

# Maltese

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## 1 Language

Maltese is the national language of Malta. It is a Semitic language spoken by almost 400,000 people[1]. Maltese is a descendant of the *Siculo-Arabic* dialect developed in Sicily and Malta, later to be heavily influenced by Italian, Sicilian and English vocabularies.

## 2 Phonetic inventory

### 2.1 Consonants

	Labial		Dental		Post-Alveolar	Velar		Palatal	Laryngeal
Nasals	m				n				
Stops	p	b	t	d		k	g		ʔ
Affricates			ts	dz	tʃ	dʒ			
Fricatives	f	v	s	z	ʃ				h
Trills			r						
Approximants	l							j	

Additionally, the voiced labial-velar approximant /w/.

### 2.2 Vowels

#### 2.2.1 Monophtongs

	Front		Central		Back	
High	ɪ	ɪː			ʊ	ʊː
Mid	ɛ	ɛː			ɔ	ɔː
Low			ɐ	ɐː		

I will normally use /a/, /e/, /i/, /o/, /u/ to denote /ɐ/, /ɛ/, /ɪ/, /ɔ/, /ʊ/, respectively.

#### 2.2.2 Diphthongs

Seven diphthongs exist in Maltese: /ɐʊ/, /ɐɪ/, /ɛʊ/, /ɛɪ/, /ɪʊ/, /ɔɪ/ and /ɔʊ/.

### 3 Syllable inventory

	Word Initial	Word Medial	Word final
V	<u>u</u> .nu:r 'honour'	—	—
CV	kɪ.tɛp 'he wrote'	mɛh.m <u>u</u> .dʒi:n 'dirty (pl.)'	ip.kɪ 'cry (Imp.)'
VC	ip.kɪ 'cry (Imp.)'	—	—
CVC	pɛt.nɛ 'comb'	ɔ.r <u>en</u> .dʒɔ 'orange'	ɪ.b <u>es</u> 'hard'
CVV	dɛɪ.rɛ 'her house'	bɪʔ.zɪ.ʔɛs 'with pigs'	ɛtʃ.tʃɛt.tɛɪ 'he accepted it (f.)'
CCVC	tɪlf.tɛ 'I lost it (f.)'	ɛtʃ.tʃɛt.tɛ 'he accepted'	ʔɔ.rɔ.blɔk 'it (m.) has drawn nearer in time'

Many more syllable structures are allowed; Borg-Azzopardi[1] define the canonical syllable as (C)(C)(C)V(C)(C) for monosyllabic words and (C)(C)V(C) for multisyllabic words.

#### 3.1 Generalizations

TODO

#### Data sources

[1] Azzopardi-Alexa. *Maltese*. Descriptive Grammars. Taylor & Francis, 1996.