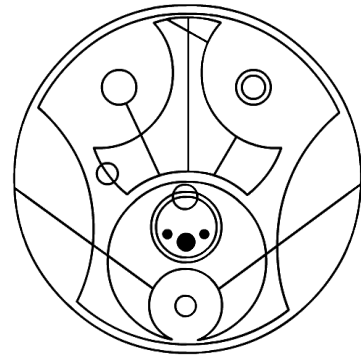


Introduction:

Gallifreyan is a fictional language used by the Time Lords of Gallifrey, from the British television program Doctor Who. Doctor Who and the concept of a circular language called Gallifreyan are © BBC, but this alphabet was created by Loren Sherman and is free for anyone to use! To learn more, visit shermansplanet.com/gallifreyan.



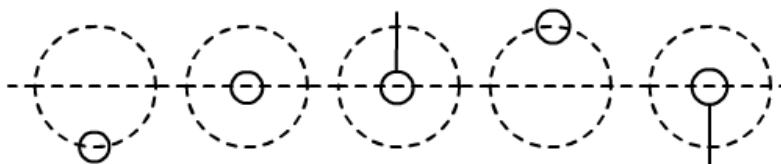
There are many kinds of Gallifreyan. All of them are made by fans, and I suggest you check them out too. This guide deals with Circular Gallifreyan. To clarify, this is not a language - it's just an alphabet in which you can write English and similar languages.

The Alphabet Itself:

		•	••	•••	••••			
	B		CH	D		G	H	F
	J	PH	K	L	C	N	P	M
	T	WH	SH	R		V	W	S
	TH	GH	Y	Z	Q	QU	X	NG

These are the consonants.

A E I O U



These are the vowels. A more comprehensive diagram can be found [here](#).



And here's the punctuation. More on that later.

Words:

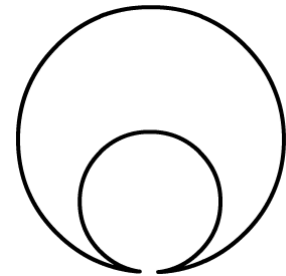
To read a word in Gallifreyan, start at the bottom, then read counterclockwise. Let's construct a few example words.

Bow

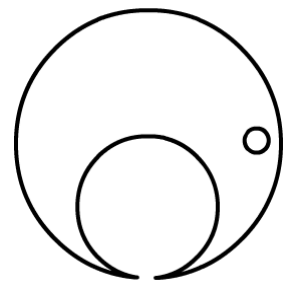
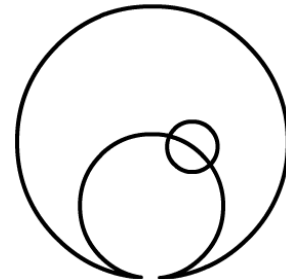
1. Here are the individual letters as they appear in the alphabet grid above.



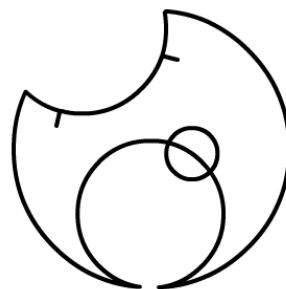
2. Place the B at the bottom of the word, since it is the first letter. Because the word is short, the B can be rather large. The first letter of a word does not have to be exactly at the bottom, but it does have to be the first letter when reading counterclockwise from the bottom.



3. Because the O is a vowel and it comes after a consonant (B), it is placed "on top of" the B. The dotted circles in the vowel list show how each vowel attaches. In the case of O, it would look something like the picture to the right. If the O were not preceded by a consonant, it would look more like the lower picture. This is also what it would look like if it were at the beginning of the word, or if you simply don't want to attach it to the consonant. Vowels seem hard to manage, but [this vowel sheet](#) provides an easy reference.



4. The W has lines coming out of it. It is a good habit to indicate however many lines are needed with short marks on the letter, then extend them fully once the full sentence is created. That way, you can connect letters (even between words) that have lines on them.

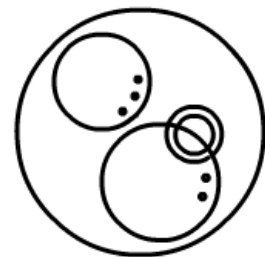


Now you have the word for bow! See if you can tell what these other words are:



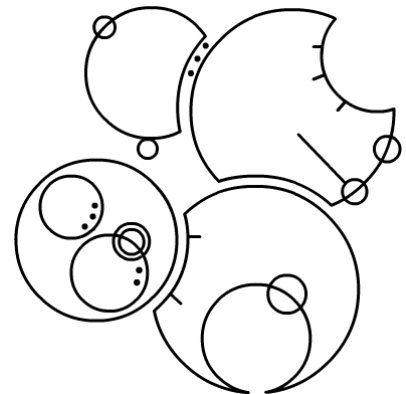
These words, of course, are "ties", "are", and "cool".

Double letters such as the "oo" in "cool" can be denoted by another circle, so "cool" could be written as such:

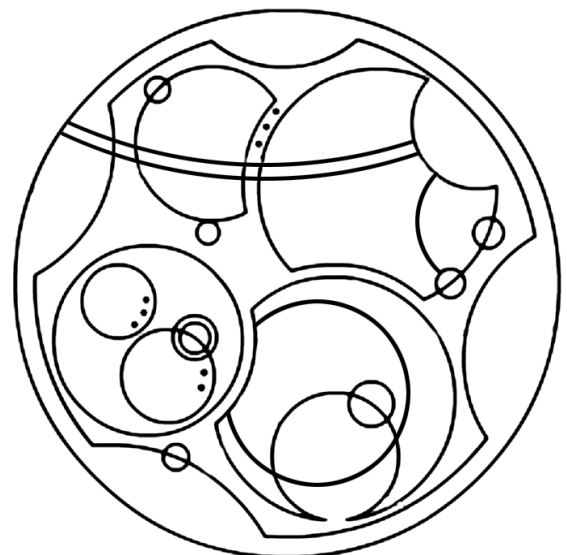


Sentences:

Words are fine, but sentences look much more impressive. Sentences, like words, are read counterclockwise from the bottom. The letters T, WH, SH, R, V, W, and S can be used to make words "interlock", which, like many aspects of Gallifreyan, is purely an aesthetic decision on the writer's part. Here are the words from above, arranged as they would be in a sentence.

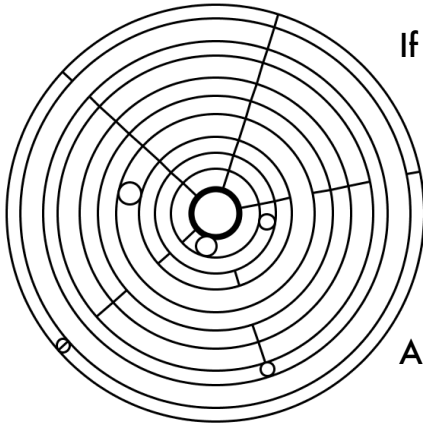


The next step is to add two circles around the entire sentence. The outer circle is simply a circle containing the sentence. The inner circle isn't a perfect circle; it has divots. These, again, are purely aesthetic. Punctuation is placed on the inner circle as well. After that, it's time to extend the lines. Other than the difference between I and U, it doesn't matter which direction they point, how straight they are, or how far they go. A line can connect two letters, just make sure that each letter still has the correct number of lines extending from it.

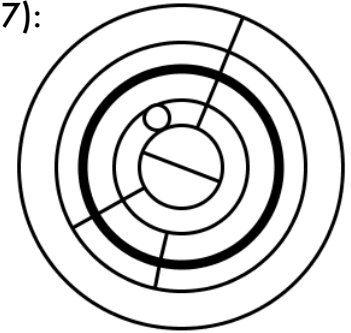


Numbers:

Numbers are represented by a series of concentric rings, read from outer to inner. Each ring is a digit, equal to the number of lines in that ring. A circle counts as five. A thicker ring represents a decimal point (if there is no decimal point, the innermost ring is the thick one). Negatives are denoted by a line in the center of the circle. For instance, this number is negative thirteen point thirty-seven (-13.37):



If you text "JELLY BABIES" to the number on the left, you'll get a verification that you translated correctly- but beware, you might just wind up confusing someone!



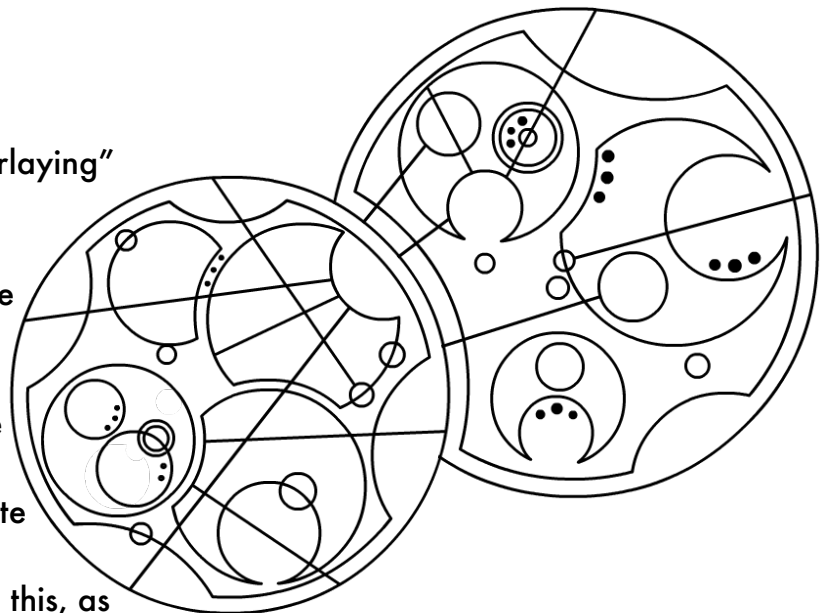
This number system was based heavily on the work of Annie "sirkles" Drahos.

Punctuation:

Punctuation is attached to the inner sentence circle. To avoid confusion, punctuation lines always radiate outwards, and are contained between the inner and outer sentence circles. The exception to this rule is the apostrophe, which extends from the word circle to the outer sentence circle.

Connecting Sentences:

Sentences are connected by "overlaying" one sentence on top of another, making use of the divots in the inner word circle. These chains are read from left to right. I like to imagine that time lords do not write in a chain, but have multiple starts and ends to each series of sentences to represent the alternate possible timelines. The nature of sentence connection lends itself to this, as each sentence can be connected to more than two other sentences.



The Real Test:

Longer sentences can have “layers”, which are simply concentric circles read from outer to inner (much like numbers). If you can translate this sentence, consider yourself a Gallifreyan expert.



If you have any questions, comments, suggestions, ridicule, praise, requests, or working TARDISes for sale, contact me at lorenzosherman@gmail.com or visit shermansplanet.com/gallifreyan.

FAQ

Can I combine two consonants that aren't the same?

Yes, but the system is a bit different than it is for double letters. These letter-pairs are identified by making the second letter thicker than the first. For instance, the word to the right is "tramp". The word below it is also "tramp", but the M and the P share lines.

Can I put numbers in words?

Yes, you can treat numbers as letters in a word or words in a sentence.

Can I write long words the same way I write long sentences?

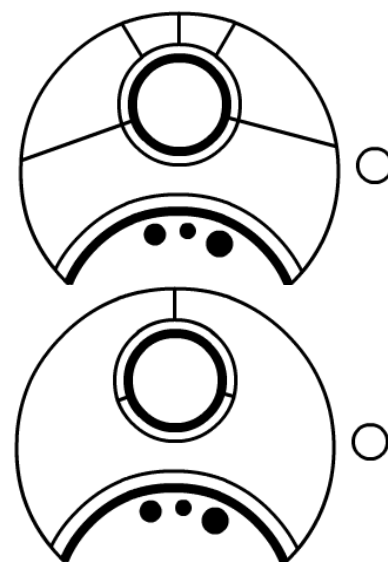
Indeed! Just remember, read from outer to inner, counterclockwise, starting at the bottom. With words, this looks like one word in the blank space in the middle of another word.

How do I write a U if I'm just writing one word?

If you want, you can put a circle around the word so you give the U line someplace to end (even if there's no U, adding an outer circle often looks cool). But there's no rule saying every line has to end on another—you can just leave it.

What does the Gallifreyan in this episode translate to?

Nothing, unfortunately. In Doctor Who, they just draw random cool-looking circles for Gallifreyan.



Diacritics, etc.

Umlauts are expressed by two dashes intersecting either the vowel, or the consonant to which the vowel is attached. For instance, the word to the right is *müde*.



Accent acute marks such as *é* are expressed similarly, except with one dash. An accent grave (*è*) has three.

The scandinavian *å* is just like the standard *a*, except it is written as two interlocking circles instead of one. Same goes for *ø / o*, and *æ / e*.

ß (eszett) is simply written as a double S.

To represent letters like *ñ*, take a divot out of the letter circle, much like a miniature *t*. For instance, the word to the right is *año*.

