

Introduction

Map of Africa



Map of Nigeria

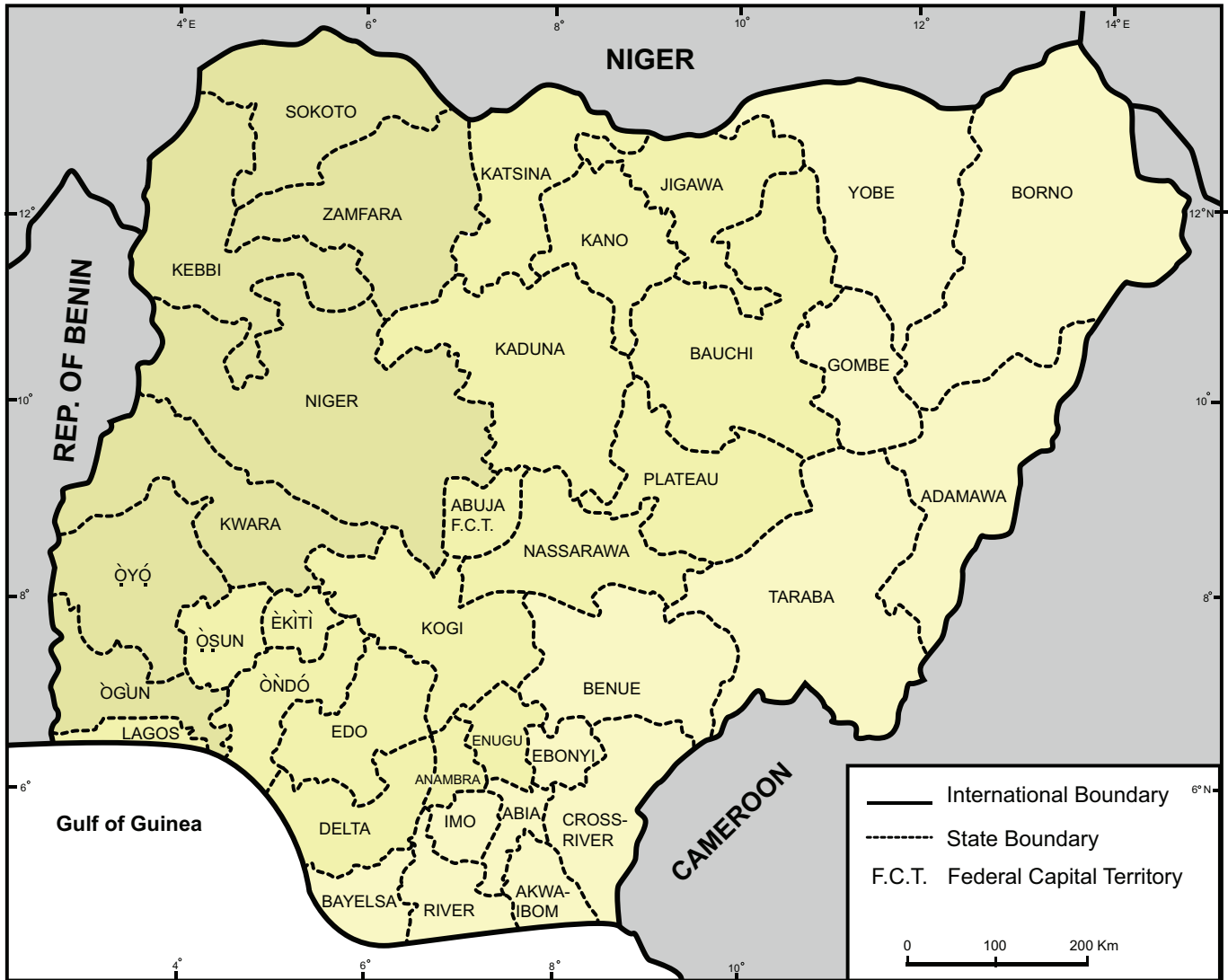


Fig Map of Nigeria Showing all the States
Máàpù Nàìjíríà tí ó ń ɣàfihàn gbogbo ìpínlè

Map Yorùbá Land (showing some Yorùbá cities)



Fig. Map of South-Western Nigeria Showing the Current Yoruba States

Map of Yorùbá World





Yorùbá Alphabets

Yorùbá language has **eighteen** consonants and **seven** oral vowels as found below:

IPA	Yorùbá Letters	Yorùbá Words	English Meanings	English Examples
[a]	a	àga	<i>chair</i>	as in 'apple'
[b]	b	bàtà	<i>shoe</i>	as in 'boy'
[d]	d	dùndún	<i>a type of drum</i>	as in 'dog'
[e]	e	ehoro	<i>rabbit</i>	as in 'eight'
[ɛ]	ẹ	ẹṣin	<i>horse</i>	as in 'egg'
[f]	f	filà	<i>hat</i>	as in 'feather'
[g]	g	garawa	<i>bucket</i>	as in 'go'
[gb]	gb	gbágùúdá	<i>cassava</i>	pronounced [gb]
[h]	h	hanrun	<i>to snore</i>	as in 'hall'
[i]	i	igi	<i>tree</i>	as in 'igloo'
[dʒ]	j	jígí	<i>mirror</i>	as in 'jog'
[k]	k	kòkóró	<i>key</i>	as in 'koala'
[l]	l	légbélègbé	<i>tadpole</i>	as in 'lie'
[m]	m	mánígòrò	<i>mango</i>	as in 'mom'
[n]	n	náírà	<i>nigerian money</i>	as in 'never'
[o]	o	ológbò	<i>cat</i>	as in 'oven'
[ɔ]	ọ	ọbọ	<i>monkey</i>	as in 'oil'
[kp]	p	pépéyẹ	<i>duck</i>	pronounced [kp]
[r]	r	ràkúnmí	<i>camel</i>	as in 'rise'
[s]	s	sálúbàtà	<i>sandal</i>	as in 'sun'
[ʃ]	ṣ	ṣíbí	<i>spoon</i>	as in 'shy'
[t]	t	tata	<i>grasshopper</i>	as in 'tie'
[u*]	u*	tú	<i>to untie</i>	as in 'true'
[w]	w	wárápá	<i>epilepsy</i>	as in 'water'
[j]	y	yànmùyánmù	<i>mosquito</i>	as in 'yes'

*No Standard Yorùbá language word starts with the vowel 'u'. However, in certain Yorùbá dialects such as the Èkìtì, and Ìjẹ̀sà dialects, a word can begin with 'u' as in *urọ* (a lie) and *uṣu* (yam) which is written in Standard Yorùbá as *irọ* and *iṣu*.

Vowels



Oral Vowels - Fáwẹ̀lì Àìránmúpè

There are seven oral vowels in Standard Yorùbá:

a	e	ẹ	i	o	ọ	u
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Below are examples of the vowels with their English meanings.

IPA	Yorùbá Letters	Yorùbá Words	English Meanings	English Examples
[a]	a	ajá	<i>dog</i>	as in 'apple'
[e]	e	erin	<i>elephant</i>	as in 'day'
[ɛ]	ẹ	ẹyẹ	<i>bird</i>	as in 'egg'
[i]	i	imú	<i>nose</i>	as in 'ignore'
[o]	o	owó	<i>money</i>	as in 'open'
[ɔ]	ọ	ọwọ	<i>hand</i>	as in 'oil'
[u]	u	*ooru	<i>heat</i>	as in 'put'

*Remember that there is no Standard Yorùbá word that begins with the vowel 'u' except in some other Yorùbá dialects as mentioned earlier.



Nasal Vowels - Fáwẹ̀lì Àránmúpè

Yorùbá has five nasal vowels:

-an	-ẹ̀n	-in	-ọ̀n	-un
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an	as in 'Ìbàdàn'	<i>a city in Western Nigeria</i>
ẹ̀n	as in 'ìyẹ̀n'	<i>that one</i>
in	as in 'erin'	<i>elephant</i>
ọ̀n	as in 'ìbọ̀n'	<i>gun</i>
un	as in 'fun'	<i>to blow</i>

While there is a distinction between /-an/ and /-ọ̀n/ in Standard Yorùbá orthography, both are pronounced the same, i.e. [ǽ]. Therefore, the nasal vowels in words like àgbọ̀n [àgbǽ] *coconut* and ìran [ìrǽ] *generation* are pronounced the same, i.e. [ǽ], though they are orthographically different.

Consonants

Yorùbá language has eighteen consonants as found below:

b	d	f	g	gb	h	j	k	l
m	n	p	r	s	ṣ	t	w	y

Note that the English alphabets c, q, v, x, z do not exist in Yorùbá.



Consonants

IPA	Yorùbá Letters	Yorùbá Words	English Meanings	English Examples
[b]	b	bàtà	<i>shoe</i>	as in 'bag'
[d]	d	dùhndú	<i>fried yam</i>	as in 'date'
[f]	f	filà	<i>hat</i>	as in 'foot'
[g]	g	igi	<i>tree</i>	as in 'gig'
[gb]	gb	gbogbo	<i>all</i>	N/A
[dʒ]	j	jòwọ	<i>please</i>	as in 'jaws'
[k]	k	kókọró	<i>key</i>	as in 'kitchen'
[l]	l	labalábá	<i>butterfly</i>	as in 'lollipop'
[m]	m	méjì	<i>two</i>	as in 'mouth'
[n]	n	nísisìnyí	<i>now</i>	as in 'near'
[kp]	p	pátápátá	<i>completely</i>	N/A
[r]	r	rìkísí	<i>conspiracy</i>	as in 'risky'
[s]	s	sálúbàtà	<i>sandal</i>	as in 'sun'
[ʃ]	ṣ	ṣíbí	<i>spoon</i>	as in 'shy'
[t]	t	tata	<i>grasshopper</i>	as in 'tea'
[w]	w	wàrà	<i>milk</i>	as in 'wheat'
[y]	y	yànmùyánmú	<i>mosquito</i>	as in 'yes'

The syllabic [m] and [n]

/m/ and */n/* are considered nasal consonants. However, they can act in capacity as syllabic nasals because they behave like vowels on which tones can be marked. In other words, they can stand on their own just like a syllable as found below:

Adéḥrelé	a/dé/ḥ/re/lé	<i>name of a person</i>
Bímbólá	Bí/m/bó/lá	<i>name of a person</i>
dùḥdú	dù/ḥ/dú	<i>fried yam</i>



Tones

Yorùbá language has three primary but contrastive tones that are marked as follows:

High	[/]	as in [bɪ́], <i>to give birth to</i>
Mid	[]	usually left unmarked as in [bi], <i>to ask</i>
Low	[\]	as in [bì], <i>to vomit</i>

However, there is also a down-stepped tone marked in the following in which a high tone is followed by a high tone and a low tone:

[/]	as in [akékòḥò], <i>a student</i>
	as in [ọ́lọpàá], <i>a police officer</i>

Tones can sometimes be marked on a nasal consonant as in the example below:

Mò ḥ ọ *I am going*

Tones distinguish words when they contrast in Yorùbá language as in the following examples:

eré	→	<i>play</i>
èrè	→	<i>gain, benefit</i>
ère	→	<i>carved, wooden image</i>
edé	→	<i>shrimp</i>
èdè	→	<i>language</i>

àṣà	→	<i>custom</i>
àṣá	→	<i>hawk, falcon</i>
owó	→	<i>money</i>
òwò	→	<i>trade</i>
ọwọ	→	<i>hand</i>
òwò	→	<i>respect, honor</i>

Titles in Yorùbá Culture

It is not uncommon in Yorùbá culture for people to have titles precede their names when they are being addressed. These titles can be in English or in Yorùbá. Some examples include: Lawyer Bísí Adéṣlá, Justice Bólá Adéḃísí, Engineer Dayò Ọlálékan, Chief Táyò Adélarí, Accountant Bádé Adélékè, Olorì Ṣadé Akíntáyọ, and Ọba Adélékè Adéṣlá

Adájọ	<i>Judge</i>
Agbejọrò	<i>Lawyer</i>
Alága	<i>Chairman (e.g of a meeting)</i>
Arábìnrin	<i>Mrs.</i>
Arákùnrin	<i>Master</i>
Dókítà	<i>Doctor (medical)</i>
Ọba	<i>King</i>
Ọgá	<i>Boss</i>
Ọgbéni	<i>Mr.</i>
Ọjògbọn	<i>Professor</i>
Olorì	<i>Queen</i>
Olóyè	<i>Chief</i>
Omidan	<i>Miss</i>

Ọ̀mọ̀wé	<i>Doctor of philosophy (Ph.D)</i>
Ààrẹ	<i>President (e.g of a club or school.)</i>

Yorùbá Names

Some Yorùbá names are gender specific while other names are gender neutral. Yorùbá people give names to a newborn baby based on the circumstances surrounding the birth of that baby. Meanings of Yorùbá names are discussed in Book II of this series.

Male	Female
Adékúnlé	Similólú
Ọ̀lásẹ̀ìndé	Fọ̀lášadé
Àbáyọ̀mí	Folúkẹ̀mi
Ọ̀ládàpọ̀	Olúwátómi
Olúgbénga	Mojísólá
Gbénró	Fadékẹ̀mi
Akíntúndé	Adérónké
Şẹgun	Fọ̀lákẹ̀mi
Olúwadáre	Ìyábọ̀
Babátúndé	Yéwándé
Gbóyèga	Similólú
Kọ̀lápọ̀	Atinúkẹ̀

Neutral (Male or female)

Mobólájí	Adébísí
Abíòdún	Bùnmi
Adékóyè	Adébólá
Olúrẹmí	Modúpẹ
Olúfẹmi	Adéọlá
Adéşọlá	Ayòkúnlé
Olúşẹyẹ	Bùsọlá
Fẹyíşayọ	Bámidélé
Moyòsọlá	Ọláyínká
Bólájí	Títílọlá
Adétósìn	Abímbólá

Communication in Class

ẹ dákẹ ariwo!	<i>silence, be quiet!</i> (you pl.)
dákẹ ariwo!	<i>silence, be quiet!</i> (you sg.)
ẹ şí ìwée yín sí ojú ìwée	<i>open your text books to page..</i> (you pl.)
şí ìwéeè rẹ	<i>open your text book</i> (you sg.)
ẹ dìde!	<i>stand up!</i> (you pl.)
dìde	<i>stand up!</i> (you sg.)
ẹ pa ìwée yín dé	<i>close your books</i> (you pl.)
pa ìwéeè rẹ dé	<i>close your book</i> (you sg.)
ẹ túnun sọ	<i>repeat!</i> (you pl. or mark of respect)
túnun sọ	<i>repeat!</i> (you sg.)
ẹ jòwọ	<i>please!</i> (you pl.); mark of respect
jòwọ	<i>please!</i> (you sg.)

ẹ f'etí sílẹ!	<i>listen!</i> (you pl.)
fetísílẹ!	<i>listen!</i> (you sg.)
ẹ jókòó!	<i>sit down!</i> (you pl.)
jókòó!	<i>sit down!</i> (you sg.)
ẹ sọ ọ ní Yorùbá	<i>say it in Yorùbá</i> (you pl. or for respect)
sọ ọ ní Yorùbá	<i>say it in Yorùbá</i> (you sg.)
ẹ nawọ sókè	<i>raise your hand</i> (you pl.)
nawọ sókè	<i>raise your hand</i> (you sg.)
mo ní ìbéèrè	<i>I have a question</i>
báwo ni a ẹ ń sọ wí (pé)...	<i>how do we say that...</i>
báwo ni a ẹ ń sọ ____ ní Yorùbá	<i>how do we say ____ in Yorùbá?</i>
ẹ́ ọ́ yéé yín?	<i>do you (pl.) understand?</i>
bẹ̀ẹ̀ ni, ọ́ yé wa	<i>yes, we understand</i>
ẹ́ ọ́ yé ẹ?	<i>do you (sg.) understand?</i>
bẹ̀ẹ̀ ni, ọ́ yé mi	<i>yes, I understand</i>
ẹ sọ ọ tẹ̀lé mi	<i>repeat after me</i> (pl.)
sọ ọ tẹ̀lé mi	<i>repeat after me</i> (sg.)
kí ni ìtúmọ̀.....	<i>what is the meaning of...?</i>

