**Arabic**

**Letters of the Alphabet**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Initial** | **Medial** | **Final** | **Alone** | **Romanization** |
| ا | ﺎ | ﺎ | ا | omit (see Note 1) |
| ﺑ | ﺒ | ﺐ | ﺏ | b |
| ﺗ | ﺘ | ﺖ | ﺕ | t |
| ﺛ | ﺜ | ﺚ | ﺙ | th |
| ﺟ | ﺠ | ﺞ | ﺝ | j |
| ﺣ | ﺤ | ﺢ | ﺡ | ḥ |
| ﺧ | ﺨ | ﺦ | ﺥ | kh |
| ﺩ | ﺪ | ﺪ | ﺩ | d |
| ﺫ | ﺬ | ﺬ | ﺫ | dh |
| ﺭ | ﺮ | ﺮ | ﺭ | r |
| ﺯ | ﺰ | ﺰ | ﺯ | z |
| ﺳ | ﺴ | ﺲ | ﺱ | s |
| ﺷ | ﺸ | ﺶ | ﺵ | sh |
| ﺻ | ﺼ | ﺺ | ﺹ | ṣ |
| ﺿ | ﻀ | ﺾ | ﺽ | ḍ |
| ﻃ | ﻄ | ﻂ | ﻁ | ṭ |
| ﻇ | ﻈ | ﻆ | ﻅ | ẓ |
| ﻋ | ﻌ | ﻊ | ﻉ | ‘ (ayn) |
| ﻏ | ﻐ | ﻎ | ﻍ | gh |
| ﻓ | ﻔ | ﻒ | ﻑ | f (see Note 2) |
| ﻗ | ﻘ | ﻖ | ﻕ | q (see Note 2) |
| ﻛ | ﻜ | ﻚ | ﻙ | k |
| ﻟ | ﻠ | ﻞ | ﻝ | l |
| ﻣ | ﻤ | ﻢ | ﻡ | m |
| ﻧ | ﻨ | ﻦ | ﻥ | n |
| ﻫ | ﻬ | ـة ، ﻪ | ة ، ه | h (see Note 3) |
| ﻭ | ﻮ | ﻮ | ﻭ | w |
| ﻳ | ﻴ | ي | ي | y |

**Vowels and Diphthongs**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| َ | a | َا | ā (see Rule 5) | ِ ﻯ | ī |
| ُ | u | ﻯ َ | á (see Rule 6(a)) | َ ﻭْ | aw |
| ِ | i | ُ ﻭ | ū | ﻯْ َ | ay |

**Letters Representing Non-Arabic Consonants**

This list is not exhaustive. It should be noted that a letter in this group may have more than one phonetic value, depending on the country or area where it is used, and that the romanization will vary accordingly.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| گ | g | چ | ch | ڤ | v |
| ڴ | ñ | چ | zh | ۋ | v |
| پ | p | ژ | zh | ڥ | v |

**Notes**

1. For the use of *alif* to support *hamzah*, see rule 2. For the romanization of *hamzah* by the consonantal sign ’ (alif), see rule 8(a). For other orthographic uses of *alif* see rules 3-5.

2. The *Maghribī* variations ڢ and ڧ are romanized *f* and *q* respectively.

3. ة in a word in the construct state is romanized *t*. See rule 7(b).

**RULES OF APPLICATION**

**Arabic Letters Romanized in Different Ways Depending on Their Context**

1. As indicated in the table, ﻭ and ي may represent:

1. The consonants romanized *w* and *y*, respectively.

waḍ‘ وضع

‘iwaḍ عوض

dalw دلو

yad يد

ḥiyal حيل

ṭahy طهي

1. The long vowels romanized *ū*, *ī*, and *ā* respectively.

ūlá أولى

ṣūrah صورة

dhū ذو

īmān إيمان

jīl جيل

fī في

kitāb كتاب

saḥāb سحاب

jumān جمان

See also rules 11(a) and 11(b)(1-2).

1. The diphthongs romanized *aw* and *ay*, respectively.

awj أوج

nawm نوم

law لو

aysar أيسر

shaykh شيخ

‘aynay عيني

See also rules 11(a)(2) and 11(b)(3).

2. ا *(alif)*, و and ى when used to support ء (*hamzah*) are not represented in romanization. See rule 8(a).

3. ا *(alif)* when used to support *waṣlah* ( ٱ ) and *maddah* ( آ ) is not represented in romanization. See rules 9 and 10.

4. ا *(alif)* and و when used as orthographic signs without phonetic significance are not represented in romanization.

fa‘alū فعلوا

ulā’ika أولائك

ūqīyah أوقية

See also rule 12 and examples cited in rules 23-26.

5. ا *(alif)* is used to represent the long vowel romanized *ā*, as indicated in the table.

fā‘il فاعل

riḍā رضا

This *alif*, when medial, is sometimes omitted in Arabic; it is always indicated in romanization. See rule 19.

6. Final ى appears in the following special cases:

1. As ﻯ َ (*alif maqṣūrah*) used in place of َا to represent the long vowel romanized *ā*.

ḥattá حتَّى

maḍá مضَى

kubrá كبرَى

Yaḥyá يحيَى

musammá مسمَّى

Muṣṭafá مصطفَى

1. As ِ ﻯّ in nouns and adjectives of the form *fā‘īl* which are derived from defective roots. This ending is romanized *ī*, not *īy*, without regard to the presence of ّ (*shaddah*). See rule 11(b)(2).

Raḍī al-Dīn رضي الدين

Compare the *fa‘īl* form of the same root الرضى[without *shaddah*] *al-Raḍī*.

1. As ِ ﻯّ in the relative adjective (*nisbah*). The ending, like (b) above, is romanized *ī*, not *īy*.

al-Miṣrī المصرِيّ

Compareالمصرِيّة *al-Miṣrīyah* and see rule 11(b)(1).

7. ة (*tā’ marbūṭah*)

1. When the noun or adjective ending in ة is indefinite, or is preceded by the definite article, ة is romanized *h*. The ة in such positions is often replaced by ه.

ṣalāh صلاة

al-Risālah al-bahīyah الرسالة البهية

mir’āh مرآة

Urjūzah fī al-ṭibb أرجوزة فى الطب

1. When the word ending in ة is in the construct state [muḍāf wa-muḍāf ilayh], ة is romanized *t*.

Wizārat al-Tarbiyah وزارة التربية

Mir’āt al-zamān مرآة الزمان

1. When the word ending in ة is used adverbially, ة (vocalized ةً) is romanized *tan*. See rule 12(b).

**Romanization of Arabic Orthographic Symbols Other than Letters and Vowel Signs**

The signs listed below are frequently omitted from unvocalized Arabic writing and printing; their presence or absence must then be inferred. They are represented in romanization according to the following rules:

8. ء (*hamzah*)

1. In initial position, whether at the beginning of a word, following a prefixed preposition or conjunction, or following the definite article, ء is not represented in romanization. When medial or final, ء is romanized as ’ (alif).

asad أسد

uns أنس

idhā إذا

mas’alah مسألة

mu’tamar مؤتمر

dā’im دائم

mala’a ملأ

khaṭi’a خطئ

1. ء, when replaced by the sign (*waṣlah*) and then known as *hamzat al-waṣl*, is not represented in romanization. See rule 9 below.



9. (*waṣlah*), like initial ء, is not represented in romanization. See also rule 8(b) above. When the *alif* which supports *waṣlah* belongs to the article ال, the initial vowel of the article is romanized *a*. See rule 17(b). In other words, beginning with *hamzat al-waṣl*, the initial vowel is romanized *i*.



Riḥlat Ibn Jubayr رحلة ٱبن جبير

al-istidrāk الإستدراك

kutub iqtanatʹhā كتب ٱقتنتها

bi-ihtimām ‘Abd al-Majīd باهتمام عبد ٱلمجيد

10. ˜ (*maddah*)

1. Initial آ is romanized *ā*.

ālah آلة

Kullīyat al-Ādāb كلية الآداب

1. Medial آ, when it represents the phonetic combination *’ā*, is so romanized.

ta’ālīf تآليف

ma’āthir مآثر

1. ˜ is otherwise not represented in romanization.

khulafā’ خلفآء

11. ّ (*shaddah* or *tashdīd*)

1. Over و:
2. ُوّ, representing the combination of long vowel plus consonant, is romanized *ūw*.

‘adūw عدُوّ

qūwah قُوّة

See also rule 1(b).

1. َوّ, representing the combination of diphthong plus consonant, is romanized *aww*.

Shawwāl شَوّال

ṣawwara صَوّر

jaww جوّ

See also rule 1(c).

1. Over ى:
2. Medial ِىّ, representing the combination of long vowel plus consonant, is romanized *īy*.

al-Miṣrīyah المصرِيّة

See also rule 1(b).

1. Final ِىّ is romanized *ī*. See rules 6(b) and 6(c).
2. Medial and final َىّ, representing the combination of diphthong plus consonant, is romanized *ayy*.

ayyām أَيّام

sayyid سَيّد

Quṣayy قصَيّ

See also rule 1(c).

1. Over other letters, ّ is represented in romanization by doubling the letter or digraph concerned.

al-Ghazzī الغزّيّ

al-Kashshāf الكشّاف

12. *Tanwīn* may take the written form ٌ, ً (ًا), or ٍ, romanized *un*, *an*, and *in*, respectively. *Tanwīn* is normally disregarded in romanization, however. It is indicated in the following cases:

1. When it occurs in indefinite nouns derived from defective roots.

qāḍin قاضٍ

ma‘nan معنىً

1. When it indicates the adverbial use of a noun or adjective.

ṭab‘an طبعًا

faj’atan فجأةً

al-Mushtarik waḍ‘an المشترك وضعاً

wa-al-muftariq ṣuq‘an والمفترق صقعاً

**Grammatical Structure as It Affects Romanization**

13. Final inflections of verbs are retained in romanization, except in pause. represent

man waliya Miṣr من ولي مصر

ma‘rifat mā yajibu la-hum معرفة ما يجب لهم

ṣallá Allāh ‘alayhi wa-sallam صلى الله عليه وسلم

al-Lu’lu’ al-maknūn fī ḥukm اللؤلؤ المكنون فى حكم

al-ikhbār ‘ammā sa-yakūn الإخبار عما سيكون

14. Final inflections of nouns and adjectives:

1. Vocalic endings are not represented in romanization, except preceding pronominal suffixes, and except when the text being romanized is in verse.

uṣūluhā al-nafsīyah wa-ṭuruq أصولها النفسية وطرق تدريسها

tadrīsihā

ilá yawminā hādhā الى يومنا هذا

1. *Tanwīn* is not represented in romanization, except as specified in rule 12.
2. ة (*tā’ marbūṭah*) is romanized h or t as specified in rule 7.
3. For the romanization of the relative adjective (*nisbah*) see rule 6(c).

15. Pronouns, pronominal suffixes, and demonstratives:

1. Vocalic endings are retained in romanization.

anā wa-anta انا وانت

hādhihi al-ḥāl هذه الحال

mu’allafātuhu wa-shurūḥuhā مؤلفاته وشروحها

1. At the close of a phrase or sentence, the ending is romanized in its pausal form.

ḥayātuhu wa-‘aṣruh حياته وعصره

Tawfīq al-Ḥakīm, afkāruh, توفيق الحكيم، أفكاره، آثاره

āthāruh

16. Prepositions and conjunctions:

1. Final vowels of separable prepositions and conjunctions are retained in romanization.

anna أن

annahu أنه

bayna yadayhi بين يديه

Note the special cases: مما *mimmā*, ممن *mimman*.

1. Inseparable prepositions, conjunctions, and other prefixes are connected with what follows by a hyphen.

bi-hi به

wa-ma‘ahu ومعه

lā-silkī لاسلكي

17. The definite article:

1. The romanized form *al* is connected with the following word by a hyphen.

al-kitāb al-thānī الكتاب الثاني

al-ittiḥād الإتحاد

al-aṣl الأصل

al-āthār الآثار

1. When ال is initial in the word, and when it follows an inseparable preposition or conjunction, it is always romanized *al* regardless of whether the preceding word, as romanized, ends in a vowel or a consonant.

ilá al-ān الى الآن

Abū al-Wafā’ ابو الوفاء

Maktabat al-Nahḍah al-Miṣrīyah مكتبة النهضة المصرية

bi-al-tamām wa-al-kamāl بالتمام والكمال

Note the exceptional treatment of the preposition ل followed by the article:

lil-Shirbīnī للشربيني

See also rule 23.

1. The ل of the article is always romanized *l*, whether it is followed by a “sun letter” or not, i.e., regardless of whether or not it is assimilated in pronunciation to the initial consonant of the word to which it is attached.

al-ḥurūf al-abjadīyah الحروف الأبجدية

Abū al-Layth al-Samarqandī ابو الليث السمرقندي

**Orthography of Arabic in Romanization**

18. Capitalization:

1. Rules for the capitalization of English are followed, except that the definite article *al* is given in lower case in all positions.
2. Diacritics are used with both upper and lower case letters.

al-Ījī الايجي

al-Ālūsī الآلوسي

19. The macron or the acute accent, as appropriate, is used to indicate all long vowels, including those which in Arabic script are written defectively. The macron or the acute accent, as the case may be, is retained over final long vowels which are shortened in pronunciation before *hamzat al-waṣl*.

Ibrāhīm إبراهيم ، إبرهيم

Dā’ūd داؤود ، داؤد

Abū al-Ḥasan ابو الحسن

ru’ūs رؤوس

dhālika ذلك

‘alá al-‘ayn على العين

20. The hyphen is used:

1. To connect the definite article *al* with the word to which it is attached. See rule 17(a).
2. Between an inseparable prefix and what follows. See rules 16(b) and 17(b) above.
3. Between *bin* and the following element in personal names when they are written in Arabic as a single word. See rule 25.

21. The prime ( ʹ ) is used:

1. To separate two letters representing two distinct consonantal sounds, when the combination might otherwise be read as a digraph.

Adʹham أدهم

akramatʹhā أكرمتها

1. To mark the use of a letter in its final form when it occurs in the middle of a word.

Qal‘ahʹjī ‌قلعه‌جى

Shaykhʹzādah شيخ زاده

22. As in the case of romanization from other languages, foreign words which occur in an Arabic context and are written in Arabic letters are romanized according to the rules for romanizing Arabic.

Jārmānūs (*not* Germanos *nor* Germanus) جارمانوس

Lūrd Ghrānfīl (*not* Lord Granville) لورد غرانفيل

Īsāghūjī (*not* Isagoge) ايساغوجي

For short vowels not indicated in the Arabic, the Arabic vowel nearest to the original pronunciation is supplied.

Gharsiyā Khayin (*not* García Jaén) غرسيا خين

**Examples of Irregular Arabic Orthography**

23. Note the romanization of الله, alone and in combination.

Allāh الله

billāh



lillāh



bismillāh بسم الله

al-Mustanṣir billāh



24. Note the romanization of the following personal names:

Ṭāhā طه

Yāsīn يس ، يسن

‘Amr عمرو

Bahjat بهجت ، بهجة

25. ابن and بن are both romanized *ibn* in all positions.

Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Abī al-Rabī‘ احمد بن محمد بن ابي الربيع

Sharḥ Ibn ‘Aqīl ‘alá Alfīyat Ibn Mālik شرح ابن عقيل على الفية ابن مالك

Exception is made in the case of modern names, typically North African, in which the element بن is pronounced *bin*.

Bin Khiddah بن خده

Bin-‘Abd Allāh بنعبد الله

26. Note the anomalous spelling مائة, romanized *mi’ah*.