

Finding the Tone of a Thai Syllable...

Knowing Thai tone rules is important if you intend to speak Thai clearly. Sometimes reading through the rules helps, but for others charts make more sense. I've included both in this post.

In Thai there are three kinds of consonants:

- 1) low class: ค,ศ,ซ,ง,ช,ซ,ฌ,ญ,ฑ,ฒ,ณ,ท,ถ,น,พ,ฟ,ภ,ม,ย,ร,ล,ว,ฬ,ฮ
- 2) mid class: ก,จ,ฎ,ฏ,ต,ต,บ,ป,อ
- 3) high class: ข,ข,ฉ,ฐ,ถ,ผ,ฝ,ศ,ษ,ส,ห

You best remember the mid and the high class consonants – the low class are all the rest.

In Thai there are two kinds of vowels:

- 1) short vowels: -ั, -ิ, -ุ, -ี and ฤ. And all vowels with ะ or -็ in them.
- 2) long vowels: all the rest

In Thai there are two kinds of syllables:

- 1) dead syllable: ends a short vowel or on a p t or k sound.
- 2) live syllable: all the rest

In Thai there are four tones marks:

- 1) ˊ : normally indicates a low tone
- 2) ˋ : normally indicated a falling tone
- 3) ˊˊ : normally indicates a high tone
- 4) ˊˋ : normally indicates a rising tone

The Thai tone rules...

If the syllable has a tone mark:

- follow the tone mark
exception: the first consonant is low class: take the next tone

If the syllable doesn't have a tone mark:

- and the syllable is a life syllable: mid tone
exception: the first consonant is high class: rising tone
- and the syllable is dead: low tone
exception: the first consonant is low class
and the syllable has a short vowel: high tone
and the syllable has a long vowel: falling tone

By Kris Willems

Post url: <http://womenlearnthai.com/index.php/finding-the-tone-of-a-thai-syllable>