The core Samoan alphabet is comprised of just 14 letters:
• the consonants F, G, L, M, N, P, S, T and V; and
• the vowels A, E, I, O and U.

The letters K, H and R are also used, but usually for foreign loanwords and/or for colloquial language.

Vowels can be long or short. Long vowels are marked with a macron (e.g. ā).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vowel</th>
<th>Long</th>
<th>Short</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>bath</td>
<td>but</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>eh</td>
<td>bet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>feet</td>
<td>eat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>raw</td>
<td>order</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U</td>
<td>loot</td>
<td>to</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While there are only five vowels, combinations of vowels (diphthongs) are common e.g. au, ao, ea, oi, ua.

Samoan consonants are pronounced the same as in English, with the exception of G which sounds like the NG in the word ‘song’.

In addition there is the glottalstop, which is designated by an apostrophe '.

Basic Greetings and Phrases

- welcome afio mai
- hello talofa, malo
- good bye tofa, soifua
- good night manuia le po
- good day manuia le aso
- excuse me tulou lava
- thank you fa'afetai
- please fa'amolemole

For further information about Samoan pronunciation visit: http://samoan.manuatele.net/