

Urdu Romanization Table
2011 version

Urdu (in Arabic script)

Letters of the Alphabet

| Initial | Medial | Final | Alone | Romanization |
|---------|--------|-------|-------|-----------------------|
| ا | ا | ا | ا | omit (see Note 1) |
| ب | ب | ب | ب | b |
| پ | پ | پ | پ | p |
| ت | ت | ت | ت | t |
| ٹ | ٹ | ٹ | ٹ | ṭ |
| ث | ث | ث | ث | <u>s</u> |
| ج | ج | ج | ج | j |
| چ | چ | چ | چ | c |
| ح | ح | ح | ح | ḥ |
| خ | خ | خ | خ | <u>kh</u> |
| د | د | د | د | d |
| ڈ | ڈ | ڈ | ڈ | ḍ |
| ذ | ذ | ذ | ذ | <u>z</u> |
| ر | ر | ر | ر | r |
| ڑ | ڑ | ڑ | ڑ | ṛ |
| ز | ز | ز | ز | z |
| ژ | ژ | ژ | ژ | zh |
| س | س | س | س | s |
| ش | ش | ش | ش | sh |
| ص | ص | ص | ص | ṣ |
| ض | ض | ض | ض | ẓ |
| ط | ط | ط | ط | ṭ |
| ظ | ظ | ظ | ظ | ẓ |
| ع | ع | ع | ع | ' (ayn) |
| غ | غ | غ | غ | <u>gh</u> |
| ف | ف | ف | ف | f |
| ق | ق | ق | ق | q |
| ک | ک | ک | ک | k |
| گ | گ | گ | گ | g |
| ل | ل | ل | ل | l |
| م | م | م | م | m |
| ن | ن | ن | ن | n |
| ں | ں | ں | ں | <u>n</u> (see Note 2) |

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| Initial | Medial | Final | Alone | Romanization |
|---------|-----------|-----------|-------|-----------------|
| و | و | و | و | v |
| ھ | ھ | ھ | ھ | h |
| - | - | آ | آ | t (see Rule 10) |
| ی | ی (ے ، ی) | ی (ے ، ی) | ی | y (see Note 3) |

Digraphs Representing Urdu Aspirates (see Note 4)

Value

| | |
|----|----|
| bh | بھ |
| ph | پھ |
| th | تھ |
| ṭh | ٹھ |
| jh | جھ |
| ch | چھ |
| dh | دھ |
| ḍh | ڈھ |
| ṛh | ڑھ |
| kh | کھ |
| gh | گھ |

Urdu Vowels and Diphthongs (see Note 5)

Value

| | |
|----|---------|
| a | اَ |
| u | اُ |
| i | اِ |
| ā | اِ |
| á | اِ ، اِ |
| ū | اُ |
| ī | اِ |
| o | اَ |
| e | اِ ، اِ |
| au | اُ |
| ai | اِ ، اِ |

Notes

1. For the use of l (*alif*) to support ء (*hamzah*) and م (*maddah*), see rules 1 and 2, respectively. For the romanization of ء by (*alif*), see rule 12. For other orthographic uses of l see rules 3-4.

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2. For the distinction between ن and ں, see rule 6.
3. For the distinction between ی and ے, see rule 11(c) and (e).
4. For the form of the letter o in these digraphs, see rule 9.
5. Vowel points are used sparingly, and for romanization must be supplied from a dictionary.

RULES OF APPLICATION

Letters Which May Be Romanized in Different Ways Depending on Their Context

1. ا (alif), و and ی are used to support ء (hamzah); see rule 12. When so used, these letters are not represented in romanization.
2. ا (alif) is used to support ّ (maddah); see rule 13. When so used, it is not represented in romanization.
3. ا (alif) is used after a consonant to indicate the long vowel romanized ā.
rāj راج
karnā کرنا
In some words of Arabic origin this alif appears as a superscript letter over ی representing the alif maqṣūrah.
da'vā دعوی
The alif is sometimes omitted in writing. It is always represented in romanization.
'Abdurrahmān عبد الرحمن ، عبد الرحمان
4. ا (alif) may be used as an orthographic sign without phonetic significance. In these cases it is not represented in romanization. See rule 16.
'ilman علما
5. ط appears as a superscript letter over ت, د, and ر when the latter represent the cerebral sounds romanized ṭ, ḍ, and ṛ, respectively.
6. Regardless of pronunciation, undotted forms of the letter ن are romanized n and dotted forms are romanized *n*.
jahān جہاں
7. و is used:
(a) To represent the consonant sound romanized v.
dev دیو
vujūd وجود
In some words of Persian origin this consonant, though written, has ceased to be pronounced. It is retained in romanization.

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- | | | |
|-----|--|------|
| | khvīsh | خویش |
| (b) | To represent the long vowel romanized <i>ū</i> . | |
| | ūkh | اوخ |
| | Urdū | اردو |
| (c) | To represent the long vowel romanized <i>o</i> . | |
| | os | اوس |
| | dost | دوست |
| | For the romanization of the conjunction و as <i>o</i> see rule 19. | |
| (d) | To represent the diphthong romanized <i>au</i> . | |
| | aur | اور |
| | qaumī | قومی |
| (e) | To support ء (<i>hamzah</i>). See rule 12. | |
| | For the use of ّ (<i>shaddah</i>) with و see rule 14. | |
8. o is used to represent the consonantal sound romanized *h*.
- | | |
|-----|-----|
| ham | هم |
| gāh | گاہ |
- Final o, though not pronounced, is normally retained in romanization.
- | | |
|-----------|--------|
| kih | کہ |
| guldastah | گلدستہ |
- Exception is made in the case of words whose final syllable ends in an aspirated consonant. When final o is added to the letter ه in this position, it is not represented in romanization.
- | | |
|------|------|
| mukh | مکھہ |
|------|------|
9. o (usually written in the form ه) is used to represent the aspirated element of the sounds romanized *bh, ph, th, ṭh, jh, ch, ḍh, ṛh, kh, gh*.
- | | |
|-------|------|
| phūl | پھول |
| acchā | اچھا |
- For the writing and romanization of words ending in an aspirated consonant, see rule 8.
10. ۀ and ت, which are sometimes used interchangeably, are both romanized *t*.
- | | |
|--------|-------------|
| ḥikmat | حکمت ، حکمة |
|--------|-------------|
11. ی (often written ِی) is used:
- (a) To represent the consonant romanized *y*.
- | | |
|---------|-------|
| siyāsat | سیاست |
| diyā | دیا |
- (b) To represent the long vowel romanized *ī*.

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- | | | |
|-----|--|--------|
| | taṣvīr | تصویر |
| | īshvār | ایشوار |
| (c) | To represent the long vowel romanized <i>e</i> . | |
| | sher | شیر |
| | nevā | نیوا |
| | When ی with this value is final, the form ے generally replaces ی. | |
| | se | سے |
| | laṛke | لڑکے |
| (d) | To represent the long vowel romanized <i>ā</i> . See rule 3. | |
| | da'vá | دعوی |
| | 'uqbā | عقبی |
| (e) | To represent the diphthong romanized <i>ai</i> . | |
| | maidān | میدان |
| | bail | بیل |
| | When ی with this value is final, it is sometimes written ے . | |
| | hai | ہے |
| (f) | To support ء (<i>hamzah</i>). In this position ی is usually undotted. See rule 12. | |
| | For the use of ّ (<i>shaddah</i>) with ی see rule 14. | |
| | For the use of ی in a <i>muzāf</i> see rule 17. | |

Romanization of Orthographic Symbols Other Than Letters and Vowel Signs

Although vowel signs are frequently omitted in printed texts, they are always taken into consideration in romanization. The rules for other symbols vary.

12. ء (*hamzah*)
- (a) In initial position ء is not represented in romanization.
- (b) In medial and final position, when ء represents a consonant, it is romanized ' (*aliḥ*).
- | | |
|--------|-------|
| mu'min | مؤمن |
| li'e | لئے |
| bhāī | بھائی |
- (c) When ء represents the connective syllable joining a *muzāf* to what follows, it is romanized -*yi*. See rule 17.
- | | |
|----------------------|---------------|
| malikah-yi Inglisṭān | ملکہ انگلستان |
|----------------------|---------------|
13. ّ (*maddah*)
- (a) At the beginning of a word, or following the Arabic article ال, ّ is romanized *ā*.

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آب

- (b) At the beginning of a syllable within a word, \tilde{I} is romanized 'ā.

مرآت

قرآن

- (c) $\bar{\square}$ is otherwise omitted in romanization.

14. ^u◌ (shaddah or tashdīd) indicates the doubling in pronunciation of the letter over which it is written. It is represented in romanization by doubling the letter or digraph concerned.

چا

کہنا

مکمل

When ୦ occurs over ୨ and ୫, these letters are regarded as representing consonants.

They are romanized $\nu\nu$ and $\gamma\gamma$, respectively.

قوت

سید

زکریا

15. ◌◊ (*sukūn* or *jazm*) indicates the absence of a vowel following the letter over which it is written. It is not represented in romanization.

16. *Tanvīn* (written ^{◌َ}, ^{◌ِ}, ^{◌ِ̄} (l^{◌̄})) is romanized *un*, *in*, *an*, respectively, when it occurs in a word or expression borrowed from Arabic. Otherwise it is not represented in romanization.

فوراً

Romanization as Affected by Grammatical Structure

17. *Izāfat.*

- (a) When the *muzāf*, the first of two words in the grammatical relationship known as *izāfat*, ends in a consonant, *-i* is added to it in the romanization.

تاریخ ہندوستان

- (b) When the *muzāf* ends in a vowel or in silent *o*, *-yi* is added.

دریای شور

زبان اردو معلیٰ

ملکہ انگلستان

For the use of **ع** (*hamzah*) to indicate the *muzāf*, see rule 12(c).

18. The Arabic article **Al** is romanized differently depending on the letters and context with which it is associated.

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(a) When it is prefixed to a word beginning with a “moon letter”
(خ، ع، غ، ف، ق، ك، م، و، ه، ی، ا، ب، ج، ح) it is romanized *al*.
al-Qur’ān القرآن

(b) When it is prefixed to a word beginning with a “sun letter”
(ز، س، ش، ص، ض، ط، ظ، ل، ن، ت، ث، د، ذ، ر) the / of the article is replaced in romanization by the same letter or digraph as that which begins the following word.

as-sijill السجل

(c) When it occurs before the second element in a name, the vowel of the article is replaced by the final vowel of the preceding word.

| | |
|--------------|------------|
| ‘Abdul‘azīz | عبد العزیز |
| ‘Abdurrashīd | عبد الرشید |
| Abūlfazl | ابو الفضل |
| Zūlqarnain | ذو القرنین |
| Faḍlullāh | فضل اللہ |

19. The conjunction **و**, when used to join two closely associated members of a phrase, is romanized *o*.

māl o asbāb مال و اسباب

Otherwise **و** is romanized *va*.

20. Rules for the capitalization of English are followed, except that the Arabic article *a/* is lowercased in all positions.

21. The macron is used with both capital and lowercase letters.

22. The hyphen is used:

- (a) To connect a *muḥāf* with the following vowel or syllable. See rule 17.
- (b) To connect the Arabic article *a/* with the following word. See rule 18.

23. Foreign words in an Urdu context, including Arabic and Persian words, are romanized according to the rules for Urdu.

جناب ہیڈ ماسٹر صاحب گورنمنٹ ہائی اسکول
Janāb-i Heḍ Māṣṭar ṣāhib-i Gavarnmant Hāī Iskūl

For short vowels not indicated in the script, the Urdu vowels nearest the original pronunciation of the word concerned are supplied in romanization.

24. A quotation in another language using the Arabic script is romanized according to the rules for the language concerned.