



か sounds like “ka” in “contract,” “kite,” or “kind,” and has three strokes: the first stroke cuts horizontally across, comes down, and creates a hook, the bottom of the scroll. The second stroke comes down from the top and creates the left side. A third stroke lives to the right as its own slant, the feather quill used to write the contract for か [ka].



よ is said like the “yo” in “yoke” or Yo Yo Ma and almost looks like a traditional ox yoke to keep livestock aligned for plowing fields. The first stroke is the horizontal stroke to the right, about a third down the block starting from the center of the block. The second and final stroke starts at the top middle, makes a smooth connection with the initial stroke, and creates a resting loop and tail at the bottom of the block. It is used as a Sentence-Final Rider in Japanese to add emphasis on facts the listener is unaware of, indicating new information.





た sounds like “ta” as in “tardigrade” and we can see three of them in this image where the first set of strokes are an elongated lowercase t and the third and fourth strokes form a shape similar to い [ee] on its side, a mora called こ [ko] as we will soon learn. You can remember this mora by remembering that tardigrades eat tacos [ta+ko].



れ is pronounced like “re” in “red” or as in “ferret” and is two strokes, one vertical, about a third in from the left side of the block, and a second stroke that makes the head, neck, paw, back, haunches, rear feet, and tail of the ferret.

