

Dakota Pronunciation Guide

The Dakota, Lakota, and Nakota languages are primarily spoken, not written. While there are some commonly accepted spellings and letter use, it may differ from source to source. In the examples below, Dakota letters and English equivalents of the Dakota sounds are given, but these are only approximations. For more accurate pronunciation, consult a native speaker.

Vowels

a
e
i
o
u

English Sounds

ah
ay
ee
oh
oo

As In:

father
they
machine
no
rule

Consonants

b
ç
ç̄
d
g
ğ
h
h̄
k
k̄
m
n
ŋ
p
p̄
q
s
š
t
t̄
w
y
z
ž

Sounded:

as in **ball**
“ch”, as in **chin**
exploded, guttural “ch” sound
as in **dog**
as in **go**
guttural, not found in English
as in **hi**
guttural, not found in English
as in **king**
an exploded “k” not found in English
as in **moon**
as in **name**
a nasal sound, like in “**ink**”
as in **pine**
an exploded “p” not found in English
see “k”
as in **sun**
“sh”, as in **shell**
as in **time**
an exploded “t” not found in English
as in **woman**
as in **yell**
as in **zebra**
“zh”, as in **azure**