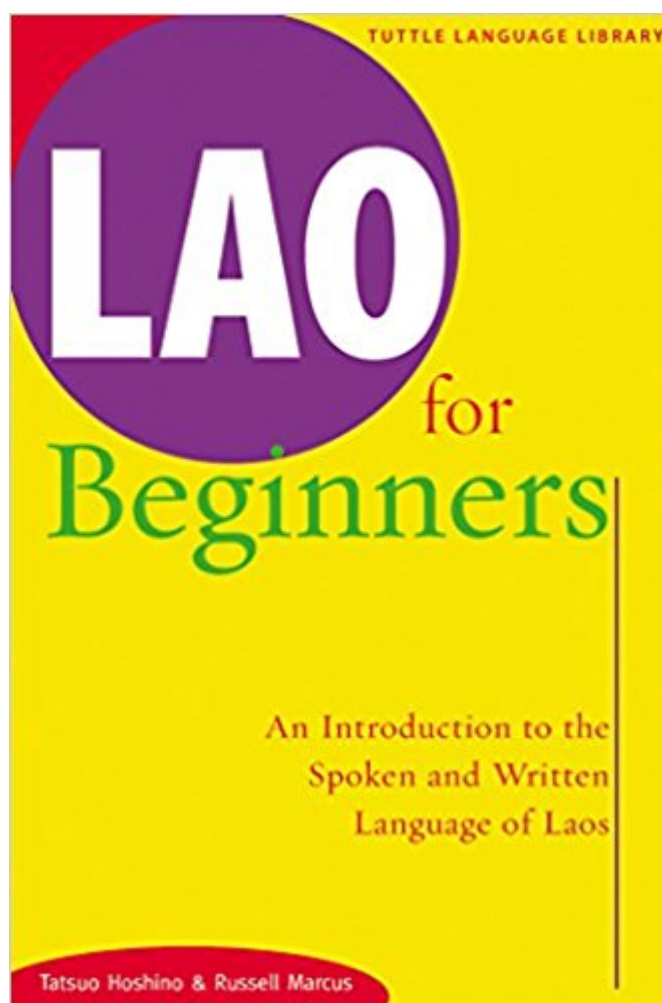


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# Lao For Beginners: An Introduction To The Written And Spoken Language Of Laos



## Synopsis

This is an effective and concise self-study Lao language book. Lao for Beginners is for the person who is beginning to learn Lao. It is an incredibly useful introduction to spoken Lao for tourists, businesspeople or students. Lao for Beginners is primarily a workbook full of exercises to help beginners practice and acquire the ability to communicate with Lao people in spoken Lao. It is not a phrase book to scratch the surface of the Lao language. The book has been tested in classrooms and by individuals who have used it successfully to learn Lao. This beginning Lao text was designed for people who want to learn how to speak Lao fast. The book mainly teaches speaking Lao although there is a section which teaches reading Lao. The vocabulary in the whole text is limited to the 1,000 most frequently used words in everyday speech based on one of the author's own research in Vietnamese. The Lao words are listed in a special glossary for beginners which is arranged in English alphabetical order. To make studying easier, all exercises are written in phonetic Lao as well as authentic Lao script. As an additional aid, a review of the major features of Lao grammar is condensed into only 16 pages (including very useful tables) and is located in one place so that it can be read quickly and used as a reference frequently. Lao for Beginners is organized in five parts: Part 1: How to speak Lao. Part 2: Grammar Review. Part 3: How to Read Lao. Part 4: Lao-English Glossary for Beginners.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Tatsuo Hoshino, a Japanese historian who studied at the Sorbonne, has lived in Laos and Thailand,

and has written extensively about the history of Laos. Russell Marcus served as editor and chief compiler of the English-Lao, Lao-English Dictionary. He has lived in both Laos and Thailand.

The less in this book are very well organized, they flow with the learning process. The font is a little tiny so reading the Lao characters tend to tire my eyes. However I do not have 20/20 vision either.

Not helpful. Print too small

There are two books 'called Lao for beginners' and 2 books called 'Let's learn Lao'. I have not seen the Tuttle publications book. The one by Buasawan Simmala and Benjawan Poomsan Becker (Baipoon publishing 2003) has lot of audio. It has many problems, but the words in Lao are spelled correctly. Teach yourself methods have recently become very flimsy because few of the buyers actually get through them, so an author can sell a lot of substandard books. But for those who want to learn this is rather cruel punishment. It would be useful if the authors tried to learn a language from a book like what they have produced.

This is not a do-it-yourself book. The title even says it is an "introduction" to the language. I found it very helpful, and personally easy to use. Each section is purposeful, with an intro discussing how intonations and consonants can change the word, and how it is based on the closest English pronunciation as best as it could. (It has better phonetics than other Beginning Lao books out there, and there are not many options.) The sections are divided into basic conversational language, grammatical use, and reading/writing exercises. This book is not meant to be used alone, you definitely need a Lao/English Dictionary and probably someone Lao to fine-tune the pronunciation. My Lao friends were able to understand me after the first two lessons! As in many languages, there are sometimes differences in "casual" speech and proper speech, but they do say that you would use the examples given in the book for proper speech. This is more of a workbook a teacher would assign students given to support a Lao lesson.

I've been using this book on and off for 20 years and have found it very useful indeed. I always go back to it to brush up. It's simple (if a little crude in terms of its presentation) but it's systematic, breaks down the sentence structure into meaningful blocks of text and uses both lao script, phonetics (including numbers for the correct tone), as well as the English translation. There are a few mistakes here and there but not serious. It should be remembered that Lao is not spoken by a

whole lot of people (between 5-15 million?) and there aren't many books that cover this language. This is the best introductory book that I've seen.

Since this is the only Laos grammar book on the market, those of us who are interested in learning are forced to use it. The pages are not formatted well, having an amateurish feel to the layout. The sentence diagrams are very confusing and the print is small. It takes a little extra effort to learn the language simply because the book is not formatted aesthetically. Otherwise, the grammar is fine, although it is a must to get the Lao-English Dictionary to implement what is learned in the grammar book. This book is the only game in town so we have to use it, but it needs another edition to fix the layout.

I am Laotian and wanted to be up to date on my language skills, so I purchased this book a couple of years ago to expand my Lao vocabulary. I noticed that some of the words are wrong, not just spelled wrong, but are of a totally different subject! Also, the diagram for the different Lao tones at the beginning of the book are difficult and complicated to understand. It's not clear on how to pronounce each tone. For a language that is based on tones, I think it's better just to buy a book w/ a cd rom so you can hear exactly how the tones are pronounced. I was extremely disappointed w/ this book.

The book offers an easy to understand method of learning to speak Lao. After a quick study of the book I was able to communicate with a native Lao speaker and be understood. However the book doesn't really focus on the language a modern person might want if traveling in Laos.

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