# THE ALPHABET

The Nuu-chah-nulth and Ditidaht alphabets have forty-seven characters.

It is a phonetic alphabet, which means that every letter represents a different sound, and every sound is represented by only one character.

a aa c c̓ č č̓
e ee h ḥ i ii
k kʷ k̓ k̓ʷ ɬ ƛ
ƛ̓ m m̓ n n̓ o
oo p p̓ q qʷ s
š t t̓ u uu w
w̓ x xʷ x̣ x̣ʷ y
y̓ ʔ ʕ b d

Please work with your local language advocate to identify characters used in your dialect.

# RESOURCES

There are many websites that offer more thorough lessons on the Nuu-chah-nulth and Ditidaht alphabets and interactive options for learning.

## FirstVoices

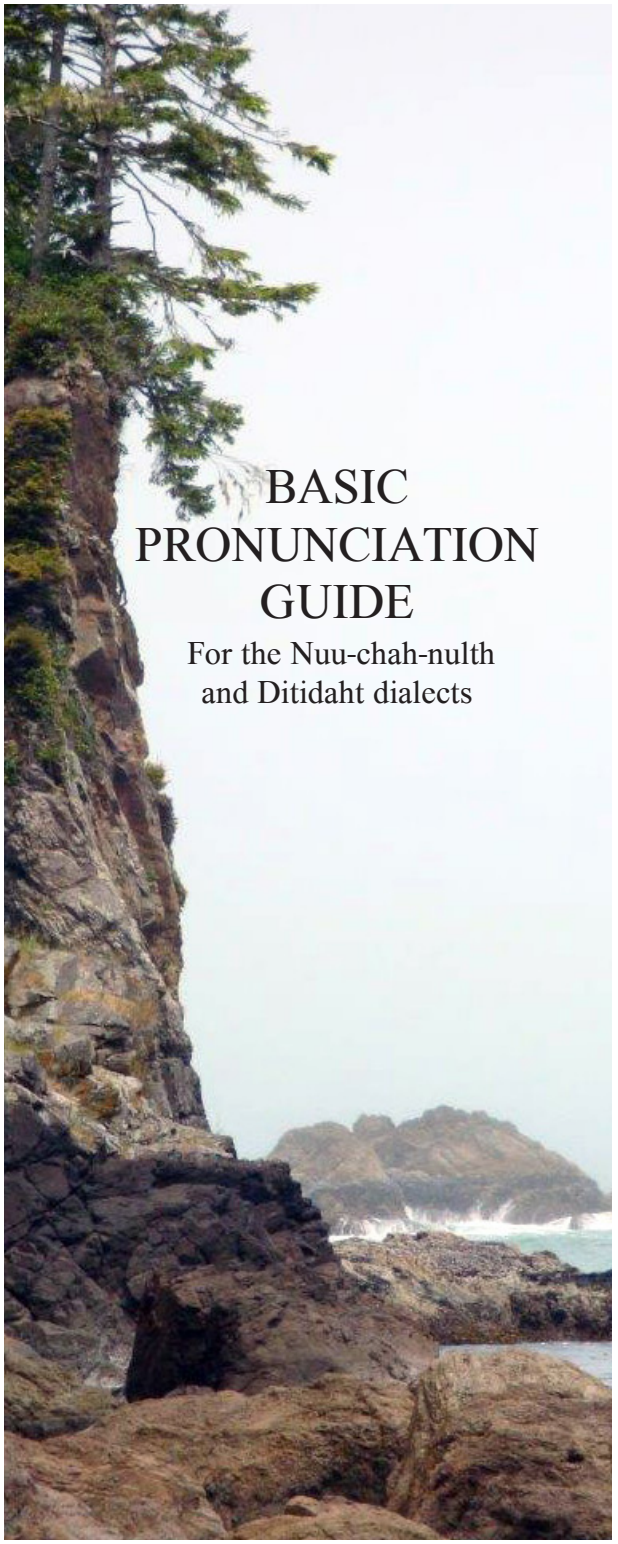
FirstVoices is a website that offers audio recordings along with the translations. You can search both words and phrases and there is also a section for educational games.

http://www.firstvoices.com/en/Nuu-chah-nulth

## Kwistuup.net

Kwistuup.net is a website that offers “Survival Conversations” for the Nuu-chah-nulth and Ditidaht dialects and an in-depth language curriculum.

http://kwistuup.net/



# BASIC PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

For the Nuu-chah-nulth and Ditidaht dialects



# UNIQUE CHARACTERS

**Unique Characters are not found in the English alphabet and many of the sounds are not used in English.**

č - sound of “ch”
c̓ - explosive “ch”
ḥ - like breathing on glass
kʷ - sound of “qu” in queen
k̓ʷ- explosive “qu”
ɬ - a hissed “L”
ƛ - sound “tla” place the tongue behind teeth and let it drop
ƛ̓ - explosive sound of “tla”
qʷ - sound of “kw” but farther back
š - sound of “sh”
xʷ - hissing like a cat with rounded lips
x̣ - hissing like trying to spit
x̣ʷ - hissing like trying to spit with rounded lips
ʔ - a catch in the throat
ʕ - a deep catch in the throat

# COMMON CHARACTERS

h k m n p s t w y b d



**Common Characters are pronounced the same in Nuu-chah-nulth and Ditidaht as they are in English.**

# SIMILAR CHARACTERS

a - sound of “u”
aa - sound of “a”
c - sound of “ts” as in hats
c̓ - explosive “ts”
i - sound of “bit”
ii - sound of “ski”
k̓ - explosive “k”
m̓ - sound of “m” with a catch
n̓ - sound of “n” with a catch
o - sound of “go”
oo - long “oh” or “aw”
p̓ - explosive “p”
q - sound of “k” but farther back
t̓ - explosive “t”
u - sound of “put”
uu - sound of “due”
w̓ - sound of “w” with a catch
x - hissing like a cat
y̓ - sound of “y” with a catch

**Similar Characters are used in Nuu-chah-nulth, Ditidaht and English. However, they are pronounced differently.**

