How Guarani sounds Avañe'ẽ

Which Guarani: this sheet uses Paraguayan Guarani, written in the official alphabet of 33 letters. Related Guarani languages are spoken in Bolivia, Brazil and Argentina too, and some of them sound and spell a little differently.

The trick: one letter is one sound, and every letter is said. The alphabet: a ã ch e ẽ g g̃ h i ĩ j k l m mb n nd ng nt ñ o õ p r rr s t u ũ v y ỹ '

Letters	Sounds like	Example
a, e, i, o, u	short and pure: a in father, e in bed, i in ski, o in for, u in rule	**ára / tete / ita** day / body / stone
y	the sixth vowel, said deep in the mouth: say u, then spread your lips as if smiling	**y / yvy** water / earth, land
ã, ẽ, ĩ, õ, ũ, ỹ	the same six vowels, said through your nose as well as your mouth	**porã / ñe'ẽ / peteĩ** good / word / one
'	the puso: a short catch in the throat, like the break in uh-oh	**ka'a / so'o** herb, yerba mate / meat
ch	sh in shop	**che** I, me, my
g	a soft g, lighter than the g in go	**guata / aguyje** walk / thank you
g̃	the same soft g, said through the nose	**ko'ág̃a** now
j	j in jam	**jagua / jasy** dog / moon
mb, nd, ng, nt	one sound each, not two: a soft m before b, n before d, g or t	**mbyja / nde** star / you
ñ	ny in canyon	**ñande / kuña** we / woman
r	a light tap of the tongue	**arai / yvyra** cloud / tree
v	a soft v, the lips barely touching	**vy'a / yvoty** joy / flower
h	h in hat	**hũ / hovy** black / blue
k, p, t	as in English, but with no puff of air	**kure / pira / tata** pig / fish / fire
l, m, n, rr, s	much as in English; rr is a rolled r. l and rr are rare	**mitã / mymba** child / pet

a · e · i · o · u · y

six vowels, each with a nasal twin

ã ẽ ĩ õ ũ ỹ the tilde means through the nose

mitã child · **porã** good

mitã · mitãnguéra

a nasal sound spreads through the word

so the tilde is written once, and endings follow it:

-kuéra becomes **-nguéra**, **-pe** becomes **-me**

Nasal harmony: one nasal vowel makes the whole word nasal, so ñe'ẽ and mitã need only one tilde, and endings change to match: mitã, child; mitãnguéra, children.

Stress: usually on the last syllable: ja-GUA, dog; po-RÃ, good. When it falls anywhere else, an accent shows where: Ó-ga, house; Mba'éichapa? The puso splits two vowels into two beats: ka-'a.

How words work jaguakuéra

No gender, no the: Guarani has no masculine or feminine and no word for the or a: jagua is a dog or the dog, and ha'e is he and she. In everyday talk you'll also hear la and umi used a bit like the; this sheet leaves them out.

Words in colour

noun
a thing, a person or a place
jagua dog · **óga** house

describing word
comes after the noun
tuicha big · **porã** good

verb
the bare form, with no prefix
guata walk · **karu** eat

other
little words and phrases
ha and · **ko'ágã** now

Endings

jagua a dog, the dog	jagua**kuéra** dogs: -kuéra, more than one	mitã**nguéra** children: -nguéra after a nasal word	tává**pe** in town, to town: -pe, in, to	guaraní**me** in Guarani: -me after a nasal sound

More than one: -kuéra on the end, but it's often left off when it's clear: mokõi jagua, two dogs. After a nasal word it's -nguéra, and -pe becomes -me: mitãnguéra, guaraníme.

My, your, this

che jagua my dog	nde jagua your dog	che sy my mum	ko jagua this dog	jagua tuicha a big dog

che and nde: I and you, and also my and your. A few words change their first sound after them: óga, house; che róga, my house. There's no word for am or is: Che mbo'ehára, I'm a teacher.

Who: guata, to walk, and ñe'ẽ, to speak

	I walk	I speak
che I	**a**guata	**a**ñe'ẽ
nde you	**re**guata	**re**ñe'ẽ
ha'e he, she	**o**guata	**o**ñe'ẽ
ñande we, you too	**ja**guata	**ña**ñe'ẽ
ore we, not you	**ro**guata	**ro**ñe'ẽ
peẽ you, all	**pe**guata	**pe**ñe'ẽ
ha'ekuéra they	**o**guata	**o**ñe'ẽ

The prefix says who: mostly like English, who, then the verb, then what: Che akaru mandi'o, I eat cassava. The prefix already says who, so che is often left out: Akaru mandi'o. We has two forms: ñande takes you in, ore leaves you out; with a nasal verb, ja becomes ña.

Saying no: nd- in front and -i at the end: ndaguatái, I don't walk; ndereguatái, you don't walk; ndoguatái, he or she doesn't walk.
Questions: -pa on the word you ask about: Reñe'ẽpa guaraníme? Do you speak Guarani? Mba'épa kóva? What's this? -piko does the same job, and you'll hear both.

The first 239 words Che, nde, ha'e

How: learn five a day, then listen for them in Guarani songs, videos and series. *Pink italics* say how a word is used, not what it means.

Me and you

che
I, me; also my *(che jagua, my dog)*

nde
you, one person; also your

ha'e
he, she: there is no gender

ñande / ore
we, you too / we, but not you

peẽ
you, more than one

ha'ekuéra
they

ko / pe
this / that, before a word *(ko jagua, this dog)*

kóva / upéva
this one / that one

Question words

mba'e
what; also thing *(Mba'épa kóva? What's this?)*

máva
who

moõ
where

mba'éicha
how

mboy
how many, how much

mba'ére
why *(it means for what)*

Little words

ha
and

térã
or

avei
also, too

ko'ápe / upépe
here / there

oĩ / ndaipóri
there is / there isn't

upéi
then, after that

jey
again

mbegue / pya'e
slowly / quickly

Family

sy
mother, mum *(che sy, my mum)*

túva
father, dad *(che ru, my dad)*

mitã
child

ta'ýra / rajy
son / daughter, said by a father

memby
son or daughter, said by a mother

jarýi
grandmother

tamói
grandfather

ména
husband

tembireko
wife

ogaygua
family *(it means the people of the house)*

kuña / kuimba'e
woman / man

People

kuñataĩ / karia'y
young woman / young man

mitãkuña / mitãkaria'y
girl / boy

tapicha
person

angirũ
friend

mbo'ehára
teacher *(it means one who teaches)*

temimbo'e
student, pupil

mba'apohára
worker

We, two ways: ñande is we, you included; ore is we, but not you. Son and daughter depend on who's speaking: a father says ta'ýra and rajy, a mother says memby.

Time and things Ko'ágã, ko'ẽrõ

When

ko'ágã
now

ko'ẽrõ
tomorrow

kuehe
yesterday

ára
day; also time, weather

ko'ẽ
dawn, first light

pyhareve
morning

ka'aru
afternoon, early evening

pyhare
night

jasy
month; also moon

ary
year

The body

tete
body

akã
head

tesa
eye

apysa
ear

tĩ
nose

juru
mouth

tãi
tooth

akãrague
hair

ajúra
neck

po
hand; also five

py
foot

Things

pirapire
money

ao
clothes

okẽ
door

ovetã
window

apyka
chair, seat

tupa
bed

aranduka
book

kuatia
paper; also a letter

kyse
knife

Weather and nature

kuarahy
sun

mbyja
star

ama
rain

yvytu
wind

arai
cloud

ysyry
river, stream

yvy
earth, land

ka'aguy
forest

yvyra
tree; also wood

yvoty
flower

ita
stone

tata
fire

Animals

jagua
dog

mbarakaja
cat

ryguasu
hen, chicken

guyra
bird

pira
fish

kure
pig

mymba
pet, animal you keep

jaguarete
jaguar

tatu
armadillo

panambi
butterfly

kururu
toad

mainumby
hummingbird

Numbers

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
peteĩ	mokõi	mbohapy	irundy	po	poteĩ	pokõi	poapy	porundy	pa

11	12	20	30
pateĩ	pakõi	mokõipa	mbohapypa

Counting: from six on, the numbers are built on po, hand, and pa, ten: poteĩ, six, is hand and one; pateĩ, eleven, is ten and one; mokõipa, twenty, is two tens. In everyday talk, bigger numbers are often said in Spanish.

Tomorrow: ko'ẽrõ, tomorrow, comes from ko'ẽ, dawn: it means when it dawns.

Food, places, verbs Tembi'u, óga, japo

Food and drink

tembi'u
food

y
water

so'o
meat

mandi'o
cassava

avati
maize, corn

mbujape
bread

mbeju
flat cake of cassava starch

kamby
milk

juky
salt

kumanda
beans

pakova
banana

ryguasu rupi'a
egg *(it means hen's egg)*

ka'ay
mate, the drink

Places

óga
house, home

táva
town, city

tape
road, path

mbo'ehao
school

kokue
field, farm plot

okára
the countryside; also outside

ñu
open grassland

tetã
country

Paraguái
Paraguay

avañe'ẽ
Guarani, the language *(it means people's speech)*

Verbs

guata
walk

karu
eat *(akaru, I eat)*

y'u
drink

ke
sleep

ho
go *(aha, I go)*

ju
come *(aju, I come)*

hecha
see

hendu
hear, listen

ma'ẽ
look, watch

ñe'ẽ
speak; also word, language

ikuaa
know *(aikuaa, I know)*

mbo'e
teach

moñe'ẽ
read

japo
do, make

mba'apo
work

jogua
buy

me'ẽ
give

hayhu
love

vy'a
be happy; also joy

purahéi
sing

jeroky
dance

ñembosarái
play

pytyvõ
help

porandu
ask

ha'arõ
wait

jahe'o
cry

puka
laugh

guapy
sit down

pu'ã
stand up, get up

ñani
run

pe'a / mboty
open / close

Describing words

tuicha / michĩ
big / small

porã / vai
good, beautiful / bad, ugly

pyahu
new

tuja
old, for people and animals

ro'y / haku
cold / hot

he'ẽ
sweet, tasty

kane'õ
tired *(Che kane'õ, I'm tired)*

mbarete
strong

mombyry / aguĩ
far / near

heta / mbovy
a lot, many / few

puku / mbyky
long / short

potĩ / ky'a
clean / dirty

pohýi / vevúi
heavy / light

pytã / sa'yju
red / yellow

hũ / morotĩ
black / white

hovy
blue; also green

Verbs: the dictionary form has no prefix. Add the one for who: guata, aguata, I walk; karu, akaru, I eat; ñe'ẽ, añe'ẽ, I speak (page 2). A few are irregular: ho, go, is aha, I go.

Describing words go after the noun: jagua tuicha, a big dog; kuña porã, a beautiful woman.

Phrases and show words Mba'éichapa?

Hello and goodbye

Mba'éichapa?
hello, how are you?

Iporã
fine, good *(the answer)*

Ha nde?
and you?

Mba'éichapa reiko?
how are you doing?

Aiko porã
I'm well

Maitei
hello, warm greetings

Mba'éichapa ne ko'ẽ?
good morning *(see below)*

Mba'éichapa nde ka'aru?
good afternoon

Mba'éichapa nde réra?
what's your name?

Che réra ...
my name is ...

Moõguápa nde?
where are you from?

Eguahẽ porãite
welcome

Jajotopata
see you *(it means we'll meet)*

Ko'ẽrõ peve
see you tomorrow *(it means until tomorrow)*

Please, thanks and help

Heẽ / Nahániri
yes / no

Aguyje / Aguyjevete
thank you / thank you very much

Ikatúpa?
may I? *(it asks is it possible?)*

Cheñyrõ
sorry

Ndaikuaái
I don't know

Reñe'ẽpa guaraníme?
do you speak Guarani?

Ani rejepy'apy
don't worry

Reactions

Iporãite!
great! very good!

Añetépa?
really? *(it asks is it true?)*

Che avei
me too

Nde avei
you too, same to you

Upéicha
that's right, just like that

Avy'a!
I'm happy!

The big scenes

Rohayhu
I love you *(see below)*

Chepytyvõ!
help me!

Jaha!
let's go!

Eju ko'ápe!
come here!

Eha'arõ!
wait!

Ani rejahe'o
don't cry

Ani rekyhyje
don't be scared

Aime ko'ápe
I'm here

What to call people

karai
sir, Mr

kuñakarai
madam, Mrs

che angirũ
my friend

Mba'éichapa: the everyday hello, any time of day, and the answer is Iporã. Mba'éichapa reiko? asks the same thing, a little warmer. Maitei is a warm greeting, often written at the start of a message.

ne and Rohayhu: nde, your, becomes ne before a nasal word: Mba'éichapa ne ko'ẽ? asks how was your dawn. In Rohayhu, ro is I to you, not we. Jajotopata starts with ja, we, you included, and ends with ta, will. Aguyjevete is Aguyje with vete, very much.

Two languages: most Paraguayans speak both Guarani and Spanish, and you'll often hear the two mixed in one sentence.

Practice Jaha!

How: cover the grey lines with a strip of paper. Read the Guarani out loud, then slide it down to check. Can you read every line without peeking? You've got it.

No am, no is: Che réra Jasy, my name is Jasy, is word for word my name Jasy; Che mbo'ehára, I'm a teacher, is I teacher.

Read every letter: nothing is silent, y is a vowel, and the puso is a catch: ka-'a, two beats.

Read these sentences

1. Mba'éichapa? Che réra Jasy.
   Hi, how are you? My name is Jasy.

2. Iporã, aguyje. Ha nde?
   I'm fine, thank you. And you?

3. Che mbo'ehára.
   I'm a teacher.

4. Aha mbo'ehaópe.
   I go to school.

5. Akaru mandi'o ha so'o.
   I eat cassava and meat.

6. Ay'u y.
   I drink water.

7. Ndaguatái ko'ágã.
   I'm not walking now.

8. Ñande jaguata.
   We walk, you and I.

9. Mitãnguéra oho mbo'ehaópe.
   The children go to school.

10. Peẽ peñe'ẽ guaraníme.
    You all speak Guarani.

Meet a word you don't know? In Kitsumi, hover any word in subtitles to see what it means.