てんてん・まる Sound Changes

By adding てんてん or まる to certain ひらがな symbols, we can make new sounds. The name てんてん comes from the word てん, meaning mark or point, and まる means circle. These symbols are always added to the top right hand corner of the ひらがな, as shown.

Only ひらがな beginning with a K (か), S (さ), T (た) or H (は) sound can have てんてん added to them, and only characters beginning with a H (は) sound can have まる added to them.

Use these phrases and pictures to help remember the sound changes.

Kind Grandma
か → が (ga)
き → ぎ (gi)
く → ぐ (gu)
け → げ (ge)
こ → ご (go)

Stripey Zebra
さ → ざ (za)
し → じ (ji)
す → ず (zu)
せ → ぜ (ze)
そ → ぞ (zo)

Hot Potato
は → ぱ (pa)
ひ → ぴ (pi)
ふ → ぷ (pu)
へ → ぺ (pe)
ほ → ぽ (po)

Top Dog
た → だ (da)
ち → ぢ (dhi)
つ → づ (dsu)
て → で (de)
と → ど (do)

HB Pencil
は → ば (ba)
ふ → ぶ (bu)
ほ → ぼ (bo)
ひ → び (bi)
へ → べ (be)

ひらがな marked with a ◯ symbol are exceptions to the above rules - じ becomes ‘ji’ instead of ‘zi’, and ぢ and づ are pronounced similarly to じ and ず, but only used for specific words.