + (ข้อง) + khray (see also 3.5.12); when there is a preceding noun, ข้อง (‘of’) is often omitted; if there is no preceding noun, however, it may not be omitted:

บ้าน (ข้อง) khray?

Whose house?
– บ้าน (ข้อง) raw/ข้อง raw
– บ้าน(ของ)เรา/ข้องเรา
– Our house/Ours.

นี่ ข้อง khray?

Whose is this?
– ข้อง phôm
– ข้อง me
– It’s mine.

12.2.3 What? questions

What? questions are formed using the pattern VERB (PHRASE) + aray? (‘what?’); note, however, that aray? occurs before the aspect marker yuu (5.7.3) and directional verbs (5.5):

khaw chêu aray?

What’s her name?
– chêu têy
– ชื่อตั้ง
– Her name is Toi.
khun tham aray yùu?
คุณทำอะไรอยู่?
What are you doing?
– duu thi wii yùu
– ดูทีวีอยู่
– Watching TV.

khun sêw aray maa?
คุณซื้ออะไรมา?
What did you buy?

kàot aray khûn?
เกิดอะไรขึ้น?
What’s happening?

Note also the common idiomatic expression:

aray kan?
อะไรกัน?
What’s up?

Some English ‘What?’ questions use yaŋŋay? (‘How?’) rather than aray (see 12.2.8).

12.2.4 Which? questions

Which? questions are formed using the pattern VERB + (NOUN) + CLASSIFIER + nāy? (‘which?’):

aw náŋgông lêm nāy?
เอาหนังสือเล่มไหน?
Which book do you want?
– aw lêm nàn
– เล่มหนึ่ง
– I want that one.

khun khuy kàp phûuyīŋ khon nāy?
คุณคุยกับผู้หญิงคนไหน?
Which girl did you chat with?
– (khuy kàp) khon yîpûn
– (คุยกับ) คนญี่ปุ่น
– (I chatted with) the Japanese one.
Where? questions are formed using the pattern **VERB (PHRASE) + thii nay?** (‘where?’); thii nay? always occurs at the end of a sentence. Answers follow the pattern **(VERB (PHRASE) +) thii + LOCATION:**

**khun phák yùu thii nay?**
คุณพักอยู่ที่ไหน?
Where are you staying?
– (phák yùu) thii rooŋ ʔɛem riinoo
– (พักอยู่)ที่โรงแรม
– (I'm staying) at the Reno Hotel.

**kháw këat thii nay?**
เขาเกิดที่ไหน?
Where was he born?
– (këat) thii krú̄ŋthēep
– (เกิด)ที่กรุงเทพฯ
– (He was born) in Bangkok.

In both questions and answers, thii is normally dropped when the preceding verb is **pay** (‘to go’) or **maa càak** (‘to come from’); in spoken Thai thii is also often dropped when the preceding verb is **yùu** (‘to be situated at’):

**pay nay?**
ไปไหน?
Where are you going?
– pay sëm kʰrō̄ŋŋ
– ไปซั่มของ
– I’m going shopping.
kháw maa càak nǎy?
Where does he come from?
– (maa càak) chiangmày
– (มาจาก)เชียงใหม่
– (He comes from) Chiangmai.

báan yùu nǎy?
Where is your house?
– yùu thanôn súkhùmhwít
– อยู่ถนนสุขุมวิท
– It’s on Sukhumwit Road.

12.2.6 When? questions

When? questions are formed using the pattern VERB (PHRASE) + māray? (‘when?’); answers follow the pattern VERB (PHRASE) + EXPRESSION OF TIME. māray? normally occurs at the end of a sentence, but may occur at the beginning for emphatic effect:

khun klàp māray?
คุณกลับเมื่อไร
When are you returning?
– (klàp) aathít nàa
– (กลับ)อาทิตย์นี้
– (I’m returning) next week.

khun ca bōık kháw māray?
คุณจะบอกเขาวันนี้ไว้
When are you going to tell her?

māray khun ca bōık kháw?
เมื่อไหร่คุณจะบอกเขาวันนี้
When are you going to tell her?

12.2.7 Why? questions

Why? questions are formed using the basic pattern thammay (‘why?’) + (SUBJECT) + (thúŋ) + VERB (PHRASE); the word thúŋ, a colloquial variant of cuŋ (‘therefore’) is optional but extremely common in spoken
Thai. Negative why? questions (‘Why doesn’t he . . .?’) follow a similar pattern: thammay + (SUBJECT) + (thùng) + mây (‘not’) + VERB (PHRASE). Why? questions are answered by phró (wâa) (‘because’) + VERB (PHRASE):

thammay thùng sêw?
ทำไมถึงซื้อ?
Why did you buy it?
– phró (wâa) thûuk
– เพราะ(ว่า)ถูก
– Because it was cheap.

thammay kháw thùng mây kin?
ทำไมเขาไม่กิน?
Why didn’t he eat it?
– phró (wâa) phèt pay
– เพราะ(ว่า)เผ็ดไป
– Because it was too spicy.

thammay? can also occur at the end of the sentence, usually in an informal context:

bôk thammay?
บอกทำไม?
Why did you tell her?

To ask ‘Why?’ in response to a statement, the final particle là? (see10.3.3) is frequently added:

chán plìan cay lêew
ฉันเปลี่ยนใจแล้ว
I’ve changed my mind.
– thammay là?
– ทำไมเลย?
– Why?

12.2.8 How? questions: manner

How? questions in English can be divided into those of manner (‘How did you get there?’) and those of degree (‘How long is it?’); the latter are dealt with in 12.2.9.
Questions of manner follow the pattern VERB (PHRASE) + ยังอยา? ('how?'); ยังอยา? is written as if it were spelt ยังเรย, but in informal speech the normal pronunciation ยังอยา? may be reduced to simply อยา?.

**kin ยังอยา?**
กินอย่างไร
How do you eat it?

**khian ยังอยา?**
เขียนอย่างไร
How do you write it?

**pen อยา?**
เป็นอย่างไร
How are things?

ยังอยา? is sometimes used when English uses ‘What?’:

**khun wâa ยังอยา?**
คุณว่าอย่างไร
What do you think?

**khun ca tham ยังอยา?**
คุณจะทำอย่างไร
What will you do?

### 12.2.9 How? questions: degree

Some questions of degree, such as How tall?, How long (in time)?, How long (in measurement)? and How wide? follow the pattern MEASURE WORD + ถี่วระวะ? ('how much?'); such questions anticipate a specific numerical response, such as ‘1.65 metres’, ‘2 hours’, etc.

**khun pay naan ถี่วระวะ?**
คุณไปนานเท่าไร
How long are you going for?

**nàk ถี่วระวะ?**
นั่งเท่าไร
How heavy is it?

**sûuŋ ถี่วระวะ?**
สูงเท่าไร
How tall is it?
How? questions which do not necessarily anticipate a precise numerical quantification in the response can be formed by the pattern VERB (PHRASE) + māak khēc nāy? ('to what extent?):

bāa māak khēc nāy?
เนี่ยงมากเท่าไหร่?
How bored were you?
– bāa māak cīc cīc
– เนื่องมากจริงๆ
– I was really bored.

sūay māak khēc nāy?
สวยมากเท่าไหร่?
How good-looking is she?
– kō . . . sūay măn kan
– ก่อ . . . สวยเหมือนกัน
– Well . . . quite good-looking.

phērēg māak khēc nāy?
แพงมากเท่าไหร่?
How expensive is it?
– phērēg māak yàa mây nāa chūa
– แพงมากอย่างไม่น่าเชื่อ
– Unbelievably expensive.

How much? questions

How much? questions are formed using the pattern VERB (PHRASE) + thâwrây? ('how much?'). thâwrây? always occurs at the end of the question:

nīi thâwrây?
นี่เท่าไหร่?
How much is this?

khun sūy thâwrây?
คุณซื้อเท่าไหร่?
How much did you buy it for?

khâw khây bāan thâwrây?
ขายบ้านเท่าไหร่?
How much did they sell the house for?
Questions which ask ‘how much per . . . ?’, are formed using the pattern (NOUN +) CLASSIFIER + la thâwrây? (see also 13.11):

sôm loo la thâwrây?
สมโลงเท่าไร
How much are oranges a kilo?

duăn la thâwrây?
เดือนเท่าไร
How much a month?

khon la thâwrây?
คนเท่าไร
How much per person?

**12.2.11 How many? questions**

How many? questions follow the pattern VERB + (NOUN) + kîi (‘how many?’) + CLASSIFIER; the answer normally consists of NUMBER + CLASSIFIER:

aw kaafê kîi thûay?
เอากี่ถ้วย
How many cups of coffee do you want?
- sôwp thûay
- ส่งถ้วย
- Two.

mii lûuk kîi khon?
มีลูกกี่คน
How many children do you have?
- săam khon
- สามคน
- Three.

pay kîi wan?
ไปกี่วัน
How many days are you going for?
- cêt wan
- เจ็ดวัน
- Seven.
12.2.12  **Wh- questions + dīi**

The pattern VERB (PHRASE) + WH- QUESTION + dīi is used for asking advice:

- **sāpp aray dīi?**  
  What shall I/we buy?

- **pay mēarāy dīi?**  
  When shall I/we go?

- **tham yāŋgay dīi?**  
  What shall I/we do?

- **phūut yāŋgay dīi?**  
  How shall I say it?/What shall I say?

12.2.13  **Wh- questions + bāaŋ**

The pattern VERB (PHRASE) + WH- QUESTION + bāaŋ anticipates a list of things, people, places, etc. in the response; the list is normally expressed as X + Y + lēew kō ('and') + Z:

- **khāw sūpp aray bāaŋ?**  
  What (plural) did he buy?
  - (sūpp) phàk khīŋ lēew kō plaa  
  - (ซื้อ) ผัก ขิง แล้วกับปลา  
  - (He bought) vegetables, ginger and fish.

- **khuy kāp khray bāaŋ?**  
  Who (plural) did you chat with?
  - (khuy kāp) nōk úut lēew kō ciāp  
  - (คุยกับ)นัก ออกมา แล้วกับเจ้าบ้าน  
  - (I chatted with) Nok, Oot and Jiap.

- **khun pay thīaw thīi nāy bāaŋ?**  
  Where (plural) did you go?
– (pay thîaw) laaw phamâa lêêw kò ciin
– (ไปเที่ยวลาว พมา แล้วก็จีน)
– (I went to) Laos, Burma and China.

The question pen yaŋgay bāaŋ? (‘How are things?’) when used as a greeting, requires a simple formula response, such as ‘Fine’; it is often reduced to pen ŋay bāaŋ or pen ŋay:

pen yaŋgay bāaŋ?
เป็นอย่างไรบาง
How are things?
– sabaay dïi khrâp/khâ
– สบายดีครับ/คะ
– Fine.

[12.2.14] How/what about . . .? questions

How/What about . . .? is used as a non-initiating question when the topic of conversation is defined and the kind of information to be supplied is understood by both parties; it is formed by the pattern: lêêw + NOUN + là?:

lêêw khun là?
แล้วคุณล่ะ
And how/what about you?

lêêw phân là?
แล้วพี่ล่ะ
And how/what about your friend?

lêêw phûn nîi là?
แล้วพูนนี่ล่ะ
And how/what about tomorrow?

[12.3] Alternative questions

Alternative questions (Do you want tea or coffee?) link two phrases with rûu (‘or’) which in spoken Thai is normally pronounced rú:

pay duu năng rú klâp bâaŋ?
ไปดูหนังหรือกลับบ้าน
Shall we see a film or go home?
Do you want tea or coffee?

To reply to such questions, you repeat the appropriate phrase, e.g. klàp bâan ‘Go home’; aw kaaf ‘I’ll have coffee’.

A much-contracted form of alternative question common in spoken Thai is formed by VERB + mây + VERB:

pay mây pay?
ไปไม่ไป
Are you going or not? (lit. go – not – go)

sûù mây sûù?
ซื้อไม่ซื้อ
Are you going to buy it or not? (lit. buy – not – buy)

These could be expanded using rû to ca pay rû ca mây pay? (will – go – or – will – not – go) and ca sûù rû ca mây sûù? (will – buy – or – will – not – buy).

# 12.4 Indirect questions

Indirect questions are formed by the pattern: SUBJECT + thâam (‘to ask’) + (DIRECT OBJECT) + wâa (‘that’) + DIRECT QUESTION:

**Direct question**
ca klàp khûn nîi mây?
จะกลับเช้าหรือเย็น
Will you be back tonight?

**Indirect question**
khâw thâam wâa ca klâp khûn nîi mây?
เขาถามว่าจะกลับเช้าหรือเย็น
He asked if I’d be back tonight.

**Direct question**
mîi fên ré yag?
มีแฟนหรือยัง
Do you have a boyfriend?

**Indirect question**
phôm thâam khâw wâa mîi fên ré yag?
ผมถามเขาว่ามีแฟนหรือยัง
I asked her if she had a boyfriend.

For indirect speech, see 5.9, 9.3.
Chapter 13

Numbers, measurement and quantification

The most common word for ‘number’ in Thai is lēek. It is commonly followed by thîi in expressions like ‘number nine’, ‘house number 38’ and so on. It is also often prefixed by māay. The word bāa, from English ‘number’, has a more restricted usage, most commonly with telephone numbers and room numbers. camnuan means ‘number’ in the sense of ‘quantity’ or in expressions like ‘a number of my friends’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thai</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>lēek faràŋ</td>
<td>Arabic numbers</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lēek thay</td>
<td>Thai numbers</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lēek khûu</td>
<td>even number</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lēek kîi</td>
<td>odd number</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lēek thîi kâaw</td>
<td>number nine</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>báan lēek thîi cèt</td>
<td>house no. 7</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>māay lēek thîi sip</td>
<td>number ten</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

hông bə̂̂ yîi sip sàam
ห้อง номерยี่สิบสาม
room no. 23

bə̂̂ thoorasāp
เบอร์โทรศัพท์
telephone number

phān camnuan nûn
เพื่อนจำนวนหนึ่ง
a number of friends
### Cardinal numbers

Both Thai and Arabic numbers are in common everyday use. Thai script numerals are identical to those found in the Cambodian script, while the Lao script employs some but not all of the same number symbols.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>Thai</th>
<th>Lao</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>สุน</td>
<td>สวณ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>หนึ่ง</td>
<td>สวณ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>สวณ</td>
<td>สวณ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>ส胺</td>
<td>ส胺</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>สี</td>
<td>สี</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>ห้า</td>
<td>ห้า</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>หก</td>
<td>หก</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>จ็ด</td>
<td>จ็ด</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>แปด</td>
<td>แปด</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>เก้า</td>
<td>เก้า</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>สิบ</td>
<td>สิบ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Numbers 12–19 are formed regularly using sip + UNIT; eleven is irregular, using ถต instead of หนึ่ง:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>Thai</th>
<th>Lao</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>สิบเอ็ด</td>
<td>สิบเอ็ด</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>สิบสอง</td>
<td>สิบสอง</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>สิบสาม</td>
<td>สิบสาม</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>สิบสี่</td>
<td>สิบสี่</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Multiples of 10 up to 90 use sip (‘ten’) as a suffix and are regular with the exception of ‘twenty’, which uses ยี่ instead of สวณ:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>Thai</th>
<th>Lao</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>ยี่สิบ</td>
<td>ยี่สิบ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>สิบสาม</td>
<td>สิบสาม</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>สิบสี่</td>
<td>สิบสี่</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>ห้าสิบ</td>
<td>ห้าสิบ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>หกสิบ</td>
<td>หกสิบ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Numbers between 10 and 100 are formed in a regular way with the exception of 21, 31, 41, etc. where the word for 'one' is èt and not นี่. In numbers 21–29, yíi sip is often contracted to yíip in informal spoken Thai:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Thai Word</th>
<th>English Equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>yíi sip èt</td>
<td>ยี่ยี่ป็อ ยี่ยี่ป็อ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>yíi sip sáam</td>
<td>ยี่ยี่ป็อ ยี่ยี่ป็อ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>sáam sip èt</td>
<td>สามสิป ก็อ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>sìi sip èt</td>
<td>ซีป ก็อ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>háa sip èt</td>
<td>ห้าสิป ก็อ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Numbers from 100 upwards are also formed regularly, but in addition to words for ‘thousand’ and ‘million’, there are also specific words for ‘ten thousand’ (หมื่น) and ‘hundred thousand’ (แสน):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Thai Word</th>
<th>English Equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>(หมื่น) róoy</td>
<td>(หมื่น) ร้อย</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>101</td>
<td>(หมื่น) róoy èt</td>
<td>(หมื่น) ร้อยเอ็ด</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>102</td>
<td>(หมื่น) róoy sáam</td>
<td>(หมื่น) ร้อยสาม</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1000</td>
<td>(หมื่น) phan</td>
<td>(หมื่น) หมื่น</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1002</td>
<td>(หมื่น) phan (kàp) sáam</td>
<td>(หมื่น) หมื่น (กับ)สาม</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1200</td>
<td>(หมื่น) phan sáam (róoy)</td>
<td>(หมื่น) หมื่นสาม (ร้อย)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>(หมื่น) róoy</td>
<td>(หมื่น) หมื่น</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100,000</td>
<td>(หมื่น) sáam</td>
<td>(หมื่น) แสน</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,000,000</td>
<td>(หมื่น) làan</td>
<td>(หมื่น) ล้าน</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Numbers, including the year, are read as in the following examples; years may be prefaced by *pii* (*year*):

- 1986 (pii) nêŋ phan kāaw râoy pêêt sip hôk
- 2541 (pii) sōg phan hâa râoy sii sip èt
- 75,862 cêt mûwn hâa phan pêêt râoy hôk sip sōg
- 432,925 sii sêe sâam mûwn sōg phan kâaw râoy yîi sip hâa

When a cardinal number occurs with a noun, the appropriate classifier must also be used (3.5.1, 3.5.5, 3.5.8).

### 13.2 Cardinal numbers with sâk and tâŋ

sâk + CARDINAL NUMBER + CLASSIFIER conveys the sense of ‘as little/few as’, ‘merely’ or ‘just’, and is often reinforced by thâwnán (‘only’) at the end of the phrase; sometimes it simply conveys the idea of approximation. When sâk occurs before a classifier with no number word, it is understood that ‘one’ has been omitted:

- phôm pay sâk hâa wan  ผมไปลักหัววัน  I’m going for five days, or so.
- raw khuy kan sâk chûamoo thâwnán เราคุยกันสักちょっと  We chatted for just an hour.
- raw yàak mii lûuk sâk khon sôg khon เราอยากมีลูกสองคน We’d like to have a child or two.

tâŋ + CARDINAL NUMBER + CLASSIFIER conveys the idea of ‘as much/many as’:

- khâw khuy kan tâŋ sâam chûamoo  เขาคุยกันแต่งสามชั่วโมง They chatted for as long as three hours.
- khâw rian tâŋ hâa pii lêew เขาเรียนแต่งหนาเวว He has studied for as long as five years.
Both 撒克 and 時 can be used with other, non-numerical quantifier words such as ‘a little’ and ‘a long time’:

ร้องยิ่งด้วยแล้วไหม?
Can you wait a little longer?

ผมยิ่งด้วยพอท่าน
I haven't met him for a long time.

### Ordinal numbers

Ordinal numbers in Thai are formed by the pattern, ที่ + CARDINAL NUMBER:

- ที่หนึ่ง ที่หนึ่ง  first
- ที่สอง ที่สอง  second
- ที่สาม ที่สาม  third

When an ordinal number occurs with a noun, the appropriate classifier must also be used (3.5.3, 3.5.9).

The word แรก also means ‘first’, but in a historical sense rather than in rank order. It is therefore not always interchangeable with ที่หนึ่ง:

 primeira ที่หนึ่ง/พรอม แรก
 the first time

But:

รางวัลที่หนึ่ง ที่หนึ่ง
the first (top) prize

รางวัลแรก (พรอม) แรก
the inaugural prize

Note that in the expression แรก แรก (‘at first’), the word ที่ (‘time’) is a noun, pronounced with a mid-tone, not the location marker ที่ (‘at’):

ที่แรกยิ่งไม่ชอบ
At first I didn’t like him.
‘Firstly’, ‘secondly’, and so on, used in putting forward numbered points in a reasoned argument, follow the pattern prakaan (‘item, sort, kind’) + ORDINAL NUMBER:

- prakaan thîi nê̄يثุนุนั้น ปรากฏที่หนึ่ง  firstly
- prakaan réek ปรากฏแรก  or
- prakaan thîi sâ̄̄gû�ุกุสguna ปรากฏที่สอง  secondly
- prakaan thîi sâam ปรากฏที่สาม  thirdly

### 13.4 Sanskrit numbers

The Sanskrit numbers èek (‘one’), thoo (‘two’) and trii (‘three’) are used with academic degrees and military ranks, and in the names of tones and tone marks (2.5.2):

- parinyaa èek/thoo/trii ปารินัยาอา แธ/ทู/ตรี
  PhD/MA, MSc, etc./BA, BSc, etc.

- phon (tamrûat) èek/thoo/trii พหุ(ตัมรุา)อา แธ/ทู/ตรี
  (police) general/lieutenant-general/major-general

The word thoo is also used instead of sâ̄̄gû�ุกุ when giving telephone numbers, which are read as if each unit is a single digit:

- bô̄̄ thoorasàp thoo sìi hâa – sâam thoo kâaw pêêt โทรศัพท์ สอง  สอง สอง ห้า – สี่ สาม สอง ดับเบิ้ล
telephone number, two four five – three two nine eight

Other Sanskrit numbers appear in the words for ‘decade’, ‘decathlon’ and ‘century’:

- thótsawát ศตวรรษ  decade
- thótsakriithaa ศตอานิชิต  decathlon
- sàtawát ศตวรรษ  century
13.5 Once, twice . . .

‘Once’, ‘twice’, and so on, are formed using CARDINAL NUMBER + khráng or hón, both of which mean ‘time’ or ‘occasion’:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CARDINAL NUMBER</th>
<th>THAI</th>
<th>MEANING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>nòŋ</td>
<td>once, one time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>s̀wàŋ</td>
<td>twice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>sàam</td>
<td>three times</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

nòŋ when it occurs after khráng is less emphatic; diaw (‘single’) may be used after khráng, instead of nòŋ, for greater emphasis:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CARDINAL NUMBER</th>
<th>THAI</th>
<th>MEANING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>khráng nòŋ</td>
<td>once, on one occasion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>khráng diaw</td>
<td>(just) once, on a single occasion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

khráng and hón are also used with ordinal numbers to mean ‘first time’, ‘second time’, and so on:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CARDINAL NUMBER</th>
<th>THAI</th>
<th>MEANING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>khráng thîi nòŋ</td>
<td>the first time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>khráng thîi diaw</td>
<td>(just) the first time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13.6 Fractions, decimals, percentages, multiples

13.6.1 Fractions

Fractions, other than ‘half’, are expressed by the pattern sèet (‘numerator’) + NUMBER + sùan (‘denominator’) + NUMBER:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FRACTION</th>
<th>THAI</th>
<th>MEANING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/4</td>
<td>sèet nòŋ sùan sìi</td>
<td>quarter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/4</td>
<td>sèet sàam sùan sìi</td>
<td>three-quarters</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, in expressions like ‘three-quarters of the population . . .’, sàam nay sìi (three – in – four) is more common:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FRACTION</th>
<th>THAI</th>
<th>MEANING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/4</td>
<td>prachaachon sàam nay sìi</td>
<td>three-quarters of the population</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
khrun (‘half’) behaves like other number words in occurring after a noun and before a classifier:

lāw khrun khùat
เหล่าครึ่งขวด
half a bottle of whisky

khrun wan
ครึ่งวัน
half a day

khrun (‘half’) also occurs after a classifier in the pattern NOUN + (NUMBER +) CLASSIFIER + khrun to mean ‘NUMBER and a half’; if no number word appears, the phrase conveys the idea of ‘one and a half:

lāw sōông khùat khrun
เหล่าสองขวดครึ่ง
two and a half bottles of whisky

raw pay đan khrun
เราไปดื่อมครึ่ง
We went for a month and a half.

13.6.2 Decimals

Decimal numbers are read as NUMBER + cūt (‘point’) + NUMBER; decimals behave like other numbers in being followed by a classifier:

sīi cūt hâa
สี่จุดห้า
4.5

yaaw hōk cūt hâa sāam nīw
ยาวหกจุดห้าสามนิ้ว
6.53 inches long

13.6.3 Percentages

The word pəsen (‘per cent’) is borrowed directly from English. It is used in the pattern, NOUN + NUMBER + pəsen; in sentences, the verb may occur immediately after the noun or after pəsen:
10.5 per cent of the people

Thirty per cent of the students failed.

Percentages may also be expressed by the pattern, **NOUN + ร้อย la (‘per hundred’) + NUMBER + CLASSIFIER**, although this is now less common than **ผิวสถาน**.

### 13.6.4 Multiples

‘X times more ...’ is expressed by the pattern **ADJECTIVE/ADVERB + kwàa + NUMBER + thâw**:

- **yày kwàa sāam thâw**
  ไห dụวสามเท่า
  three times bigger

- **sànùk kwàa phan thâw**
  ส่วนกวางพันเท่า
  a thousand times more fun

### 13.7 Collective numbers

The collective numbers **khûu** (‘pair’) and **lôo** (‘dozen’) behave like classifiers and occur in the pattern **NOUN + NUMBER + COLLECTIVE NUMBER**:

- **râwû thâaw sāam khûu**
  ร่างขาสามคู่
  three pairs of shoes

- **khây khâen lôo**
  ไข่เค็งโหล
  half a dozen eggs
Some idiomatic expressions involving numbers

sêen (‘one hundred thousand’) or sêen ca or sêen thiî ca is used before a verb/adjective to mean ‘extremely’, ‘ever so . . .’:

sêen klay
แสนใจไกล
extremely far

sêen ca sanûk
แสนใจสนุก
ever such fun

tóny peet (‘one hundred and eight’) means ‘all kinds of’; it is sometimes further intensified by the addition of phan (‘thousand’):

panhâa tóny peet (phan) prakaan
ปัญหารวมเป้(พัน)ประจำ
all kinds of problems

hâa tóny (‘five hundred’), curiously, is added to the word coon (‘bandit, thief’) but to no other noun; it does not indicate plurality, nor intensify the scale of thievery, nor reflect the speaker’s attitude:

coon hâa tóny
โจราตราอย
bandit, thief

sâam sip sëng (‘thirty-two’) is used with the word aakaan (‘state, condition, sign’) in the expression aakaan khróp sâam sip sëng (‘to be perfectly normal’). Literally, it means ‘the full thirty-two conditions’ and is a reference to the traditional belief that the body comprised thirty-two integral parts, including hair, teeth, skin, fingernails, limbs and internal organs. The expression is used to describe newly born children or those escaping injury in an accident.

aakaan khróp sâam sip sëng
อาการครบสามสิบสอง
to be perfectly normal

kâaw (‘nine’) is regarded as lucky because it is identical in pronunciation (but not spelling) to a part of the word for ‘to progress’ (kâaw nâa):

kâaw เก้า nine

kâaw nâa ก้าวหน้า to progress
### 13.9 Measurements

Measurements, such as ‘three metres wide’, ‘two hours long’ and ‘six feet tall’ follow the pattern Type of Measurement (i.e. length, weight, etc.) + number + unit of measurement:

- **Yaaw cet niw**
  seven inches long

- **Nak haa sip kiloo**
  fifty kilos in weight

Area is expressed as number + taraa (‘square’) + unit of measurement:

- **Sip taraa meet**
  ten square metres

Plots of land are normally measured in taraa waa (square waa; 1 sq. waa = 4 sq. metres) or rai (rai; 1 rai = 1600 sq. metres or 400 square waa; 2.53 rai = 1 acre). Note that waa is a linear measurement and is therefore preceded by taraa, but rai is itself an area measurement and thus does not occur with taraa:

- **Siip taraa waa**
  forty square waa

- **Sip rai**
  ten rai

### 13.10 Distances

The distance between two places can be expressed by the pattern place A + yuu (‘to be located’) + klay caak (‘far from’) + place B + number + unit of measurement:

- **Hua hin yuu klay caak krunthhee psoo rai y kiloomet**
  Hua Hin is 200 kilometres from Bangkok.
hàaŋ ñeak (‘far from’) can be used as an alternative to klay ñeak:

prysanii yóo hàaŋ ñeak bâan mây kii naathii

The post office is a few minutes from my house.

13.11 Distribution: ‘per’

Expressions like ‘500 baht per person’, ‘six times per week’ and ‘50 baht a kilo’ involve the use of la (‘per’); the word order in Thai is the opposite to English (e.g. person – per – 500 baht), with the number expression occurring after la:

khon la hàaŋ róoy bâat

500 baht per person

aathít la hók khráŋ

six times a week

loo la hàaŋ sip bâat

50 baht a kilo

Note the idiomatic expressions khon la râañ (‘a different matter’) and khon la yàaŋ (‘a different type’), where khon does not mean ‘person’:

pen khon la râañ

That’s a different matter.

nîi pen khon la yàaŋ

This is a different kind.

13.12 Quantifiers

The following quantifiers occur in the pattern (NOUN +) QUANTIFIER + CLASSIFIER (3.5.2). They occupy the same position between nouns and classifiers as cardinal numbers (3.5.1) and can therefore be thought of as ‘number words’. All, with the exception of māak, can occur before a classifier without a preceding noun:
thúk  ทุก  every, all
têt la  แตละ  each
baaŋ  บาง  some
lাযย  หลาย  several, many
mây kii  ไม่เท่า  not many
n藕y  น้อย  few
mâak  มาก  many

chủa weelaa lāay duan
ช่วงเวลาหลายเดือน
a period of several/many months

aahāan baâŋ yāâŋ
อาหารบางอย่าง
some kinds of food

In phrases involving n藕y (‘few’), the classifier is commonly omitted, while in phrases involving mâak (‘many’), the classifier is normally omitted:

kháw mii phłoân n藕y (khon)
เขาไม่เพียงอย่าง(คน)
He has few friends.

nay sà náam mii plaa mâak (tua)
ไม่มีปลามากมาย(ตัว)
In the pond there are many fish.

A small number of quantifiers, including yá (‘many’), ye (‘many’), yáyé (‘many’), mâakmaay (‘many’), nîtny (‘a little’), léknöy (‘few, little’), follow a noun, but do not occur with classifiers; because mâak only occurs with a classifier in rather stylised Thai, it can be included with this group:

kháw mii feän yá/yé/yá/yé/mâakmaay/mâak
เขาไม่เพียงเยอะ/เยอะ/เยอะ/เยอะ/มากมากมาย/มาก
She’s got lots of boyfriends.

sày nám taan nîtny
ใส่น้ำตาลน้อย
Put a little sugar in.

mii aahāan lîa, léknöy
มีอาหารเหลือเล็กน้อย
There’s a little food left over.
The quantifiers mâak and nitnày also function as adverbs of degree; the similarity in both sound and meaning between the quantifier bāaŋ and the adverb of degree bāaŋ is often confusing for the learner (7.6).

### Negative quantification

Negative quantities (e.g. no brothers and sisters, there isn’t any fish sauce) are expressed by the pattern mây mii (‘there are not’) + NOUN:

- mây mii phîi nòwë
dem têng
no brothers and sisters
- mây mii nám plaa
dem nàa pla
There’s no fish sauce.

### Approximation: ‘about’

Approximation is expressed using pramaan or raaw (both of which mean ‘about’) + NUMBER + CLASSIFIER:

- nák thëp thîaw pramaan ròy khon
  nêkông phêy pramaan rôy khon
  about 100 tourists
- raaw hók chûamooŋ
  râaw hûk chûamooŋ
  about six hours

Two consecutive numbers also convey approximation:

- sëwëg sàam wan
  săm sàam wàn
  two or three days
- hâa hók khon
  hû hûk khôn
  five or six people

A range of numbers (from . . . to . . .) is expressed by NUMBER + thù́ (‘to’) + NUMBER + CLASSIFIER:
sìp thẹŋ sìp hàa khon
สิบถึงสิบห้า
(from) ten to fifteen people

Lower limits can be expressed by yàaŋ nāy thii sút (‘at least’) + NUMBER + CLASSIFIER:

yàaŋ nāy thii sút sāam wan
อย่างน้อยที่สุดสามวัน
at least three days

Upper limits (‘at the most’) follow a similar pattern using màak (‘much’) instead of nāy:

yàaŋ màak thii sút màen bāat
อย่างมากที่สุดหนึ่งบาท
at the most 10,000 baht

13.15 Restriction: ‘only’

There are several different words for ‘only . . .’ and they can occur in various combinations:

a  NOUN + NUMBER + CLASSIFIER + thàwnán
b  NOUN + phiaŋ + NUMBER + CLASSIFIER (+ thàwnán)
c  NOUN + (phiaŋ) + tèe + NUMBER + CLASSIFIER (+ thàwnán)
d  NOUN + (phiaŋ) + khîe + NUMBER + CLASSIFIER (+ thàwnán)

Note, however, that the order, NUMBER + CLASSIFIER is normally reversed when the number is ‘one’ (see 3.5.1) and the word diaw (‘single’) is commonly used instead of nùŋ (‘one’). The use of tèe (‘but’) to mean ‘only’ is mirrored in the archaic English usage of ‘but’ in statements like ‘I have but three daughters fair.’

kháw mii lûuk sọŋŋ khon thàwnán
เขามีลูกสองคนเท่านั้น
They have only two children.

phôm ca kîn bia khùat diaw thàwnán
ผมจะกินเบียร์แค่ดื่มอย่างเดียวเท่านั้น
I’ll have only one beer.
There is only four hundred baht left.

There were only two Westerners.

I went to Chiangmai for only three days.

‘More than’

‘More than . . .’ is usually expressed using the word kwàa (‘more than, -er than’); its position in relation to the number and classifier varies.

This pattern tends to be used when dealing with multiples of ten and round numbers:

kháw sỳ sà réọ kwàa tua
She bought more than 100 blouses.

chán dày ụn dààn sỳọ kwàa bàat
I get a monthly salary of more than 20,000 baht.

raw dààn thàày yií sip kwàa chúamooŋ
We travelled for more than twenty hours.

This pattern is also used only with large round numbers:

mìì támjà chú kwàa réọ khon
There were more than 100 policemen.
13.16.3 NOUN + māak kwàa + NUMBER + CLASSIFIER

This pattern can be used generally and with non-round numbers:

น้ำส้มมากกว่าสิบห้าล่ม
more than fifteen books

kháw kin bia māak kwàa hòk khùat
He drank more than six bottles of beer.

māak kwàa can be substituted by either kən (‘in excess of’) or kən kwàa:

นักเรียนเกินกว่าสามสิบห้าคน
more than thirty pupils

13.16.4 NOUN + NUMBER + CLASSIFIER + kwàa

This pattern is used to convey the idea of a fraction – but not a whole unit – more; kwàa is sometimes reduplicated, with the first element pronounced with a mid-tone and a shortened vowel:

ช้านกว่า.Month.cwàa
I waited over two hours.

บ่ายสี่โมงกว่า
a little after 4 p.m.

Note the difference between

kháw kin bia sèo khùat kwàa
He has drunk over two bottles of beer (but not as many as three).

and

kháw kin bia māak kwàa sèo khùat
He has drunk more than two bottles of beer (i.e. at least three).
‘Less than’

‘Less than . . .’ can be expressed most simply by the pattern (NOUN) + น้อย kwâa (‘less than’) + NUMBER + CLASSIFIER:

\[
\text{phûu yây น้อย kwâa sip khon}
\]

Josh wants to buy ten adults

\[
\text{kháw phûut น้อย kwâa hàa naathii}
\]

He spoke for less than five minutes.

The negative form of the ‘as many as’ construction (13.18), NOUN + ตายثبت + NUMBER + CLASSIFIER, is also commonly used to express ‘less than’:

\[
\text{kháw dây นิยนตัน ตายثبت ภักษุนัน баат}
\]

He gets a monthly salary of less than 10,000 baht.

‘As many as’

‘As many as . . .’ or ‘up to . . .’ is expressed by the pattern NOUN + ทธุ (‘to reach’) + NUMBER + CLASSIFIER:

\[
\text{mii khon samâk ทธุ ฟิวน khon}
\]

There were as many as a thousand applicants.

For the negative form, see 13.17.
14.1 Days

Days of the week are normally prefaced by the word wan (‘day’); no preposition, corresponding to English ‘on’, is used:

- Monday: wan can (วันจันทร์)
- Tuesday: wan aŋkhaan (วันอังคาร)
- Wednesday: wan phút (วันพฤหัส)
- Thursday: wan pharəhāt (วันพฤหัส)
- Friday: wan sùk (วันศุกร์)
- Saturday: wan sāaw (วันเสาร์)
- Sunday: wan aathit (วันอาทิตย์)

We shall return on Wednesday.

*Note the alternative, very formal pronunciation:

wan pharəhātsabɔɔdi (วันพฤหัสบดี)

14.2 Parts of the day

Words like cháaw (‘morning’) and bàay (‘afternoon’) may optionally be prefixed with the word tɔɔn (‘a period of time’) to express the idea ‘in the morning’, ‘in the afternoon’, etc.:

- morning: (tɔɔn) cháaw (ตอน) ข้าว
- noon: (tɔɔn) thiaŋ (wan) (ตอน) ที่งาน
afternoon (ต่ำ) bàay (ตอน)บ่าย
(early) evening (ต่ำ) yen (ตอน)ยี่
night time (ต่ำ) klaaŋ khêññ (ตอน)กลางคืน
daytime (ต่ำ) klaaŋ wan (ตอน)กลางวัน

pay cháaw klap yen
ไปاخันเก็บเงิน
We’ll go in the morning and return in the evening.

ต่ำน bàay cháam máy wàaŋ
doànывย่น่่ไม่่วย
I’m not free in the afternoon.

14.3 Months

Months with 31 days end in -khom, those with 30 days in -yon and February ends in -phan. In normal speech, the word duan (‘month’) is often prefixed and the final syllable omitted; no preposition corresponding to English ‘in’ is used:

January mókkaraakhom  มกราคม
February kumphaaphan  กุมภาพันธ์
March miinaakhom  มีนาคม
April meesaˇayon  เมษายน
May phrútsaphaakhom  พฤษภาคม
June míthunaayon  มิถุนายน
July karákkadaakhom  กรกฎาคม
August síñhāakhom  สิงหาคม
September kanyaayon  กันยายน
October tulaakhom  ตุลาคม
November phrútsacikkaayon  พฤศจิกายน
December thanwaakhom  ธันวาคม

kháw pay duan síñhāa
เขาไปด่อนสิงหา
He’s going in August.
14.4 Years

The year is calculated according to the Buddhist Era (B.E.) (phút-thasåkkaràat, or phûn sô for short) which dates from the birth of the Buddha, 543 years before the birth of Christ. To convert Thai years to AD (khriítasåkkaràat, or khâo sô for short), subtract 543; thus, 2500 B.E is 1957 AD, while 2000 AD is 2543 B.E.

To express the idea that something happened or will happen in a certain year, the word pìi ('year') is used before the number; the preposition này ('in') may preface pìi but this is more common in formal written Thai than in the spoken language:

kháw tÊN N aan (nay) pìi sô̄n phan hâa róy yìi sip êt
เขานางงาม(ใน)ปี ๒๕๗๑
He got married in 2521 (1978).

Most Thais are also aware of their birth year in the twelve-year cycle in which each year is named after an animal. This animal term is specific to the year and is not used to refer to the living creature. The animal year is normally prefaced by the word pìi:

- Year of the Rat (1948, 1960 . . .) pìi chûat ปีชัต
- Year of the Ox (1949, 1961 . . .) pìi chalûu ปีตุล
- Year of the Tiger (1950, 1962 . . .) pìi khåan ปีชำ
- Year of the Rabbit (1951, 1963 . . .) pìi thò ปีถะ
- Year of the Dragon (1952, 1964 . . .) pìi maroŋg ปีมะโรง
- Year of the Snake (1953, 1965 . . .) pìi maseŋ ปีมะเสียง
- Year of the Horse (1954, 1966 . . .) pìi mamia ปีมะมี
- Year of the Goat (1955, 1967 . . .) pìi mameŋ ปีมะแม
- Year of the Monkey (1956, 1968 . . .) pìi wàsk ปีวสก
- Year of the Cock (1957, 1969 . . .) pìi rakaa ปีราค
- Year of the Dog (1958, 1970 . . .) pìi cô ปีจอ
- Year of the Pig (1959, 1971 . . .) pìi kun ปีกุน

A twelve-year cycle is called rîk piì; the ‘completion of five cycles’ (khróp hâa rîk), that is the sixtieth birthday, is traditionally celebrated as a major milestone in a person’s life.
In addition to the Western New Year (pii máy,) both the traditional Thai New Year (sôŋkraan), which occurs on 13 April, and the Chinese New Year (trút ciin), in February, are widely celebrated. Thailand adopted the international convention of beginning the new year on 1 January in 1941.

### 14.5 Dates

Dates are expressed using the pattern wan (‘day’) + ORDINAL NUMBER + MONTH (+ YEAR):

- wan thîi sip sîi tulaa (sôŋγ phosphāa rāsēy sip hōk)
  
  วันที่ ๑๔ ตุลาคม (๒๕๑๖)
  
  14 October (2516)

‘What date . . .?’ questions use the expression, wan thîi thàwrày?:

- wan nîi (pen) wan thîi thàwrày?
  
  วันนี้ (เป็น)วันที่เท่าไร
  
  What is the date today?

- pay wan thîi thàwrày?
  
  ไปวันที่เท่าไร
  
  What date are you going?

### 14.6 Seasons

There are three seasons in Thailand, the cool season (November to February), the hot season (March to June) and the rainy season (July to October). The formal Thai word for ‘season’ is rîduu but nāa is more commonly used in speech. ‘Spring/autumn’ literally translate as ‘season – leaves – burst forth/fall’.

- cool season  nāa (rîduu) nāaw  หน้า (ฤดู) หน้า
- hot season  nāa rōn  หน้าร้อน
- rainy season  nāa fōn  หน้าฝน
- spring  nāa bay máay plī  หน้าใบไม้ผลิ
- autumn  nāa bay máay rūŋ  หน้าใบไม้ร่วง
### 14.7 Useful expressions of time

In this section common expressions of time are listed at some length because of some unpredictable irregularities in the patterns. The word *múa* occurs in expressions of past time; where it appears in brackets, it is optional.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Mon / Fam</th>
<th>Pron / Comm.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>today</td>
<td>wan níi</td>
<td>วันนี้</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tomorrow</td>
<td>phrûŋ níi</td>
<td>พรุ่งนี้</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the day after tomorrow</td>
<td>marɛûn</td>
<td>มะริน</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yesterday</td>
<td>mûa waan (nii)</td>
<td>เมื่อวาน(นี้)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the day before yesterday</td>
<td>mûa waan ɔ̄n(nii)</td>
<td>เมื่อวานเช้า(นี้)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>this morning</td>
<td>cháaw níi</td>
<td>เช้านี้</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>this afternoon</td>
<td>bàay níi</td>
<td>บ่ายนี้</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>this evening</td>
<td>yen níi</td>
<td>เย็นนี้</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tonight</td>
<td>khwûn níi</td>
<td>คืนนี้</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yesterday morning</td>
<td>cháaw (mûa) waan</td>
<td>เช้า(เมื่อ)วาน</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yesterday afternoon</td>
<td>bàay (mûa) waan</td>
<td>บ่าย(เมื่อ)วาน</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yesterday evening</td>
<td>yen (mûa) waan</td>
<td>เย็น(เมื่อ)วาน</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yesterday night</td>
<td>mûa khwûn</td>
<td>เมื่อคืน</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tomorrow morning</td>
<td>phrûŋ níi cháaw</td>
<td>พรุ่งนี้เช้า</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tomorrow afternoon</td>
<td>phrûŋ níi bàay</td>
<td>พรุ่งนี้บ่าย</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tomorrow evening</td>
<td>phrûŋ níi yen</td>
<td>พรุ่งนี้เย็น</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tomorrow night</td>
<td>khwûn phrûŋ níi</td>
<td>คืนพรุ่งนี้</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
14.7.2 ‘This’, ‘next’, ‘last . . .’

The words nīi (‘this’), nāa (‘next’) and thīi lēew (‘last’) can occur after any unit of time. (múa) . . . may optionally be used with thīi lēew in ‘last week/month/year’. pīi klaay and (wan) rūŋ khun are fixed expressions:

- this week: aathit nīi
- next month: dēan nāa
- last year: (mēa) pīi thīi lēew
- last year: pīi klaay
- the next day: (wan) rūŋ khun

14.7.3 ‘Beginning’, ‘during’, ‘middle’, ‘end’

14.7.3.1 ‘Beginning’: tôn

tōn pīi thīi lēew

the beginning of last year

14.7.3.2 ‘During’: rawāŋ

rawāŋ dēan meesaā

during April

14.7.3.3 ‘Middle’: klaaŋ

klaaŋ dēan nāa

the middle of next month

14.7.3.4 ‘End’: sīn/plaay

sīn/plaay pīi nīi

the end of this year
14.7.4 ‘Ago’, ‘in . . . time’, ‘within’, ‘since’

14.7.4.1 ‘Ago’: (māa) . . . kōon/thii lēew/maa lēew/maa nīi

‘Ago’ is normally expressed using (māa) + NUMBER + UNIT OF TIME + either kōon or thii lēew or maa lēew or maa nīi, which can be used interchangeably. Note, however that ‘a moment ago’ is a set phrase which does not follow this pattern.

(māa) hāa pīi kōon
(māa) cēt duan thii lēew
(māa) sāam wān maa lēew
(māa) sāam naathii maa nīi
(māa) kīi nīi (eeg)/māa takīi nīi (eeg)
(me ti nīi (eeng)/me or thīi nīi (eeng)
(just) a moment ago

14.7.4.2 ‘In . . . time’: iik

iik hōk wān
iik hōk wān
in six days’ time

14.7.4.3 ‘Within’: phaay nay

phaay nay sāam duan
within three months

14.7.4.4 ‘Since’: tāŋtē

tāŋtē māa waan
since yesterday
### 14.7.5 Duration of time

Duration of time (I’m going for two weeks) is most commonly expressed by the pattern VERB (PHRASE) + EXPRESSION OF TIME; there is no preposition in Thai corresponding to English ‘for’:

- **phōm pay sōn aathit**
  ผมไปสองอาทิตย์
  I’m going for two weeks.

- **kháw rian phaasā thay sāam pii**
  เขาเรียนภาษาไทยสามปี
  She studied Thai for 3 years.

Two alternative patterns for expressing duration of time are (a) VERB (PHRASE) + pen weelaa + EXPRESSION OF TIME; and (b) VERB (PHRASE) + dāay + EXPRESSION OF TIME; the latter is used only in the past continuous tense:

- **kháw ca rian pen weelaa sāam pii**
  เขาจะเรียนเป็นเวลาสามปี
  He will study for three years.

- **chán sōn phaasā aŋkrit (maa) dāay cēt dūan léeaw**
  ฉันสอนภาษาอังกฤษ(มา)ได้เจ็ดเดือนแล้ว
  I have been teaching English for seven months.

### 14.8 Telling the time

#### 14.8.1 Hours

Telling the time in Thai is complicated by the fact that the hour word, equivalent to ‘o’clock’ in English, varies according to the time of day and, with it, the position of the hour number:

- **tii + NUMBER**
  1 a.m.–5 a.m.
- **NUMBER + mooŋ cháaw**
  6 a.m.–11 a.m.
- **bāay + NUMBER + mooŋ**
  1 p.m.–4 p.m.
- **NUMBER + mooŋ yen**
  5 p.m.–6 p.m.
- **NUMBER + thûm**
  7 p.m.–11 p.m.
The hours from 6a.m. to 11a.m. can be counted using numbers 6–11 + moo cháaw, or in an alternative way based on a division of the day into six-hour periods, starting from 7 a.m., whereby 8 a.m. becomes ‘2 o’clock in the morning’, 9 a.m. ‘3 o’clock . . .’, and so on:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Xhosa</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>midnight</td>
<td>thiaŋ khotan</td>
<td>เที่ยงดิน</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 a.m.</td>
<td>tii nɛŋ</td>
<td>ตีหนึ่ง</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 a.m.</td>
<td>tii sɔɔŋ</td>
<td>ตีสอง</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 a.m.</td>
<td>tii səam</td>
<td>ตีสาม</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 a.m.</td>
<td>tii sìi</td>
<td>ตีสี่</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 a.m.</td>
<td>tii həa</td>
<td>ตีห้า</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 a.m.</td>
<td>hɔk mooŋ cháaw</td>
<td>หกโม่เช้า</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or</td>
<td>mooŋ cháaw</td>
<td>โม่เช้า</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 a.m.</td>
<td>cɛt mooŋ cháaw</td>
<td>เจ็ดโม่เช้า</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 a.m.</td>
<td>pɛst mooŋ cháaw</td>
<td>แปดโม่เช้า</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or</td>
<td>sɔɔŋ mooŋ cháaw</td>
<td>สี่โม่เช้า</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 a.m.</td>
<td>kəaw mooŋ cháaw</td>
<td>เก้าโม่เช้า</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or</td>
<td>səam mooŋ cháaw</td>
<td>สามโม่เช้า</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 a.m.</td>
<td>sɪp mooŋ cháaw</td>
<td>สิบโม่เช้า</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or</td>
<td>sìi mooŋ cháaw</td>
<td>สี่โม่เช้า</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 a.m.</td>
<td>sip ɛt mooŋ cháaw</td>
<td>สิบเอ็ดโม่เช้า</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or</td>
<td>həa mooŋ cháaw</td>
<td>ห้าโม่เช้า</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>miday</td>
<td>thiaŋ (wan)</td>
<td>เพียงวัน</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 p.m.</td>
<td>bąay mooŋ</td>
<td>บ่ายโม่</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 p.m.</td>
<td>bąay sɔɔŋ mooŋ</td>
<td>บ่ายสองโม่</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 p.m.</td>
<td>bəay səam mooŋ</td>
<td>บ่ายสามโม่</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 p.m.</td>
<td>bəay sìi mooŋ</td>
<td>บ่ายสี่โม่</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 p.m.</td>
<td>həa mooŋ yen</td>
<td>ห้าโม่ยัน</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 p.m.</td>
<td>hɔk mooŋ yen</td>
<td>หกโม่ยัน</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 p.m.</td>
<td>thʊm nɛŋ</td>
<td>ทุ่มยัน</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 p.m.</td>
<td>sɔɔŋ thʊm</td>
<td>สองทุ่ม</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A traditional way of counting the hours of darkness, still used among elderly people in Bangkok and in rural areas, uses the word yaam ('a 3-hour watch period'):

9 p.m.  sāam thûm  สามทุ่ม
10 p.m.  sìi thûm  สี่ทุ่ม
11 p.m.  hâa thûm  ห้าทุ่ม

Note: tii and bàay appear before the number; tii and thûm do not occur with mooŋ.

**14.8.2 Half-hours**

Half-past the hour is expressed as HOUR TIME + khrûŋ ('half'). For the hours from 7 a.m. to 11 a.m., however, the word cháaw is usually omitted:

3.30 a.m.  tii sāam khrûŋ  สามครึ่ง
7.30 a.m.  cät mooŋ khrûŋ  เซ็ตโม่โม่ครึ่ง
11.30 a.m.  sip  et mooŋ khrûŋ  ปิดเอ็ตโม่โม่ครึ่ง
2.30 p.m.  bàay sēc mooŋ khrûŋ  บ้ายสองโม่โม่ครึ่ง
5.30 p.m.  hâa mooŋ yen khrûŋ  ห้าโม่ย่นโม่ครึ่ง
10.30 p.m.  sìi thûm khrûŋ  สี่ทุ่มครึ่ง

**14.8.3 Quarter hours and minutes past/to the hour**

There is no special word for ‘quarter past’ or ‘quarter to’ the hour. Minutes past the hour are expressed as HOUR TIME + NUMBER + naathii ('minutes'):

10.15 a.m.  sip mooŋ sip hâa naathii  สิบโม่โม่สิบห้านาที
2.10 p.m.  bàay sēc mooŋ sip naathii  บ้ายสองโม่โม่สิบนาที
9.15 p.m.  sāam thûm sip hâa naathii  สามทุ่มสิบห้านาที
Minutes to the hour are expressed as iik (‘further, more’) + NUMBER + naathii (‘minutes’) + HOUR TIME:

- 10.45 a.m. iik sip hâa naathii sip èt mooŋ  
  ถี่กิ่งบ้านที่สิบเอ็ดโมง
- 5.40 p.m. iik yîi sip naathii hôk mooŋ yen  
  ถี่กิ่งบ้านที่หกโมงยี่
- 11.55 p.m. iik hâa naathii thîaŋ khêm  
  ถี่กิ่งบ้านที่เก้าโมง

14.8.4 The 24-hour clock system

In the 24-hour clock system hours are expressed as NUMBER + naalikaa (‘clock, o’clock’); half-hours are expressed as NUMBER + naalikaa + sâam sip naathii (‘thirty minutes’):

- 16.00 sip hôk naalikaa  
  สองที่นั้น
- 20.30 yîi sip naalikaa sâam sip naathii  
  ยี่สิบโมงสามสิบนาที

14.8.5 Asking the time

To ask the time kii mooŋ? or weelaa thâwrây? is used; to ask what time something happens or happened . . . kii mooŋ? is used:

- kii mooŋ lêkg?/weelaa thâwrây lêkg?  
  คืนไหน/เวลาเท่าไหร่แล้ว  
  What time is it?
- rôt วก kii mooŋ?  
  รถออกที่ไหน  
  What time does the bus leave?
15.1 Politeness

Politeness can be conveyed verbally in Thai by the appropriate choice of vocabulary, such as polite final particles (10.2), deferential pronouns (4.1) and formal vocabulary. As in most languages, the pitch and volume of voice can also be used to convey politeness. Speaking Thai softly and undemonstratively can be both a mark of politeness (reflecting the speaker’s unwillingness to be too assertive) and a sign of authority and high status (reflecting the speaker’s lack of need to be assertive); the foreigner who assumes these to be signs of weakness and indecision is likely to become culturally lost very quickly.

15.2 Thanks

The most widely used word for thank you is khọp khun. When speaking to children or subordinates, khọp cay may be used instead, and khọp phrakhu when speaking to those of higher social status, or when wishing to be especially polite. All of these forms can be intensified by adding māak (‘much’) or its reduplicated form māak māak:

khọp khun (māak) khráp/khâ  
ขอบคุณ (มาก)ครับ/ค่ะ  
Thank you (very much).

khọp phrakhu  
ขอบพระคุณ  
Thank you (especially polite and to superiors).

khọp cay  
ขอบคุณ  
Thank you (to children and subordinates).
Thanking someone for doing something is expressed by the pattern ขอค<br>khun + ที่ิ + VERB (PHRASE):

khun ที่ิ บังคับ ลูาด น้า
ขอบคุณที่บอกล่วงหน้า
Thank you for telling me in advance.

Thanking someone for something is expressed by the pattern ขอค<br>khun + สามรัก + NOUN (PHRASE):

khun สามรัก ผู้ ทูก ยาก ย้า
ขอบคุณสำหรับทุกสิ่งทุกอย่าง
Thank you for everything.

Thanks can be acknowledged (a) silently, with a smile or a nod; (b) by<br>khráp (male speakers) or khâ (female speakers); or (c) by ไม่เป็นไระ<br>‘never mind; that’s alright; don’t mention it’:

khun มาก คหร์าป
ขอบคุณมากครับ
Thank you very much.
- ไม่เป็นไระ
  - ไม่เป็นไระ
  - That’s alright.

## 15.3 Apologies

The essential word for apologising is ขอโทษ; in informal situations it<br>is often shortened to ‘โทษ. In more formal situations, ขอค can be<br>used, or even more formally, ขอ prathaan โทษ. ขอ can be intensified by มาก หรือ คิด คิด:

ขอโทษ คหร์าป/ข่า
ขอโทษครับ/คะ
Sorry; please excuse me.

ขอโทษ มาก คิด/คิด
ขอโทษมาก/จริงๆ
I’m ever so sorry.

ขอค
ขอคที่ิยิ
Sorry; please excuse me (formal).

ขอ prathaan โทษ
ขอสรรประเทศไทย
Sorry; please excuse me (very formal).
In everyday speech, kHzóóthóot is commonly followed by the mood particles thii or düay ná (10.3); ‘thóot thii is used to apologise for tiny errors, while kHzóóthóot düay ná conveys a stronger sense of apology:

(khóó) thóot thii
(ขอ)โทษที่
Sorry.

kHzóóthóot düay ná
ขอโทษด้วยนะ
Sorry.

Apologising for doing something is expressed by the pattern kHzóóthóot thii + VERB (PHRASE):

kHzóóthóot thii rópkuan
ขอโทษที่รักบ้าน
Sorry for disturbing you.

Note that thii here has a falling tone and is not to be confused with the final particle thii in thóot thii.

The expression să cay (‘I'm sorry’) is an expression of sympathy or regret rather than an apology (15.6.3).

### 15.4 Polite requests

#### 15.4.1 Requests for information

Basic requests for information can be prefaced by kHzóóthóot khráp/khâ (‘excuse me’) for politeness:

kHzóóthóot khráp/khâ, rót  disrespectful kii mooŋ?
ขอโทษครับ/คะ ร้องขอผิดใจ
Excuse me, what time does the train leave?

kHzóóthóot khráp/khâ, praysanii yùu thii này?
ขอโทษครับ/คะ ไปรษณีย์อยู่ที่ไหน
Excuse me, where is the Post Office?

#### 15.4.2 Requests for something

Requests for something are expressed by the pattern kHzóó + NOUN (PHRASE) + (dâay máy)?:
Could I have two glasses of water, please?

If the noun is unquantified (i.e. 'water' rather than 'two glasses of water'), then it is often followed by น้อย ('a little') for politeness:

Could I have some rice, please?

... dâay máy? is an optional additional politeness expression.

### 15.4.3 Requests to do something oneself

Requests to do something oneself can be expressed by the pattern ขอ + VERB (PHRASE) + น้อย + (dâay máy)?:

ขอดูน้อย?
Can I have a look, please?

ขอพูดกับคุณต่อหน่อยได้ไหม?
Could I speak to Khun Toi, please?

### 15.4.4 Requesting someone to do something

Requesting someone to do something for you or someone else is expressed by the pattern ช่วย + VERB (PHRASE):

ช่วยปิดประตู
Please close the door.

ช่วย... requests are often used with the mood particles ได้ or น้อย (10.3); ... ด้วยนาย? ('could you...?') can also be added at the end of the sentence for politeness:

ช่วยปิดประตูได้ไหม?
Please could you close the door.

ช่วยต่อหน่อยได้ไหม?
Please could you close the door.
To indicate the beneficiary of the action (i.e. who it is being done for),
the pattern may be expanded to ช่วย + VERB (PHRASE) + ให้ (+ นำที่)

ช่วย ปิดทีวีให้
Please turn the TV off (for me).

ช่วยแปลให้เขาให้
Please translate for him.

ช่วยสั่งอาหารให้(ผม)ให้
Please order food for me.

Two rather more formal words for requesting someone to do something
are karunaa and прorgetown, both of which can be translated as ‘please’;
karunaa often follows ช่วย in very formal polite conversation, while
прorgetown can be heard at the beginning of public announcements:

ช่วย karunaa บอก ให้
Please tell him.

โปร์ที่ snsnap . . .
Please be informed that . . .

Both karunaa and прorgetown also occur commonly on public signs:

karunaa ห้องนอน ต้อง โทษ
Please remove your shoes.

karunaa กอล์ฟ ปอ
Please ring the bell.

โปร์ที่กูน
Please be quiet.
15.4.5 Requesting someone not to do something

The least confrontational way to ask someone not to do something is to use the expression *mây tông* . . . (‘there’s no need to . . .’). More direct requests employ the negative imperative *yàa* . . . (‘Don’t . . .’) (11.8) which can be ‘softened’ by the addition of the mood particle *ná* (10.3) or made more tactful, polite and deferential by prefixing the polite request words *chûay, karunaa* or, more formally, *pròot. háam* . . . (‘to forbid’) is an unambiguous order rather than a request, commonly found on notices of prohibition (see also 11.9); in speech, it can be ‘softened’ by the addition of the particle *ná*:

- *mây tông pit pratuu ná*
  ไม่ต้องปิดประตูนะ
  There’s no need to shut the door.

- *chûay yàa pit pratuu ná*
  ช่วยอย่าปิดประตูนะ
  Please don’t shut the door.

- *karunaa yàa pit pratuu ná*
  กรุณาอย่าปิดประตูนะ
  Please don’t shut the door.

- *yàa pit pratuu ná*
  อย่าปิดประตูนะ
  Don’t shut the door, OK?

- *háam pit pratuu ná*
  ห้ามปิดประตูนะ
  Don’t shut the door, OK!

- *háam khâw*
  ห้ามเข้า
  No Entry!

- *háam sùup bûrîi*
  ห้ามสูบบุหรี่
  No Smoking!
15.4.6 Inviting someone to do something

Inviting someone to do something, such as sit down, come in, start eating, is expressed by the pattern 会给 (‘to invite’) + VERB (PHRASE). The mood article ซี (10.3) is commonly added to 会给 . . . invitations:

**会给 นั่ง ซี กห้าป/k้า**
เขียนหนังสือรับ/จะ
Please sit down.

**会给 น้าฮ ก้าป/k้า**
เขียนหนังสือรับ/จะ
Please come in.

**会给 ซี กห้าป/k้า**
เขียนหนังสือรับ/จะ
Carry on; go ahead; after you.

15.5 Misunderstandings

15.5.1 Expressing ignorance, uncertainty

Thai cannot use the same verb for knowing facts and knowing people or places; รู้ (informal) or ลัพ (formal, deferential) mean ‘to know facts’ while ให้ means ‘to know or be acquainted with people, places or things’:

**ชัน มาย รู้/ลัพ**
ดินไม่รู้/ทราบ
I don’t know.

**ข้า มาย ให้ พอ**
เข้าไม่รู้จัก
He doesn’t know me.

**มาย ให้ หา ว่า**
ไม่รู้จักคำว่า . . .
I don’t know the word . . .

**พอ มาย นี้ (คาย)**
ผมไม่แน่ใจ
I’m not sure.
Expressing non-comprehension

There are two words for ‘to understand’: khâw cay and rúu rûañ:

phôm mây khâw cay
I don’t understand.

khâw mây rúu rûañ
He doesn’t understand.

rúu rûañ and khâw cay often occur as resultative verbs (5.4) with faŋ (‘to listen’) and âñ (‘to read’) in questions like faŋ rúu rûañ mây? (‘do you understand (what you hear)?’) and âñ rúu rûañ mây? (‘do you understand (what you read)?’). In negative statements the word order is VERB (PHRASE) + mây + RESULTATIVE VERB (11.2):

khâw faŋ mây rúu rûañ
He doesn’t understand (what he hears).

chán âñ mây rúu rûañ
I don’t understand (what I read).

than (‘to catch up with’, in time) is also used as a resultative verb with faŋ (‘to listen’) to express the idea that non-comprehension is due to the speaker speaking too quickly:

phôm faŋ (khruu) mây than
I don’t understand (the teacher) (because he speaks too quickly).

Asking someone to repeat, speak slowly, explain, translate, spell

aray ná khráp/khá
Pardon?

phûut iik thii dâay mây?
Could you say that again?
There are two ways of asking what something means: māay khwaam wāa aray? is a request for clarification or an explanation, while pīl wāa aray? seeks a translation:

... māay khwaam wāa aray?
... หมายความว่าอะไร
What does ... mean?

... pīl wāa aray?
... แปลว่าอะไร
What does ... mean?

... phaasāa aşkrit pīl wāa aray?
... ภาษาอังกฤษแปลว่าอะไร
What is ... in English?

phaasāa aşkrit pīl wāa aray?
ภาษาอังกฤษแปลว่าอะไร
What is it in English?

phaasāa thay khīan yāŋgay?
ภาษาไทยเขียนอย่างไร
How is it written in Thai?

sakōt yāŋgay?
สะกดอย่างไร
How do you spell it?

15.6  Socialising

Initial conversations between Thais and foreigners are likely to involve the exchange of personal information. Westerners tend to find some questions, like Do you have any brothers and sisters? , surprising and others, like How much do you earn? or Why haven't you got any children yet? irritating, intrusive or downright impolite, as in fact most Thais would. But these are easily outweighed, for most Westerners, by the Thais’ capacity for saying nice things, such as You speak Thai well!, That’s a nice dress you’re wearing! or You’re looking handsome today! Westerners, perhaps unused to a culture of mutual personal compliments, often make the mistake of taking compliments too literally and, even more often, do not even consider making a return compliment at the next opportune
moment. Compliments can be accepted with a gracious khun phûut thay kè (‘thank you’) or modestly denied máy rôk khráp/khâ (‘not at all’):

**khun phûut thay kè/chát**
คุณพูดไทยดี/ชัด
You speak Thai well/clearly.
– máy rôk khráp/khâ
– ไม่หรอกครับ/คะ
– Not at all.

Other typical compliments include:

**têng tua sùay/ดูว่า**
ดูตัวสวย/หล่อ
You look nice (i.e. are nicely dressed)!

**tham aahän arây**
ทำอาหารอร่อย
Your cooking tastes good.

### 15.6.1 Greetings, introductions, farewells

The basic greeting sawàt dii, often abbreviated to ‘wàt dii in speech, is used for both formal and informal greetings regardless of the time of day; it is often accompanied by a *wai*, a gesture in which the head is bowed slightly and the hands held in a prayer-like position, somewhere between neck and forehead height, depending on the status of the person being greeted. sawàt dii can also be used when taking leave.

More casual greetings are pay näy? (‘Where are you going?’) and pay näy maa? (‘Where have you been?’) which do not normally require a precise answer; in the workplace, than khâaw rú yaŋ (‘Have you eaten yet?’) is often more a midday greeting, than an invitation to lunch together:

**sawàt dii khráp/khâ**
สวัสดีครับ/คะ
Hello, good morning/afternoon, etc.; goodbye

**sabaay dii lôe?/pen yaŋyaŋ bâaŋ?**
สบายดี/เป็นอย่างไรบ้าง
How are you?
– sabaay dii/kô rêay rêay
– สบายดี/ก็ เรียบ ๆ
– Fine/Same as usual.
pay näy?
ไปไหน
Hello (casual). (lit. Where are you going?)
- pay thîaw
ไปเที่ยว
I’m going out.
- pay thúrá
ไปธุรก
I’m going on business.
- mây pay näy
ไม่ไปไหน
I’m not going anywhere.

pay näy maa?
ไปไหนมา
Hello (casual). (lit. Where have you been?)
- pay thîaw maa
ไปเที่ยวมา
I’ve been out.
- pay thúrá maa
ไปธุรกมา
I’ve been on business.
- mây dây pay näy
ไม่ได้ไปไหน
I haven’t been anywhere.

thaan khâaw r ú yang?
ทานอาหารเสริมยัง
Hello (informal, polite). (lit. Have you eaten yet?)
- thaan lëw/yaŋ khráp(khâ)
- ทานเล็ก/ยังครับ(คะ)
- Yes/No.

khôc nînâm háy rúucâk kàp . . .
ขอแนะนำให้รู้จักกัน . . .
I’d like to introduce you to . . .

yin dîi thîi rúucâk
ยินดีที่รู้จัก
Pleased to meet you.

pay lá ná/pay kôrn
ไปแล้ว/ไปถอน
Goodbye; I’m off now.
Finding out about other people

The basic personal questions below can be prefaced by *khāɔthōot khráp/khā* (‘excuse me’) as a sign of politeness.

- *chhu aray?* ชื่ออะไร
  What’s your (first) name?

- *naam sakun aray?* นามสกุลอะไร
  What’s your surname?

- *pen khon châat aray?* เป็นชนิดอะไร
  What nationality are you?

- *maa câak nây?* มาระไน
  Where do you come from?

- *thîi . . . troŋ nây?* ที่ . . . ตรงไหน
  Whereabouts in . . .?

- *maa câak mûŋ/cañwät aray?* มาระมือง/จังหวัดอะไร
  Which town/province do you come from?

- *tham ɲaan aray?* ท่านอะไร
  What (job) do you do?

- *tham ɲaan thîi nây?* ท่านที่ไหน
  Where do you work?

- *mii phîi nòcŋ máy?* มีพี่น้องไหม
  Have you got any brothers and sisters?

- *aayû thâwrâtay?* อายุเท่าไร
  How old are you?
15.6.3 Expressing congratulations, sympathy

Congratulations and sympathy can be expressed formally using the expression khao sadet ... (‘I would like to show ...’) which may be followed by the final particles düay ná (10.3):

khao sadet khwaam yin dii (düay ná)
Congratulations!

khao sadet khwaam sìa cay (düay ná)
I’d like to express my regret/sympathy.

15.6.4 Telephone transactions

The English word ‘hello’, pronounced in a more or less Thai way (hanl̄o), is used at the beginning of phone calls; the greeting/farewell sawät dii/‘wät dii or, more informally, khøe níi ná (‘That’s all for now’) can be used at the end of the call:

khø phûut kàp khun ... nòy düay máy?
Could I speak to ... please?

khøray phûut khraá/khá?
Who’s speaking, please?

khun ... chây máy khraá/khá?
Is that ...?
phōm/chán . . . phûut khráp/khâ
This is . . . speaking.

(chûay) phûut daŋ daŋ nêy dâay máy?
(Chray) Phut dawn baa hoy daay may?
Could you speak up a little, please?

mây khêy dáy yin
Mai koy dei yin
I can scarcely hear.

râc sàk khrûu khráp/khâ
Roi lackhrù krâ krâ
Hold on a moment, please.

sàay mây dii
Sai ai dei
The line’s bad.

sàay mây wàaâg
Sai ai waaag
The line isn’t free.

sàay lût
Sai lout
I got cut off.

khêk têc bêe . . .?
Khek tec be . . .?
Could I have extension . . . please?

tchûay bêk khun tim wàa . . .
Chray bêk khun tim waa . . .
Do (you) want to leave a message?

chûay bêk khun tim hây thoo thêk chân dûay nà
Chray bêk krûn tim hay thoo thêk chân dûay nà
Please tell Khun Tim that . . .

khêe nîi nà
Khe ni nei
That’s all for now.
I'll ring back later.

I'll ring back this evening.

Sorry, I've got the wrong number.
There are many different ways of Romanising Thai. The system used throughout this book is based on one devised by the American linguist, Mary Haas. This system is widely used in university departments where Thai is taught and in the linguistic literature on Thai. As well as learning unfamiliar symbols from the International Phonetic Alphabet, such as ə, e, u, etc., the learner also has to recognise that ph and th are not pronounced like the initial consonant sound in ‘phobia’ and ‘thin’. To avoid such problems, some materials (e.g. *Teach Yourself Thai*, *Robertson’s Practical English-Thai Dictionary*) use non-technical systems of Romanisation, attempting to represent unfamiliar Thai sounds with combinations of letters such as ‘-air-o’, ‘dt’ and ‘eu-a’. Librarians and historians generally prefer the Library of Congress system, which, unlike systems used in language-learning, does not attempt to represent tone.

This is how an article entitled ‘The turning point in Thai literature’ would be Romanised according to three different systems:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>System</th>
<th>Romanisation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Essential Grammar (EG)</td>
<td>หัวใจห้องวัฒนาศิลป์ไทย</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teach Yourself Thai (TYT)</td>
<td>หัวใจโลกของการเขียนไทย</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library of Congress (LC)</td>
<td>หัวใจโลกของการเขียนไทย</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix 1

**Romanisation systems**
## Appendix 1
### Romanisation systems

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONSONANTS</th>
<th>Essential Grammar</th>
<th>Teach Yourself Thai</th>
<th>Library of Congress</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>initial</td>
<td>final</td>
<td>initial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ฅ</td>
<td>k</td>
<td>k</td>
<td>g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ฃ</td>
<td>kh</td>
<td>k</td>
<td>k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ฅ</td>
<td>kh</td>
<td>k</td>
<td>k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ฅ</td>
<td>kh</td>
<td>k</td>
<td>k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ฅ</td>
<td>kj</td>
<td>ng</td>
<td>ng</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ฅ</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>j</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ฅ</td>
<td>ch</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>ch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ฅ</td>
<td>ch</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>ch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ฅ</td>
<td>s</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ฅ</td>
<td>ch</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>ch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ฅ</td>
<td>y</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ฅ</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ฅ</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>dt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ฅ</td>
<td>th</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ฅ</td>
<td>th</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ฅ</td>
<td>th</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ฅ</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ฅ</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ฅ</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>dt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ฅ</td>
<td>th</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ฅ</td>
<td>th</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ฅ</td>
<td>th</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ฅ</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ฅ</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>p</td>
<td>b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ฅ</td>
<td>p</td>
<td>p</td>
<td>bp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ฅ</td>
<td>ph</td>
<td>p</td>
<td>p</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ฅ</td>
<td>f</td>
<td>p</td>
<td>f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ฅ</td>
<td>ph</td>
<td>p</td>
<td>p</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix I
Romanisation systems

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VOWELS</th>
<th>EG</th>
<th>TYT</th>
<th>LC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>æ</td>
<td>æ</td>
<td>æ</td>
<td>æ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ë</td>
<td>ë</td>
<td>ë</td>
<td>ë</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ø</td>
<td>ø</td>
<td>ø</td>
<td>ø</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ø</td>
<td>ø</td>
<td>ø</td>
<td>ø</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
<td>ð</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ñ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 2

The verbs hây, dây/dâay and pen: a summary

The verbs, hây, dây/dâay and pen often seem confusing to the learner because each has several quite different meanings. This section summarises and cross-references the main patterns in which they are likely to be encountered.

I hây

(a) SUBJECT + hây + DIRECT OBJECT + INDIRECT OBJECT (5.12)

As a main verb, hây means ‘to give’:

kháw hây ɴ̄n chán

xeic jàngn thìn

He gave me money.

(b) SUBJECT + hây + INDIRECT OBJECT + VERB (PHRASE) (5.11)

As a causative verb, hây means ‘to let (someone do something)’ or ‘to have (someone do something)’:

kháw hây ɴ̄n chán klàp bâan

xeic jàngn klàp bànn

He let me/had me go home.

(c) SUBJECT + VERB + hây + OBJECT + VERB (PHRASE) (5.11)

The manner of causation (e.g. telling, wanting, permitting someone to do something) can be specified by an appropriate verb preceding hây:

chán yàak hây khun chûay nòy

xeic jàngn khun chûay nòy

I’d like you to help me a bit.
(d) SUBJECT + tham + hay + OBJECT + VERB (PHRASE) (5.11)
This pattern conveys a sense of intention or coercion on the part of the subject:

ร่องบึธีพีนีที่ม่อนห่ายพ้อมรามค้าหันสัมผัส
เรื่องแบบนี้ทำให้ผมรู้ ربماสัมผัส
This kind of thing always makes me annoyed.

(e) SUBJECT + VERB (PHRASE) + hay + INDIRECT OBJECT (8.3)
To convey the idea that the action is being carried out for the benefit of someone:

พ้อมสัมผัสห่ายขุน
ผมซื้อให้คุณ
I bought it for you.

(f) VERB (PHRASE) + hay + ADJECTIVE (7.1.5; 9.4)
As an adverb-marker in imperatives:

พูดห่ายชัดน้๊ย
พูดเห็นชัดน้๊ย
Speak clearly, please!

2 ด้วย/ด้าย

Note that ด้วย and ด้าย are spelt identically but the pronunciation varies according to its position in the sentence.

(a) ด้วย + NOUN
As a main verb ด้วย means ‘to get’:

ขุนด้วยผ่านด้านท่วมรา
คุณให้เงินเลื่อนเท่าไร
How much salary do you get?
(b) **dây + VERB (PHRASE)**

As an auxiliary verb before the main verb, **dây** means ‘to get to do something’:

```
chán ca dây pay thîaw laaw
ฉันจะไปที่ลาว
I’ll get to visit Laos.
```

(c) **VERB (PHRASE) + dâay (5.6.2)**

As an auxiliary verb after a verb or verb phrase, **dâay** means ‘can, able to’:

```
raw pay phrû nîi mây dâay
เราไปพรุ้งนี้ไม่ได้
We can’t go tomorrow.
```

(d) **VERB (PHRASE) + dâay + ADJECTIVE (7.1.4)**

As an adverb-marker after the verb or verb phrase and before an adjective:

```
kháw phûut thay dâay dîi
เขาพูดไทยได้
He speaks Thai well.
```

(e) **mây dây + VERB (PHRASE)**

To indicate negative past (5.7.7):

```
raw mây dây pay
เราไม่ได้ไป
We didn’t go.
```

or to contradict or correct a preceding statement or assumption (11.4):

```
khaûw mây dây pen khon âjkrit
เขาไม่ได้เป็นคนอังกฤษ
He’s not English.
```

(f) **INDEFINITE PRONOUN + kô dâay (4.8.7); VERB (PHRASE)/NOUN + kô dâay**

To show amenability, a lack of preference or indifference:

```
khun pay mûarày kô dâay
คุณไปเมื่อไรก็ได้
You can go whenever you like.
```
wan niī kò dāay phrû niī kò dāay
วันนี้ก็ได้ พรุ่งนี้ก็ได้
Today is OK, tomorrow is OK.

pay kò dāay mây pay kò dāay
ไปก็ได้ ไม่ไปก็ได้
Going is fine by me, not going is fine, too.

(g) VERB (PHRASE) + (maa) + dāay + TIME EXPRESSION (14.7.5)
To express duration of time (for . . .) for actions that began in the past and continue through to the present (5.7.8):

chán tham ŋaan thîi krûngthîep (maa) dâay lâay pîi lîow
ที่ทำงานที่กรุงเทพฯ(มา)ได้หลายปีแล้ว
I have been working in Bangkok for several years.

3 pen

(a) pen + NOUN (5.1.1)
As the verb ‘to be’, it cannot normally be followed by an adjective (5.2); the negative is either mây chây + NOUN, or mây dây pen + NOUN:

kháw pen phêán
เขาเป็นเพื่อน
He’s a friend.

(b) VERB (PHRASE) + pen (5.6.2)
As an auxiliary post-verb, meaning ‘to know how to do something’:

kháw wâay náam pen
เขาว่ายน้ำเป็น
He can swim.

(c) VERB (PHRASE) + pen + NOUN (PHRASE) (7.1.3)
As an adverb-marker:

kháw càay pen ƞôn sôt
เขาจ่ายเงินสด
They paid in cash.
(d) VERB (PHRASE) + pen + EXPRESSION OF TIME (14.7.5)

To express duration of time:

kháw yùu thîi nîi pen weelaa naan

He’s been here a long time.

(e) pen + DISEASE

Where English uses ‘to have’ or ‘to get’ with diseases and illnesses, Thai uses pen:

khun pen wàt chây máy?

You’ve got a cold, haven’t you?
Adjectives in Thai occur after the nouns they describe; they do not occur with the verb ‘to be’. Adjectives also function as stative verbs; thus, dii is both the adjective ‘good’ and the stative verb ‘to be good’. Adjectives and adverbs often take the same form in Thai; thus dii is both the adjective ‘good’ and the adverb ‘well’.

Adverbs often occur after verbs. They can describe an action, where they often take the same form as adjectives, or the whole sentence.

Aspect is concerned with whether the action of a verb is complete, ongoing or habitual; it is marked in Thai by auxiliary verbs.

Auxiliary verbs only occur with other verbs; Thai auxiliaries include modal verbs and time and aspect markers.

Causative verbs in Thai convey a range of meanings including allowing something to happen, causing something to happen, either intentionally or unintentionally, and compelling someone to do something.

Classifiers are attributed to every noun and are used primarily, but not exclusively, in noun phrases involving numbers, such as ‘three daughters’, ‘four glasses of orange juice’, and so on.

Compounds are combinations of two words to make a new word. Compounding is an important derivational process in Thai in creating nouns, adjectives and verbs.

Concessive clauses concede a point which is then often countered in the following clause. In English they usually begin with ‘although’; in Thai, the following clause is usually introduced by ‘but’.

Conditional clauses commonly begin with ‘if’ and state a condition under which the following clause holds true. In Thai the ‘if’ word is often omitted.

Consonant class Thai consonants are divided into three classes – low, mid and high; the class of the initial consonant in a syllable will play a part in determining the tone of the syllable.
Consonant clusters are combinations of two consonant sounds, such as pl-, khw-, pr-; in Thai they occur only at the beginning of a syllable. The class of the first consonant in the cluster plays a part in determining the tone of the syllable.

Dead syllables are one of two types of syllable in Thai (see also live syllables); dead syllables are those which end in either in a p, t or k stop consonant or a short vowel.

Demonstratives are words like ‘this’ and ‘that’. Thai demonstrative pronouns and demonstrative adjectives are distinguished by tone, pronouns having a falling tone and adjectives a high tone.

Diphthongs are glides from one ‘pure’ vowel sound to another.

Directional verbs occur after a verb (phrase) to indicate the direction of the action in relation to the speaker.

Intensifiers modify adjectives and adverbs expressing the degree to which that quality is present (e.g. very, fairly, hardly); many adjectives in Thai take their own specific intensifier (cf. pitch black).

Live syllables are one of two types of syllable in Thai (see also dead syllables); live syllables are those which end in either an m, n, η, w, or y sound or a long vowel.

Modal verbs express possibility, probability, ability, necessity, volition and obligation. Most, but not all, Thai modals occur before a verb (phrase); modals are not all negated in the same way.

Noun phrases consist of a noun modified by one or more modifying words, such as numbers, demonstratives or adjectives. Classifiers play an important role in noun phrases in Thai.

Personal pronouns Thai has a much more complex system of personal pronouns than English; choice of the appropriate pronoun is determined not only by gender and number, but also by age, social status, context and personality; kin terms, status/occupation terms, personal names and nicknames are commonly used as pronouns; pronouns are also commonly omitted.

Quantifiers are words like ‘all’, ‘some’, ‘many’ and ‘every’. In Thai noun phrases some quantifiers behave like numbers and others like adjectives.

Reduplication, most commonly involving the repetition of an adjective or an adverb, can serve a number of functions, including making the meaning less precise, intensifying the meaning and signalling an imperative; a small number of nouns can be pluralised by reduplication.

Resultative verbs occur after another verb to describe the state that results from the action of the first verb (cf. I shot him dead).
Sentence particles occur at the end of an utterance. They include question particles, which serve a grammatical function, and polite particles, mood particles and exclamatory particles, which have a communicative function.

Stative verbs describe a state rather than an action. Adjectives in Thai also function as stative verbs.

Subordinate clauses are dependent on the main clause in a sentence. They include concessive, conditional, purpose, reason and relative clauses.

Tone The pitch assigned to each syllable. Standard Thai has five tones – mid, high, low, rising and falling.

Topicalization involves placing a word or phrase other than the subject at the beginning of the sentence in order to highlight it and make it the ‘topic’ of the sentence.

Unreleased consonants occur when the airstream is closed to make the sound, but not re-opened; the final ‘p’ in English ‘yep!’ is commonly pronounced as an unreleased consonant. The final stop consonants in Thai (p, t, k) are unreleased.

Verb phrase This consists of a verb and optionally, its objects (direct and indirect) and any modifying adverb. In this book, the convention VERB (PHRASE) is used extensively to mean ‘verb or verb phrase’.

Verb serialization is an extremely common feature of Thai in which a number of verbs sharing the same subject follow one another with no intervening conjunctions or prepositions.

Wh- questions are questions which begin with wh- in English: who?, whose?, what?, which?, where?, when?, why? How? is also normally included in this category.


—— (1979) AUA Language Center Thai Course: Reading and Writing, 2 vols, Bangkok: American University Alumni Language Center.


—— (1989) Thai Sentence Particles and Other Topics, Canberra: Australian National University.


Bibliography and further reading


ability 64
abstract nouns 28–9
additive clauses 122
address, terms of 23, 39
adjectives (stative verbs) 83–95
  comparison 91–5
  intensifiers 87
  modification 85
  superlatives 95
adverbial phrases 98
adverbs 96–107
  comparison 101–2
  degree 105
  frequency 104
  manner 96
  modification 100
  time 103
although 120
apart from 122
apologies 201
approximation 184
as ... as possible 102
as many as ... 188
aw: verb (phrase) + aw 73

baañ 106, 182
báañ 106, 168
because 119, 163
by 113

cñ + verb (phrase) 67
cñ . . . ru yanñ? 158
cá/cáu/cáu 128–9
cáak 115
cay 84

chañ 84
. . . chay máy? 155
classifiers 31
  with adjectives 36–7
  with cardinal numbers 33, 36
  with demonstratives 35–6
  with quantifiers 34
  with ordinal numbers 34, 37
comparison
  adjectives 91–5
  adverbs 101–2
  degrees of comparison 91
  equal comparisons 92–3
  interrogative comparisons 93
  negative comparisons 94
  of quantities 186–8
compounds
  adjectival 84
  nouns 26–31
  verbs 59–60
concessive clauses 120
conditional clauses 119
  negative conditionals 149
congratulations 212
consonants
  classes 14
  clusters 6, 18
  double-functioning 20
  final 6, 12–13
  initial 5, 12–13, 17
  names 12–13
  pronunciation 5–6
  silenced 20
  written form 12–13, 22
Index

dates 192
dày/dâay 53–4, 64, 71, 99, 142–3, 196
  summary 219–21
days of the week 189
  parts of the day 189
dead syllables 15–16
decimals 178
diphthongs, pronunciation 7–9
direct and indirect speech 123
distances 181
distribution 182
dooy 98, 113
dûay 99, 113–14, 130
excessives 94
exclamatory particles 125
exemplification 124
for 111–13, 196
from 115
fractions 177
future actions 67
give 80–1
greetings/farewells 209–10
hâ?/hâ/hâ 128
hâa . . . mây 151–2
hâam 145, 147–8, 205
hây 77–81, 100, 111
  summary 218–19
how?
  (manner) 164
  (degree) 165
how about? 169
how many? 167
how much? 166
however (whatever way) 53
húa 84
imperatives 97, 100, 123, 135–7
in order to 121
indirect object 80
indirect questions 170
indirect speech 123
introductions 210
inviting someone to do something 206
kaan 28
kaan thii 119–20
kamlaj + verb (phrase) 69
kamlaj ca + verb (phrase) 69
káp 111, 114
khá/khá/khâa 127–8
khâaj 109
khâay + verb (phrase) 70
khîi 84
khon la 182
khôaj 38
khrâp 127
khrâp phôm 127
khôo 57
khwaam 29
kin terms 43–4
kô 118
. . . kô dâay 53
. . . kô mây chây . . . kô mây chôaj 143
lá/la 130
lâ 131
less than 188
. . . lâa/rûu? 154
. . . lêcw 68, 71, 156–8
. . . lêcw kô . . . 168
. . . (lêcw) rû yaaj? 157
live syllables 15–17
location 108–11
lôk/rok 134–5
. . . mây? 153
mây + verb (phrase) 138
mây chây 143, 155
mây chôaj 143, 151
mây dây + verb (phrase) 71, 142–3
mây mii 144
measurements 181
mi 151
mii 38
misunderstandings 206–8
  ignorance, uncertainty 206
  non-comprehension 207
months 190
more than 186–7
multiples 179
Index

mood particles 129–37
polite particles 126–9
question particles 126, 153–9
passives 74
pen 56, 65, 99, 196
summary 221–2
per 182
percentages 178
phaay 110
phàa + verb (phrase) 70
phûù 27
phûii 112
phûii thûi ca 121
politeness 200
possession 38, 50
possibility 64
prepositions 108–15
probability 64
pronouns 39–55
demonstrative 50
emphatic 48
indefinite 51–4
interrogative 51
kin terms 43
occupation terms 45
omission of 40
personal 39–43
possessive 50
reciprocal 49
reflexive 47
relative 49
sacred 46
pronunciation 5–10
purpose clauses 121
quantification 171–88
quantifiers 182–4
negative quantification 184
questions 153–70
alternative questions 169
asking the time 199
indirect questions 170
negative questions 148–9
WH- questions 159–69
WH- questions + bâa 168
WH- questions + dîi 168
yes/no questions 153–9
reason clauses 119–20

mood particle 132, question particle 155
náa 84
nák 27
names
personal 23, 44
place 23
necessity 65
negation 138–52
auxiliary verbs 140–2
main verbs 138
modifying negatives 144–5
negative causatives 146–8
negative comparisons 94
negative conditional clauses 149
negative expressions 151
negative imperatives 145–6
negative past tense 71
negative questions 148–9
resultative verbs 139
no 150, 153–9
noun phrases 31–8
nouns 23–38
abstract 28–9
borrowings 25
common 24
proper 23
numbers 171–88
cardinal numbers 172
collective numbers 179
fractions, decimals, percentages,
multiples 177–9
idiomatic expressions 180
ordinal numbers 175
Sanskrit numbers 176
nào 133
này 134

obligation 66
occupation terms as pronouns 45
once 177
only 185
otherwise 149

particles 126–37
exclamatory 125
reduplication 25, 89, 97
relative clauses 54
requests/requesting 202–6
  for information 202
  for something 202
  someone to do something 203–4
  someone not to do something 205
to do something oneself 203
romanisation 215–7
rõk/lõk 134–5
rooŋ 28
rʊ 169
... rʊ plâaw? 156
... (lɛw) rʊ yaŋ? 157
ca ... rʊ yaŋ? 158

sâk (+ cardinal number) 174
sâmràp 112
seasons 192
sì/sì/sìi/sìi 135–6
sìa/sâ: verb (phrase) + sìa/sâ 73
socialising 208–14
somebody 51
something 52
somewhere 52
spelling irregularities 19, 21
stress 10
subordinate clauses 76–7, 118
sùan 112
sympathy 212
tâ ( + cardinal number) 174
tâŋteː 115
telephone transactions 212–4
thaŋŋ 110
thanks 200
thà/hà 136
thi 137
thîi 30, 54, 77, 108, 119
time 189–99
  adverbs of time 103
  telling the time 196–9
time clauses 122
  useful expressions 193–6
to 111
too 94
tone 9
change 10
  marks 16–17
  rules 16–18
topicalization 117
zą 65–6, 140–1
twice 177
verbs 56–82
  causatives 77–80
directional verbs 61–3
  modal verbs 63–7
  resultative verbs 60, 139
  serialization 81
  stative verbs 59, 8, 72, 156
time and aspect 67–74
to be 56–9
vowels 7–9
  silent final 20
unwritten 18
  written form 14–15
wá/wâ/wóoy 129
wâa 76, 123, 170
wây: verb (phrase) + wây 72
wây: verb (phrase) + wây 65
want to 67
what? 160
when? 163
whenever 52
where? 162
which? 161
whichever 53
who? 159
whoever 51
whose? 160
why? 163
with 114
word order 116–18
writing system 11–22
yá/yà 129
yàa 145–6, 205
yàa phôŋ 146
yâaŋ 98
years 191
yes 153–9
yūu 59, 69, 108