International Phonetic Alphabet

The **(International) Radiotelephony Spelling Alphabet**, commonly known as the **NATO phonetic alphabet**, is the most widely used set of clear code words for communicating the letters of the Roman alphabet, technically a *radiotelephonic spelling alphabet*. It goes by various names, including **NATO spelling alphabet**, **ICAO phonetic alphabet** and **ICAO spelling alphabet**. The **ITU phonetic alphabet and figure code** is a rarely used variant that differs in the code words for digits.

To create the code, a series of international agencies assigned 26 code words acrophonically to the letters of the Roman alphabet, with the intention of the letters and numbers being easily distinguishable from one another over radio and telephone, regardless of language barriers and connection quality. The specific code words varied, as some seemingly distinct words were found to be ineffective in real-life conditions. In 1956, NATO modified the then-current set of code words used by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO); this modification then became the international standard when it was accepted by ICAO that year and by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) a few years later.[1] The words were chosen to be accessible to speakers of English, French and Spanish.

Although spelling alphabets are commonly called "phonetic alphabets", they should not be confused with phonetic transcription systems such as the International Phonetic Alphabet.

The 26 code words are as follows (ICAO spellings): Alfa, Bravo, Charlie, Delta, Echo, Foxtrot, Golf, Hotel, India, Juliett, Kilo, Lima, Mike, November, Oscar, Papa, Quebec, Romeo, Sierra, Tango, Uniform, Victor, Whiskey, X-ray, Yankee, Zulu.[2] "Alfa" and "Juliett" are intentionally spelled as such to avoid mispronunciations. Numbers are spoken as English digits, but with the pronunciations of *three, four, five, nine*, and *thousand* modified.

Letter code words with pronunciation

Symbol	Code word	DIN 5009 (2022)[14]	ICAO (1950)[13]	ICAO respelling[13]
A	**Alfa** [*sic*]	ˈalfa	ˈælfa	AL fah
B	**Bravo**	ˈbravo	ˈbraːˈvo [*sic*]	BRAH voh
C	**Charlie**	ˈtʃali *or* ˈʃali	ˈtʃaːli *or* ˈʃaːli	CHAR lee *or* SHAR lee
D	**Delta**	ˈdɛlta	ˈdelta	DELL tah
E	**Echo**	ˈɛko	ˈeko	ECK oh
F	**Foxtrot**	ˈfɔkstrɔt	ˈfɔkstrɔt	FOKS trot
G	**Golf**	ˈgɔlf	gʌlf [*sic*]	golf
H	**Hotel**	hoˈtɛl	hoːˈtel	ho TELL

I	**India**	ˈɪndia	ˈindi.ɑ	IN dee ah
J	**Juliett** [*sic*]	ˈdʒuliˈɛt	ˈdʒuːli.ˈet	JEW lee ETT
K	**Kilo**	ˈkilo	ˈkiːlo	KEY loh
L	**Lima**	ˈlima	ˈliːmɑ	LEE mah
M	**Mike**	ˈmai̯k	mɑik	mike
N	**November**	noˈvɛmba	noˈvembə	no VEM ber
O	**Oscar**	ˈɔska	ˈɔskɑ	OSS cah
P	**Papa**	paˈpa	pəˈpɑ	pah PAH
Q	**Quebec**	keˈbɛk	keˈbek	keh BECK
R	**Romeo**	ˈromio	ˈroːmi.o	ROW me oh
S	**Sierra**	siˈɛra	siˈerɑ	see AIR rah
T	**Tango**	ˈtaŋgo	ˈtæŋgo	TANG go
U	**Uniform**	ˈjunifɔm *or* ˈunifɔm	ˈjuːnifɔːm *or* ˈuːnifɔrm [*sic*]	YOU nee form *or* OO nee form
V	**Victor**	ˈvɪkta	ˈviktɑ	VIK tah
W	**Whiskey**	ˈwɪski	ˈwiski	WISS key
X	**Xray, x-ray**	ˈɛksrei̯	ˈeksˈrei [*sic*]	ECKS ray
Y	**Yankee**	ˈjaŋki	ˈjænki	YANG key
Z	**Zulu**	ˈzulu	ˈzuːluː	ZOO loo

There is no authoritative IPA transcription of the digits. However, there are respellings into both English and French, which can be compared to clarify some of the ambiguities and inconsistencies.

Digit code words with pronunciation hide

Symbol	Code word					
1	**One**, **unaone**	WUN	OUANN	wun	wun	OO-NAH-WUN
2	**Two**, **bissotwo**	TOO	TOU	too	too	BEES-SOH-TOO
3	**Three**, **terrathree**	TREE	TRI	tree	tree	TAY-RAH-TREE
4	**Four**, **kartefour**	FOW-er	FO eur	FOW-er	fow-er	KAR-TAY-FOWER
5	**Five**, **pantafive**	FIFE	FA ÏF [*sic*]	fife	fife	PAN-TAH-FIVE
6	**Six**, **soxisix**	SIX	SIKS	six	six	SOK-SEE-SIX
7	**Seven**, **setteseven**	SEV-en	SÈV n	SEV-en	sev-en	SAY-TAY-SEVEN
8	**Eight**, **oktoeight**	AIT	EÏT	ait	ait	OK-TOH-AIT
9	**Nine**, **novenine**[24]	NIN-er	NAÏ neu	NINE-er	nin-er	NO-VAY-NINER
0	**Zero**, **nadazero**	ZE-RO[25]	ZI RO	ZE-ro	ze-ro / zee-ro	NAH-DAH-ZAY-ROH[26][27]
00	**Hundred**	HUN-dred	HUN-dred	(zero zero)	(hundred)	
000	**Thousand**	TOU-SAND[25]	TAOU ZEND	(zero zero zero)	(thousand)	
(decimal point)	**Decimal**, (FAA) **point**	DAY-SEE-MAL[25]	DÈ SI MAL	(decimal)	(point)	DAY-SEE-MAL

CCEB code words for punctuation include:

. stop (when not a decimal point)

, comma (when not a decimal point)

-	hyphen (FAA 'dash')
/	slant
(	brackets on
)	brackets off

Others are: 'colon', 'semi-colon', 'exclamation mark', 'question mark', 'apostrophe', 'quote' and 'unquote'.

CHARACTER	MORSE CODE	TELEPHONY	PHONIC (PRONUNCIATION)*
A	• —	Alfa	(AL-FAH)
B	— • • •	Bravo	(BRAH-VOH)
C	— • — •	Charlie	(CHAR-LEE) or (SHAR-LEE)
D	— • •	Delta	(DELL-TAH)
E	•	Echo	(ECK-OH)
F	• • — •	Foxtrot	(FOKS-TROT)
G	— — •	Golf	(GOLF)
H	• • • •	Hotel	(HOH-TEL)
I	• •	India	(IN-DEE-AH)
J	• — — —	Juliett	(JEW-LEE-ETT)
K	— • —	Kilo	(KEY-LOH)
L	• — • •	Lima	(LEE-MAH)
M	— —	Mike	(MIKE)
N	— •	November	(NO-VEM-BER)
O	— — —	Oscar	(OSS-CAH)
P	• — — •	Papa	(PAH-PAH)
Q	— — • —	Quebec	(KEH-BECK)
R	• — •	Romeo	(ROW-ME-OH)
S	• • •	Sierra	(SEE-AIR-RAH)
T	—	Tango	(TANG-GO)
U	• • —	Uniform	(YOU-NEE-FORM) or (OO-NEE-FORM)
V	• • • —	Victor	(VIK-TAH)
W	• — —	Whiskey	(WISS-KEY)
X	— • • —	Xray	(ECKS-RAY)
Y	— • — —	Yankee	(YANG-KEY)
Z	— — • •	Zulu	(ZOO-LOO)
1	• — — — —	One	(WUN)
2	• • — — —	Two	(TOO)
3	• • • — —	Three	(TREE)
4	• • • • —	Four	(FOW-ER)
5	• • • • •	Five	(FIFE)
6	— • • • •	Six	(SIX)
7	— — • • •	Seven	(SEV-EN)
8	— — — • •	Eight	(AIT)
9	— — — — •	Nine	(NIN-ER)
0	— — — — —	Zero	(ZEE-RO)