



Polish Paleography Seminar

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FamilySearch

Alphabet and Pronunciation

Aa Aą Bb Cc Ćć Dd Ee Eę Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Łł Mm Nn Ńń Oo Óó Pp Rr Ss Śś Tt Uu Ww Yy
Zz Żż Źź

Letter	Sound	Letter	Sound	Letter	Sound	Letter	Sound
a	f <u>a</u> ther	ą	h <u>o</u> me	c	cat <u>s</u>	ch, h	B <u>a</u> ch (kh)
ci, ć	<u>ch</u> eck	cz	<u>ch</u> alk	dz	<u>o</u> dds	dzi, dź	<u>j</u> eans
dź	<u>j</u> aw	e	<u>e</u> ver	ę	<u>s</u> ense	i	<u>e</u> agle
j	<u>y</u> oung	ł	<u>w</u> ander	ń, ni	<u>c</u> anyon	o	sp <u>o</u> ke
ó, u	<u>t</u> oo	rz, ż	treas <u>u</u> re	si, ś	<u>sh</u> ee <u>p</u>	sz	<u>sh</u> ed
w	<u>v</u> iolin	y	<u>p</u> ill	z, iż	<u>a</u> zure		

Tools for identifying Polish names

Surnames

- <https://nazwiska-polskie.pl/>
- <http://herby.com.pl/> -- note: this website lists surnames based on the voivodship boundaries from 1998.
- [Słownik nazwisk współcześnie w Polsce używanych](#) [Dictionary of surnames currently used in Poland] – see familysearch.org/books

Given names

- https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/Appendix:Polish_given_names
- [Słownik imion](#) by Wanda Janowowa, Aldona Skarbek, Bronisława Zbijowska, and Janina Zbiniowska **available at the Family History Library**

Tools for reading Polish records

- FamilySearch Wiki – [“How to” Guides for Poland](#)
- FamilySearch Wiki – [Polish genealogical word list](#) (also see the “Handwriting help” section)
- FamilySearch Wiki – [Polish Gazetteers](#)
- *In their words: a genealogist’s translation guide to Polish, German, Latin, and Russian documents* by: Jonathan D. Shea and William F. Hoffman [vol. 1 – Polish, vol. 2 – Russian, vol. 3 – Latin] **available at the Family History Library**
- Online dictionary: <https://www.wiktionary.org/>

Additional Polish Grammar helps

- *Polish Grammar in a Nutshell* by: Oscar E. Swan (University of Pittsburgh, 2003)
- *Polish--an Essential Grammar* by: Dana Bielec (Routledge, 1998)

Polish Grammar for Genealogy

Case uses

	Nominative	Genitive	Instrumental	Locative
Use	This is the subject of the sentence.	This is the ‘ owner ’ of an item. (Indicated in English with ‘ s or of .) Also used after prepositions z (from), bez (without), etc.	The instrument by which something is done. Used after the prepositions między (between), z (together with), etc.	This is used to specify location . Used after the prepositions w (in), na (on), przy (by), etc.
Ex:	Marianna jest córką Jana i Anny. <u>Marianna</u> is the daughter of Jan and Anna.	Marianna jest córką Jana i Anny. Marianna is the daughter of Jan and Anna .	W dniu dzisiejszym zawarte zostało małżeństwo religijne między Janem a Anną. Today a religious marriage was performed between Jan and Anna .	Marianna zamieszkała w Kamion ce . Marianna resides in Kamionka .

Noun case endings

	Nominative (base form) Jan	Genitive (possessive, z [from]) son of, of the X family	Instrumental (after <i>mędzy</i> or <i>z</i>) marriage between	Locative (location after <i>w(e)</i>) born in X
Feminine Singular	Marianna Kamionka Nidzica -a (-i) or no ending	Marianny Teofili -y or -i	Marianną Teofilą -ą	Kamionce Nidzicy -e or -y/i
Masculine Singular	Jan Nowodwór Uściług [no ending]	Jana Nowodworu -a or -u	Janem -em	Nowodworze Uściługu -e or -u
Masculine Plural	(-y/i or 'i) or -e	Czopów ów or -y/i	N/A	-ach [masculine & feminine]

Adjective case endings

	Nominative (base form)	Genitive (possessive, z [from])	Instrumental (after <i>mędzy</i> or <i>z</i>)	Locative (location after <i>w(e)</i>)
Feminine Singular	Turalska -(i)a	zamarłej -ej	Turalską -(i)ą	dziesiątej -(i)ej
Masculine Singular	Turalski -i/-y	Turalskiego zamarłego -(i)ego	Turalskim -ym/-im	-ym/-im
Plural	Turalski -i/-y or -(i)e	Turalskich zamarłych -ych/-ich	-ymi/-imi	-ych/-ich

Hard and Soft Consonants

Hard	p	b	f	w	m	t	d	s	z	n	st	zd	sn
Soft	pi	bi	fi	wi	mi	ć	dź	ś	ź	ń	ść	źdź	śń

Hard	ł	r	k	g	ch	sł	zł	-	-	-
Soft	l	rz	c	dz	sz	śl	źl	cz	ź	j

*when used before a vowel, the consonants with accents lose the accent and add an i.

Ex: ś → si, ść → ści

- Genitive case
 - Used to show possession
 - Dates: when expressing 'on the date' and 'in the year', as is seen at the beginning of many Polish civil records, Genitive case is used.
 - Ex: *Dnia dwunastego lutego tysiąc osiemset sześćdziesiątego drugiego roku* (on the 12th day of February in the year 1862)
 - Used after the phrase *w obecności* (in the presence of) and after prepositions such as *z* (from, out of), *bez* (without), etc.
 - Noun declension pattern
 - Masculine singular: add **-a** (for animate things) or **-u** (for inanimate things)
 - Ex: Jan → Jana; Józef → Józefa; Andrzej → Andrzeja
 - Ex: from Nowodwór → z Nowodworu
 - Feminine singular: **-y, -i** (after words ending in **-k/-y** or soft consonants)
 - Marianna → Marianny; Agnieszka → Agnieszki; Teofila → Teofili
 - Feminine/Neuter plural: usually no ending
 - Masculine plural: add **-ów** after hard stems, and **-y/-i** after soft stems
 - Ex: Czop → Czopów
 - Adjective declension pattern
 - Masculine singular: **-ego**
 - Ex: *zmarły* → *zmarłego* (of the deceased [man])
 - Ex: Kaminski → Kaminskiego
 - Feminine singular: **-ej**
 - Ex: *zmarła* → *zmarłej* (of the deceased [female])
 - Plural: **-ych** (**-ich** if the word ends in **-k/-g**)
 - Ex: Kaminski → Kaminski**ch**
 - Ex: *zmarli* → *zmarłych* (of the deceased people)
- Instrumental case
 - Among other things, it expresses "by means of".
 - Commonly seen in marriage records after the prepositions *mędzy* (between) and *z* (with, together with, along with).
 - Noun declension pattern
 - Masculine singular: add **-em**
 - Ex: Stefan → Stefan**em**; *kawaler* (bachelor) → *kawaler**em***
 - Feminine singular: **-ą**
 - Ex: Marianna → Mariann**ą**; *panna* (maiden) → *pann**ą***
 - Adjective declension pattern
 - Masculine singular: add **-im**
 - Turalski → Turalski**im**
- Locative case
 - Primarily used to express location.
 - Used after the prepositions *w* (in), *na* (on), *po* (after), *przy* (near, during), *o* (about)
 - Time of day: preposition *o* + *godzinie* (locative form of the word *godzina* [hour]) + the ordinal number (using the locative adjective ending) + *rano* (in the morning) / *po południu* (in the afternoon) / *wieczorem* (in the evening) / *nocą* (at night)
 - Ex: *o godzinie dziesiątej rano* [at 10:00 in the morning]
 - Noun declension pattern

- Masculine/neuter singular: add **-e** to a softenable consonant and soften the consonant. Non-softenable consonants (including k, g, ch) take **-u**.
 - Ex: in Nowodwór → w Nowodwo**rze**
 - Ex: in Uściług → w Uścił**u**; in Raciąż → w Raciąż**u**
- Feminine singular: add **-e** to a softenable consonant (including k, g, ch) and soften the consonant. Non-softenable consonants take **-y (-i)**.
 - Ex: in Nidzica → w Nidzic**y**
 - Ex: in Kamionka → w Kamionc**e**
- Plural: **-ach**
 - Ex: in Hajki → w Hajk**ach**
 - Ex: in Mordy → w Mord**ach**
- Adjective declension pattern
 - Masculine/neuter singular: **-ym (-im)**
 - Ex: in Mokrelipie → w Mokry**mlipiu**
 - Ex: in Czarnylas → w Czarny**mlesie** [note: a → e is a normal vowel switch, see *Polish--an Essential Grammar* by: Dana Bielec]
 - Feminine singular: **-ej**
 - Ex: *dziesiąty* (10th) → *dziesiąt**ej*** (10th when referring to a feminine noun such as the word *godzina* [hour])
 - Ex: in Stara wieś → w Stare**j wsi** (note: the word *wieś* [village] is an exception in the locative case and does not get a separate ending. Instead the *ś* softens to *si* and the *e* fleets (disappears).]
 - Plural: **-ych (-ich)**