

Arabic letters and vowel markers

December 1, 2017

1 The Alphabet

Name	Trans.	Isolated	Final	Medial	Initial
alif	aa	ا	ا	ا	ا
baa'	b	ب	ب	ب	ب
taa'	t	ت	ت	ت	ت
thaa'	th	ث	ث	ث	ث
jiim	j	ج	ج	ج	ج
Haa'	H	ح	ح	ح	ح
khaa'	kh	خ	خ	خ	خ
daal	d	د	د	د	د
dhaal	dh	ذ	ذ	ذ	ذ
raa'	r	ر	ر	ر	ر
zaay	z	ز	ز	ز	ز
siin	s	س	س	س	س
shiin	sh	ش	ش	ش	ش
Saad	S	ص	ص	ص	ص
Daad	D	ض	ض	ض	ض
Taa'	T	ط	ط	ط	ط
DHaa'	DH	ظ	ظ	ظ	ظ
'ayn	'	ع	ع	ع	ع
ghayn	gh	غ	غ	غ	غ
faa'	f	ف	ف	ف	ف
qaaf	q	ق	ق	ق	ق
kaaf	k	ك	ك	ك	ك
laam	l	ل	ل	ل	ل
miim	m	م	م	م	م
nuun	n	ن	ن	ن	ن
haa'	h	ه	ه	ه	ه
waaw	w/uu	و	و	و	و
yaa'	y/ii	ي	ي	ي	ي

This chart was designed as a complement to the Alif Baa Arabic textbook (Georgetown University Press, 1995) and follows the transcription system used therein.

Non-connecting letters are marked with gray background.

The baseline is marked in red descending letterforms.

ظ and ط, ض, ص are the so called emphatic letters.

Common ligatures

لا →	سلام	salaam
لم →	المسلم	al-muslim
في →	في	fii
يح →	يحيى	yaHyaa
تج →	تجارة	tijaara
مح →	محل	maHall
مم →	ممل	mumill
الله →	الله	allaah

* Non-optional

The letters و and ي represent either a consonant or a long vowel and are transcribed accordingly.

2 Other letters

Name	Trans.	Isolated	Final	Medial	Initial	
hamza	ʾ	أ	آ	أ	أ	Hamza is written with different "chairs" depending on surrounding vowels and its position in the word.
		إ	أ	أ	أ	
		ؤ	ؤ	ؤ	ؤ	
		ئ	ئ	ئ	ئ	
madda	ʾaa	آ	آ	آ	آ	Hamza in the form of ء does not connect to surrounding letters.
taaʾ marbuuTa	a/at	ة	ة			
alif maqSuura	aa	ى	ى			The letters ة and ى only occur in word-final position.

3 Vowel markers

Name	Short	Long	Nunation	
fatHa	a َ	aa َا	an ْ / َّ	The alif in َّ is silent.
Damma	u ُ	uu ُو	un ُ	
kasra	i ِ	ii ِي	in ِ	
alif khanjariyya	aa ِ			Alifkhanjariyya is only used in the words هَذِهِ، هَذَا، لَكِنَّ، اللَّهُ and ذَلِكَ. Usually not printed even in voweled text.

4 Other markers

sukuun	◌ْ	Marks the absence of vowels after a consonant. Not transcribed (دَرْس dars).	Sukuun and shadda are only printed in voweled text.
shadda	◌ّ	Marks doubling of a consonant. Vowel markers are written above or below shadda rather than above or below the letter (مُدَّرِّسٌ). Transcribed as double consonant (مُدَّرِّس mudarris).	