

Arabic letters and vowel markers v.1

1 The Alphabet

This overview of the Arabic script was designed as a complement to Alif Baa (Gerorgetown University Press, 1995) and follows the transcription system therein.

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
jīm	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	ʿ	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

Non-connecting letters are marked with gray background.

The baseline is marked in red on letter forms with descenders.

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

2 Non-alphabetical letters

Name	Trans.	Isolated	Final	Medial	Initial	
hamza	ʾ	أ	آ	أ	أ	Hamza takes different forms depending on surrounding vowels. Some forms never occur in word initial or medial position.
		إ	آ	أ	أ	
		ؤ	ؤ	ؤ	ؤ	
		ئ	ئ	ئ	ئ	
madda	ʾaa	آ	آ	آ	آ	The letter ء does not connect to surrounding letters.
taaʾ marbuuTa	a/at	ة	ة			
alif maqSuura	aa	ى	ى			Letters ة and ى only occur in word-final position.
[ا+ل]	laa	لا	لا	لا	لا	
						ﻻ is the only compulsory ligature.

3 Vowel markers

Name	Short	Long	Nunation
fatHa	a َ	aa َا	an َ/َّ
Damma	u ُ	uu ُو	un ُ
kasra	i ِ	ii ِي	in ِ
alif khanjariyy		aa ِ	

4 Other markers

- sukuun** ْ Marks the absence of vowels after a consonant. Not transcribed (دُرس dars).
- shadda** ّ Marks doubling of a consonant. Short vowel is places above or below shadda rather than above or below letter (ـَـّـ). Transcribed as double consonant (مُدَّرِس mudarris).