

Lao Sorting Add-In for Excel

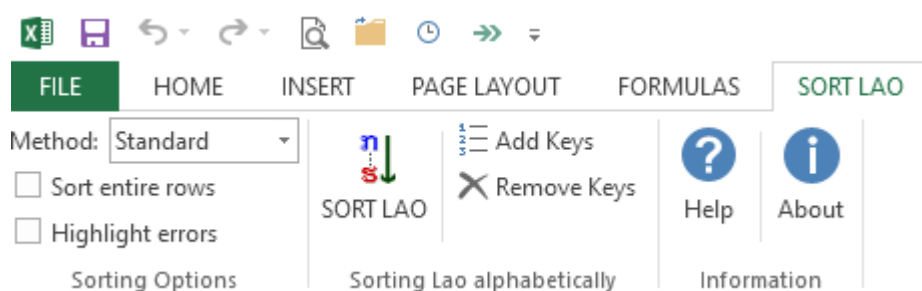
Dr John Durdin, <https://laoscript.net>

Microsoft Windows does not provide any way of sorting Lao text according to standard Lao dictionary ordering. The difficulty is that Lao dictionaries usually order words phonetically by syllables rather than according to the written form of the words.

The **Lao Sorting Add-In for Microsoft Excel** provides a way to correctly sort columns of Lao words or text according to any of the three commonly-used methods of sorting Lao word lists.

Using the Add-In

After installing the Add-In, a new ribbon tab named **SORT LAO** will be visible:



- To sort a column of Lao text, select a range of cells or the entire column and click the **SORT LAO** button in the ribbon menu. If the selection includes additional columns to the right of the Lao text, those columns will be re-ordered together with the Lao text cells in the primary (left-most) column.
- To sort entire rows using any column other than the first, select the column to order by then check the **Sort entire rows** check box before clicking **SORT LAO**.
- For more complex sorting needs, such as multi-level sorting, select all the cells that need to be sorted as Lao text and click **Add Keys**. This will add a (Latin script) alphabetic string to the start of each cell. The range or entire worksheet can then be sorted using the standard Excel sorting procedure and options, sorting the Lao cells as normal text. After sorting, select the columns or cells that had keys added then click **Remove Keys** to leave only the (re-ordered) Lao text. This approach also allows keys to be corrected individually for entries that do not conform to standard Lao syllable rules.

Methods for sorting Lao

Each Lao word normally consists of one or more syllables, each syllable having four components:

- (a) the initial consonant or consonant cluster,
- (b) the vowel, which may have several parts (e.g. ຶ, ຶ or ຶ),
- (c) the final consonant (if any),
- (d) the tone mark (if any).

All methods for sorting Lao give the highest priority to the initial consonant or consonant cluster, but different methods prioritize the remaining components differently. The standard method for sorting Lao words sorts according to **Initial – Final – Vowel – Tone**, while a commonly used alternative orders syllables by **Initial – Vowel – Final – Tone**. Another method that is sometimes used orders words by their written characters, except that prefix vowels are not given priority over the initial consonants. (This method is the way Thai words are ordered alphabetically.)

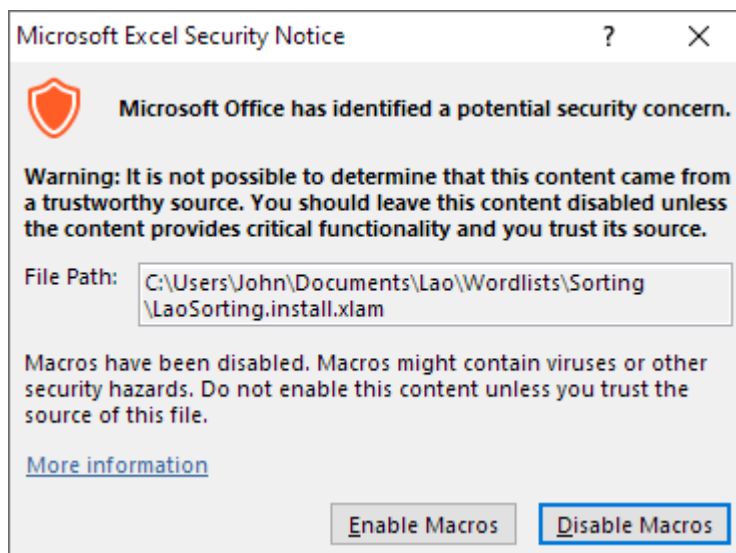
All three of the above methods are supported by the Add-In, but note that any words that have irregular syllable patterns may not be consistently ordered.

The following table illustrates the difference between the three methods of ordering Lao syllables.

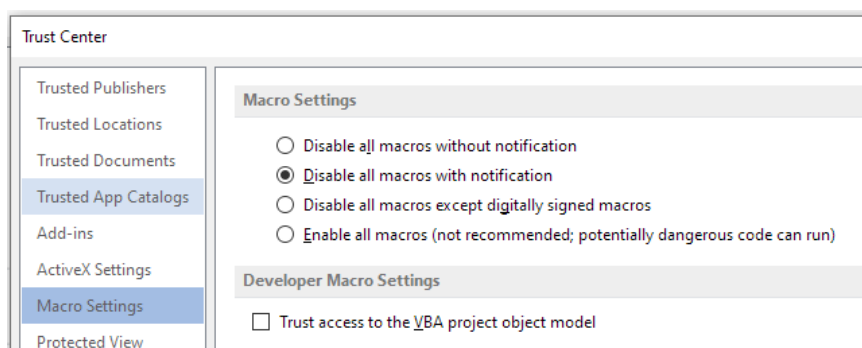
Standard		Vowel priority		Orthographic
ກະ 1		ກະ 1		ກະ 1
ແກະ 2		ເກກ 7		ກົກ 8
ໂກະ 3		ເກງ 12		ກົງ 14
ເກີ 4		ເກດ 21		ກົດ 23
ເກີ 5		ແກະ 2		ກົວ 6
ກົວ 6		ແກງ 13		ກຸງ 17
ເກກ 7		ແກດ 22		ເກີ 4
ກົກ 8		ໂກະ 3		ເກີ 5
ໂກກ 9		ກົກ 8		ເກກ 7
ກອກ 10		ກົງ 14		ເກງ 12
ກວກ 11		ກົດ 23		ເກດ 21
ເກງ 12		ໂກກ 9		ແກະ 2
ແກງ 13		ໂກງ 15		ແກງ 13
ກົງ 14		ໂກດ 24		ແກດ 22
ໂກງ 15		ກອກ 10		ໂກະ 3
ກອງ 16		ກອງ 16		ໂກກ 9
ກຸງ 17		ກອຍ 19		ໂກງ 15
ກວງ 18		ກອດ 25		ໂກດ 24
ກອຍ 19		ເກີ 4		ກວກ 11
ກວຍ 20		ເກີ 5		ກວງ 18
ເກດ 21		ກຸງ 17		ກວຍ 20
ແກດ 22		ກົວ 6		ກອກ 10
ກົດ 23		ກວກ 11		ກອງ 16
ໂກດ 24		ກວງ 18		ກອຍ 19
ກອດ 25		ກວຍ 20		ກອດ 25

Installing the Add-In

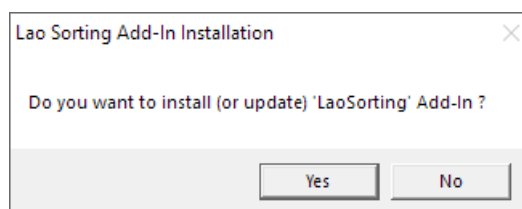
1. Download and unpack the Add-In from <https://laoscript.net/download/sortlao.zip>
2. Unblock file **LaoSorting.install.xlam** (using the option shown in File Properties).
3. Open file **LaoSorting.install.xlam** and accept the prompt to **Enable Macros**:



4. *If you do not see this Security Notice or the prompt to install the Add-In (see next step), you may have not unblocked the file, or will need to change your macro security settings in **Trust Center** to allow the installation to continue. The recommended setting is **Disable all macros with notification**:*



5. You will then be prompted to confirm installation:



6. The Add-In will then be installed and activated (or updated) and a message displayed:

