The Original Pronunciation of Sanskrit

Devanāgarī – Transliteration – IPA-Symbols

अ	a	ɐ ə	आ	ā	aː	इ	i	i	ई	ī	iː			
उ	u	u	ऊ	ū	uː	ऋ	ṛ	ɾ̩ ɹ̩	ॠ	ṝ	ɾ̩ː ɹ̩ː	ऌ	ḷ	l̩
ए	e	eː	ऐ	ai	a͡ɪ	ओ	o	oː	औ	au	a͡ʊ			
क्	k	k	ख्	kh	kʰ	ग्	g	g	घ्	gh	gʰ	ङ्	ṅ	ŋ
च्	c	t͡ɕ	छ्	ch	t͡ɕʰ	ज्	j	d͡ʑ	झ्	jh	d͡ʑʰ	ञ्	ñ	ɲ
ट्	ṭ	ʈ	ठ्	ṭh	ʈʰ	ड्	ḍ	ɖ	ढ्	ḍh	ɖʰ	ण्	ṇ	ɳ
त्	t	t	थ्	th	tʰ	द्	d	d	ध्	dh	dʰ	न्	n	n
प्	p	p	फ्	ph	pʰ	ब्	b	b	भ्	bh	bʰ	म्	m	m
य्	y	j	र्	r	ɾ ɹ	ल्	l	l	व्	v	v ʋ			
श्	ś	ɕ	ष्	ṣ	ʂ	स्	s	s						
ह्	h	ɦ												
ः	ḥ	x												
ं	ṃ	various												

Drafted by Maciej Zieba and Ulrich Stiehl under the auspices of Manfred Mayrhofer. Improvements by Jost Gippert, Madhav Deshpande, Sunder Hattangadi, John Smith and others. This chart is a compromise, since the **original** pronunciation of Sanskrit is not exactly known in every detail. – 06/09/2002/us.

Notes:

1. अ seems to have been pronounced originally as [ɐ] or as [ə], possibly never as [a]. Not even the pronunciation of this most often used letter अ is exactly known!
2. The original pronunciation of ऌ is not known. It occurs only in the verb क्लृप् (klṛp).
3. र् seems to have been pronounced as [ɾ] or as [ɹ], and likewise the liquid ऋ seems to have been pronounced as syllabic [ɾ̩] (notation: [ɾ] + [̩]) or as syllabic [ɹ̩].
4. The pronunciation of the semi-vowel व seems to have been either [v] or [ʋ].
5. **Visarga** (ः): **a)** Visarga seems to have been pronounced originally always as [x]. **b)** Nowadays however it is usually pronounced as [ɦ], followed by a repetition of the preceding – shortened – vowel, e.g. देवः [deːvɐɦɐ], देवैः [deːva͡ɪɦɪ], etc.
6. **Anusvāra** (ं): **a)** At the end of words before words initialled with any consonant, it is a shortcut for म् pronounced as [m]. **b)** Before all the plosives (k, c, ṭ, t, p, etc.) it is a shortcut for the respective class nasal, e.g. संधिः (saṃdhiḥ) = सन्धिः (sandhiḥ) = [sɐndʰix]. **c)** Before sibilants (श्, ष्, स्), semi-vowels (य्, र्, ल्, व्) and ह्, it seems to have nasalized its preceding vowel, e.g. संवत् (saṃvat) as [sɐ̃vɐt]. Controversial!

It should be stressed that **nowadays** pronunciation of Sanskrit differs considerably from the **original** pronunciation, being heavily influenced by the mother tongue of the speaker (Hindi, Marathi etc.). Example: तज्ज्ञानम् (taj jñānam = that knowledge), which seems to have been pronounced originally as [tɐd͡ʑ d͡ʑɲaːnɐm], is nowadays pronounced as [tɐd͡ʑ gjaːnɐm] (Hindi) or [tɐd͡ʑ dnjaːnɐm] (Marathi), irrespective of the sound assimilation caused by Sandhi rule (d + j = j + j, i.e. tad jñānam = taj jñānam).

THE INTERNATIONAL PHONETIC ALPHABET (revised to 1993, updated 1996)

CONSONANTS (PULMONIC)

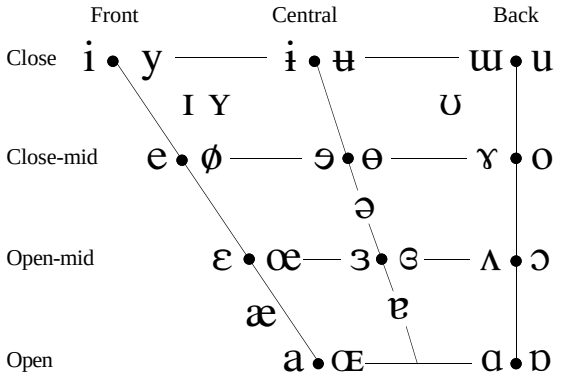
	Bilabial	Labiodental	Dental	Alveolar	Postalveolar	Retroflex	Palatal	Velar	Uvular	Pharyngeal	Glottal
Plosive	p b			t d		ʈ ɖ	c ɟ	k g	q ɢ		ʔ
Nasal	m	ɱ		n		ɳ	ɲ	ŋ	ɴ		
Trill	ʙ			r					ʀ		
Tap or Flap				ɾ		ɽ					
Fricative	ɸ β	f v	θ ð	s z	ʃ ʒ	ʂ ʐ	ç ʝ	x ɣ	χ ʁ	ħ ʕ	h ɦ
Lateral fricative				ɬ ɮ							
Approximant		ʋ		ɹ		ɻ	j	ɰ			
Lateral approximant				l		ɭ	ʎ	ʟ			

Where symbols appear in pairs, the one to the right represents a voiced consonant. Shaded areas denote articulations judged impossible.

CONSONANTS (NON-PULMONIC)

Clicks		Voiced implosives		Ejectives	
ʘ	Bilabial	ɓ	Bilabial	’	Examples:
|	Dental	ɗ	Dental/alveolar	pʼ	Bilabial
!	(Post)alveolar	ʄ	Palatal	tʼ	Dental/alveolar
ǂ	Palatoalveolar	ɠ	Velar	kʼ	Velar
ǁ	Alveolar lateral	ʛ	Uvular	sʼ	Alveolar fricative

VOWELS



Where symbols appear in pairs, the one to the right represents a rounded vowel.

OTHER SYMBOLS

ʍ	Voiceless labial-velar fricative	ɕ ʑ	Alveolo-palatal fricatives
w	Voiced labial-velar approximant	ɺ	Alveolar lateral flap
ɥ	Voiced labial-palatal approximant	ʧ	Simultaneous ʃ and x
ʜ	Voiceless epiglottal fricative		
ʢ	Voiced epiglottal fricative		
ʡ	Epiglottal plosive		

Affricates and double articulations can be represented by two symbols joined by a tie bar if necessary. k͡p t͡s

SUPRASEGMENTALS

ˈ	Primary stress
ˌ	Secondary stress ˌfoʊnəˈtɪʃən
ː	Long eː
ˑ	Half-long eˑ
˘	Extra-short ĕ
|	Minor (foot) group
‖	Major (intonation) group
.	Syllable break ɹi.ækt
‿	Linking (absence of a break)

TONES AND WORD ACCENTS

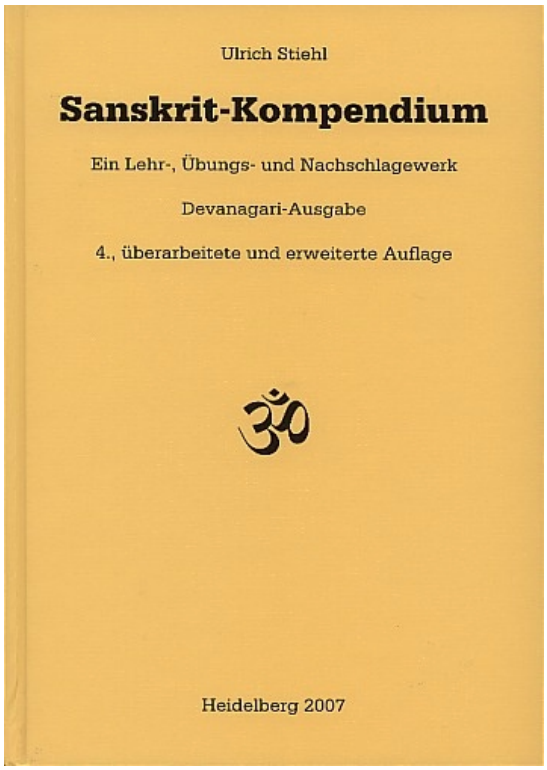
LEVEL			CONTOUR		
e̋ or ˥	Extra high		e or ˧˥	Rising	
é ˦	High		ê ˥˩	Falling	
ē ˧	Mid		ě ˩˥	High rising	
è ˨	Low		e̗ ˨˧	Low rising	
ȅ ˩	Extra low		e̋ ˥˩	Rising-falling	
↓	Downstep		↗	Global rise	
↑	Upstep		↘	Global fall	

DIACRITICS

Diacritics may be placed above a symbol with a descender, e.g. n̊ŋ̊

◌̥	Voiceless	n̥ d̥	◌̤	Breathy voiced	b̤ a̤
◌̬	Voiced	s̬ t̬	◌̰	Creaky voiced	b̰ a̰
◌ʰ	Aspirated	tʰ dʰ	◌̼	Linguolabial	t̼ d̼
◌̹	More rounded	ɔ̹	◌ʷ	Labialized	tʷ dʷ
◌̜	Less rounded	ɔ̜	◌ʲ	Palatalized	tʲ dʲ
◌̟	Advanced	u̟	◌ˠ	Velarized	tˠ dˠ
◌̠	Retracted	e̠	◌ˤ	Pharyngealized	tˤ dˤ
◌̈	Centralized	ë	◌̴	Velarized or pharyngealized	ɫ
◌̽	Mid-centralized	e̽	◌̝	Raised	e̝ (ɹ̝ = voiced alveolar fricative)
◌̩	Syllabic	n̩	◌̞	Lowered	e̞ (β̞ = voiced bilabial approximant)
◌̯	Non-syllabic	e̯	◌̪	Advanced Tongue Root	e̪
◌˞	Rhoticity	ɚ a˞	◌̺	Retracted Tongue Root	e̺

◌̃	Nasalized	ẽ	
◌ⁿ	Nasal release	dⁿ	
◌ˡ	Lateral release	dˡ	
◌̚	No audible release	d̚	



Sanskrit-Kompendium. Ein Lehr-, Übungs- und Nachschlagewerk
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Dieses Werk ist das erste Sanskritlehrbuch, das alle Möglichkeiten moderner Sprachdidaktik vollständig ausschöpft. Es ermöglicht erstmals ein zeitminimierendes Universitätsstudium, aber es ist auch bestens zum Selbststudium für Autodidakten geeignet. Obwohl es das Lernen so leicht wie möglich macht, geht es hinsichtlich des vermittelten Stoffs (Wortschatz, Formenlehre und Syntax) weit über das Niveau früherer Lehrbücher hinaus.

Prof. Dr. Dr. Manfred Mayrhofer, Wien, urteilt in einem Schreiben:

"Ihr Buch ist wirklich eine gigantische Pionierleistung. Ich habe in meiner aktiven Zeit viel Sanskrit gelehrt. Wie man etwa mit dem "Stenzler" unterrichten könne, war mir immer schleierhaft; am ehesten ging es noch mit dem Büchlein von Georg Bühler, das ja in Österreich, nachdem Bühler in Wien wirkte, reichlich vorhanden war. Aber mit Ihrer gründlichen Arbeit ist das alles nicht vergleichbar."

Die 4. Neuauflage 2007 wurde um den "Teil 8: Textanalyse: Bhagavad-Gita" erweitert, der eine grammatikalische Analyse der Anfangskapitel der Bhagavad-Gita mit detaillierten Erläuterungen aller Feinheiten der Formen- und Satzlehre enthält, um den Lernenden den Übergang von dem Lehrbuch zur Lektüre von Originaltexten zu erleichtern.

Zu weiteren Einzelheiten siehe die Leseprobe: http://www.sanskritweb.net/deutsch/leseprobe.pdf

Websites: http://www.sanskritweb.net http://www.sanskritweb.org http://www.sanskritweb.de