

Writing Systems

The four ways writing can encode a language.

Languages

By what a single character stands for.

System	A symbol is	Examples
Alphabet	One sound	Latin, Cyrillic, Greek
Abjad	A consonant	Arabic, Hebrew
Abugida	Consonant + inherent vowel	Devanagari, Thai, Amharic
Syllabary	A whole syllable	Japanese kana, Cherokee
Logographic	A word or morpheme	Chinese characters

Japanese uses three at once: two syllabaries and a logographic set, each doing a different job in the same sentence.