

## Transliteration Guide

This guide gives the English letter or combination of letters that can produce the equivalent (or closest possible) pronunciation of the Saṁskrit letters. However, there are some alphabets in the Saṁskrit language which do not have exact equivalent sounds in English. For such sounds, words in other languages or names of renowned persons or places are given.

In the words given for phonetic reference, the letter or combination of letters which matches with the pronunciation is in bold red. One can repeat the word several times and narrow down to the sound of alphabets in bold red to get the phonetic sound. In some places compound words or two words are given, wherein one can get the phonetic sound by coalescing or blending the sounds at the word boundaries. Due to variations in style and accent of English language spoken in different parts of the world, this guide can only give the closest possible phonetic reference. Hence the most reliable way to learn these sounds is to listen to the pronunciations by a Saṁskrit speaker. (Please refer to

<http://www.chitrapurmath.net/sanskrit/Varnamala/varnamala.htm> )

### VOWELS

Letter	Lowercase	Uppercase	Phonetic Reference
अ	a	A	as in <b>curl</b>
आ	ā	Ā	as in <b>father</b>
इ	i	I	as in <b>dip</b>
ई	ī	Ī	as in <b>feet</b>
उ	u	U	as in <b>push</b>
ऊ	ū	Ū	as in <b>tool</b>
ऋ	r̥	R̥	as in <b>grid</b> (guttural sound of <b>r</b> )
ॠ	ṝ	Ŗ	as in <b>greed</b> (prolongation of <b>r̥</b> )
ऌ	l̥	L̥	as in <b>revelry</b>
ৡ	ି	ି	as in <b>coral reef</b> (prolongation of <b>ି</b> )

ए	e	E	as in <b>they</b>
ऐ	ai	Ai / AI	as in <b>a yard, Jai</b> Shankar, Chennai, <b>Aishwarya</b> (blending of Saṃskṛt vowel a and i with more stress on i)
ओ	o	O	as in <b>go</b>
औ	au	Au / AU	as in <b>outer</b> (blending of Saṃskṛt vowel a and u with more stress on u)
·	ṁ	Ṅ	nasal sound of <b>m</b> in <b>plum.</b> In a word it is supported by the preceding vowel.
:	ḥ	Ṅ	sound of <b>ha</b> with expulsion of air. In a word the <b>h</b> takes the sound of the preceding vowel

## CONSONANTS

Letter	Lowercase	Uppercase	Guide
क्	k	K	as in <b>come</b>
ख्	kh	Kh / KH	as in <b>khaki</b>
ग्	g	G	as in <b>girl</b>
घ्	gh	Gh / GH	as in <b>aghast</b>
ঙ্	ঙ	ঙ	as in <b>monkey</b>
চ্	ch	Ch / CH	as in <b>chat</b>
ছ্	ছ	Ch / CH	as in <b>watch-house</b> (with blending of <b>ch-h</b> )
জ্	j	J	as in <b>jug</b>
ঝ্	ঝ	ঝ / JH	as in <b>hedgehog</b>
ঢ্	ঢ	ঢ	as in <b>singe</b>
ট্	ঠ	ঠ	as in <b>term</b>
ঢ্	ঢ	ঢ / TH	as in <b>light-house</b> (with blending of <b>t-h</b> )

ଙ୍କ	d	D	as in <b>double</b>
ଙ୍ଗ	dh	Dh / DH	as in <b>ad hoc</b> (with blending of <b>d-h</b> )
ଣ୍ଣ	n	N	as in <b>under</b> (with the tongue rolled back touching the roof of the mouth)
ତ୍ର	t	T	as in <b>Taj Mahal</b> , <b>tawa</b> in Hindi, <b>tamales</b> in Spanish (with the tongue pressing the back of the teeth)
ଥ୍ର	th	Th / TH	as in <b>third</b>
ଦ୍ର	d	D	as in <b>that</b>
ଧ୍ର	dh	Dh / DH	as in <b>breathe hard</b> (with blending of <b>the-h</b> ), <b>Madhuri</b> , <b>Dhoni</b>
ନ୍ତ	n	N	as in <b>nut</b>
ପ୍ର	p	P	as in <b>punish</b>
ଫ୍ର	ph	Ph / PH	as in <b>uphill</b> , or <b>top hat</b> (with blending of <b>p-h</b> )
ବ୍ର	b	B	as in <b>bell</b>
ଭ୍ର	bh	Bh / BH	as in <b>abhor</b>
ମ୍ର	m	M	as in <b>mud</b>
ୟୁ	y	Y	as in <b>loyal</b>
ଇଁ	r	R	as in <b>run</b> (slightly stronger than the English r, tongue presses against the roof)
ଲ୍ଲ	l	L	as in <b>luck</b>
ଵ୍ଲ	v / w	V / W	as in <b>verb</b>
ଶ୍ର	sh	Sh / SH	as in <b>shirt</b>
ସ୍ର	sh	Sh / SH	as in <b>sharp / shine</b> (with a slight rolling back of the tongue)
ସ୍ମ	s	S	as in <b>sun</b>

ह	h	H	as in <b>hut</b>
क्ष	ksh	Ksh / KSH	as in <b>action</b>
ज्ञ	jñ	Jñ / JÑ	as in <b>canyon</b>

S	S	S	used for prolonging the sound of the preceding vowel
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A consonant in Saṁskṛt does not form a complete syllable by itself. Alone it is written with the '˘' sign below the alphabet in Devanāgarī script, and is pronounced as half a syllable. When followed by a vowel it is pronounced as a complete syllable.

Just like in English, in the word **cat** you stop at the **t**, such that you almost don't hear it as there is no vowel after it. In the word **catalogue** the sound of **t** is heard as it is followed by a vowel. The following words will give an idea of how to pronounce the Saṁskṛt consonants with different vowels.

Letter	Lowercase	Uppercase	Guide
ह	ha	Ha / HA	as in <b>hurt</b>
हा	hā	Hā / HĀ	as in <b>hard</b>
हि	hi	Hi / HI	as in <b>hip</b>
ही	hī	Hī / HĪ	as in <b>heel</b>
हु	hu	Hu / HU	as in <b>hook</b>
हु	hū	Hū / HŪ	as in <b>hoot</b>
ह्र	hṛ	Hṛ / HR	sound of <b>hri</b> , as in <b>Hritik</b>
हे	he	He / HE	as in <b>hay</b>
है	hai	Hai / HAI	as in <b>hyena</b>
हो	ho	Ho / HO	as in <b>host</b>
हौ	hau	Hau / HAU	as in <b>house</b>
हं	hm	Ham / HAM	as in <b>hum</b>