
Guide to

Hebrew Transliteration

According to

Israeli Pronunciation

Key to transliteration
List of frequently used words and phrases

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE

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Immediately following the key for Israeli pronunciation is a list of frequently used Hebrew words and phrases which serve as examples of the system that has been suggested. Asterisks have been placed next to words which are exceptions to the rules of this plan of transliteration. For example, the word “Hadassah” appears with an asterisk because it is spelled with a double “s.” According to the rule, it should appear with one “s.” However, because of general usage, the accepted spelling is retained. This also applies to the organization known as “B’nai B’rith” in which apostrophes are used.

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Acting Director
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FREQUENTLY USED WORDS AND PHRASES

	A				
Adar		אָדָר	bikur cholim		בִּקּוּר חוֹלִים
Adar Rishon		אָדָר רִאשׁוֹן	bimah		בֵּימָה
Adar Sheni		אָדָר שֵׁנִי	B'nai B'rith *		בְּנֵי בְרִית
Adloyada		עֲדֹלָיָדָע		C	
Adonai		אֲדֹנָי	chacham		חָכָם
Agadah		אָגָדָה	Chad Gadya		חַד גְּדַיָּא
alav hashalom		עָלָיו הַשְּׁלוֹם	Chag Haasif		חַג הָאָסִיף
aliyah		עֲלִיָּה	Chag Habikurim		חַג הַבְּכוּרִים
Amidah		עֲמִידָה	Chag Hakatzir		חַג הַקָּצִיר
Amoraim		אֲמוֹרָאִים	Chag Hashavuot		חַג הַשְּׁבוּעוֹת
Aravah		עֲרָבָה	Chag Hasukot		חַג הַסּוּכוֹת
Aron Hakodesh		אֲרוֹן הַקֹּדֶשׁ	chag sameach		חַג שְׂמֵחַ
Ashkenazim		אֲשְׁכְּנַזִּים	chagigah		חֲגִיגָה
atarah		עֲטָרָה	chai		חַי
Av		אָב	chalah		חֲלָה
	B		chalot		חֲלוֹת
baal		בַּעַל	chalutz*		חֲלוּץ
Baal Shem Tov		בַּעַל שֵׁם טוֹב	chamets		חָמֵץ
Barechu		בָּרְכוּ	Chamishah — asar Be'av		חֲמִשָּׁה-עָשָׂר בְּאָב
Bar Mitzvah*		בַּר מִצְוָה	Chamishah — asar Bishvat		חֲמִשָּׁה-עָשָׂר בְּשֶׁבֶט
berachah		בְּרָכָה	Chanukah		חֲנֻכָּה
Berit Milah		בְּרִית מִילָה	charoset		חֲרוֹסֵת
besamim		בְּשָׂמִים	Chasidim		חֲסִידִים
bet din		בֵּית דִּין	chasidut		חֲסִידוּת
bet haknesset*		בֵּית הַכְּנֶסֶת	chatan		חָתָן
bet hamidrash		בֵּית הַמִּדְרָשׁ	chatanim		חָתָנִים
betsah		בֵּיצָה	chazan		חָזָן

*Exception because of generally accepted spelling.

cheder	חֶדֶר
Cheshvan	חֶשְׁׁוֹן
Chol Hamoed	חול המועד
Chevrah Kadisha	חֶבְרַה קַדִּישָׁא
Chumash	חומש
chupah	חֻפָּה

D

derush	דְּרוֹשׁ
Din Torah	דִּין תּוֹרָה

E

echad	אֶחָד
Elohenu	אֱלֹהֵינוּ
Elohim	אֱלֹהִים
Elul	אֱלוּל
emet	אֱמֶת
emunah	אֱמוּנָה
Eretz* Yisrael	אֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל
Erev Shabbat*	עֶרֶב שַׁבָּת
etrog	אֶתְרוֹג
etz* chayim	עֵץ חַיִּים

G

galut	גָּלוּת
Gemara	גְּמָרָא
Genizah	גִּנְזָה
geonim or ge'onim	גְּאוֹנִים
geulah or ge'ulah	גְּאוּלָּה
gimel	גִּימֵל

**Yiddish

H

hadas	הַדָּס
Hadassah*	הַדָּסָה
Haftarah	הַפְּטָרָה
Haftarot	הַפְּטָרוֹת
Haggadah*	הַגְּדָה
hakafot	הַקְּפוֹת
Hallel*	הַלֵּל
hamantashen	
(or homentashn**)	הֶמֶן-טַאשֵׁן
Hamotzi*	הַמּוֹצִיא
Haskalah	הַשְׂכָּלָה
Hatikvah	הַתִּקְוָה
Havdalah	הַבְּדִלָּה
Histadrut	הַסְּתַדְרֻת
Hoshana Rabah	הוֹשַׁעֲנָא רַבָּה
Hoshanot	הוֹשַׁעֲנוֹת
Hoshiah Na	הוֹשִׁיעָה נָא

I

Isru Chag	אִסְרוּ חַג
Iyar	אִיָּר

K

Kabbalah*	קַבָּלָה
Kaddish*	קַדִּישׁ
kallah* (bride, study session)	קַלָּה
kaparot	כַּפָּרוֹת
karpas	כַּרְפַּס
kashrut	כַּשְׁרוּת
kehillah*	קַהִלָּה

Kelal (or Klal) Yisrael	כָּלֵל יִשְׂרָאֵל
Keren Hayesod	קֶרֶן הַיְסוּד
Keren Kayemet	קֶרֶן קַיֵּמֶת
ketubah	כְּתוּבָה
kevutzah*	קְבוּצָה
kezayit	כַּזַּיִת
Kiddush*	קִדּוּשׁ
Kinot (Lamentations)	קִינוּת
Kislev	כֶּסֶלֵו
Knesset*	כְּנֶסֶת
Kodashim (Mishnah)	קֹדָשִׁים
Kohen	כֹּהֵן
Kol Nidre	כָּל נִדְרֵי

L

Lag Ba'omer	לַיַּג בְּעוֹמֵר
Lechah Dodi	לֵךְ הַ דּוּדֵי
lechayim	לְחַיִּים
leolam or le'olam	לְעוֹלָם
Leshanah Tovah	לְשָׁנָה טוֹבָה תִּכְתְּבוּ
Tikatevu	וְתִקְּטְמוּ
Vetechatemu	
leshon hakodesh	לְשׁוֹן הַקֹּדֶשׁ
luach	לִיחַ
lulav	לוּלָב

M

Maariv	מַעֲרִיב
maasim tovim	מַעֲשִׂים טוֹבִים
Machzor*	מַחְזוֹר
Maftir	מַפְטִיר
Magen David Adom	מָגֵן דָּוִד אָדוּם

malchuto	מַלְכוּתוֹ
Maot Chitim	מַעוֹת חִטִּים
Mapai	מַפְאִי
maror	מָרוֹר
Mashiach	מָשִׁיחַ
matzah*	מַצָּה
matzevah*	מַצְבָּה
Mazal Tov	מַזָּל טוֹב
Medinat Yisrael	מְדִינַת יִשְׂרָאֵל
megillah*	מְגִלָּה
Megillat Esther*	מְגִלַּת אֶסְתֵּר
Megillat Ruth*	מְגִלַּת רוּת
melamed	מְלַמֵּד
Melaveh Malkah	מְלַוֵּה מַלְכָּה
menorah	מְנוֹרָה
mezuzah	מְזוּזָה
midrash	מִדְרָשׁ
Minchah	מִנְחָה
minyan	מִנְיָן
Mishloach Manot	מִשְׁלֹחַ מָנוֹת
Mishnah	מִשְׁנָה
Mitnagdim	מִתְנַגְּדִים
mitzvah*	מִצְוָה
mizrach	מִזְרָח
Moadim Lesimchah	מוֹעֲדִים לְשִׂמְחָה
Moed (Mishnah)	מוֹעֵד
mohel	מוֹהֵל
moshav	מוֹשָׁב
Musaf	מוֹסָף

N

Nashim (Mishnah)	נָשִׁים
Neilah or Ne'ilah	נְעִילָה

Ner Tamid	נֵר תָּמִיד
Nes Gadol Hayah Sham	נֶס גָּדוֹל הָיָה שָׁם
Nezikin (Mishnah)	נִזְקִין
nigun	נִגּוּן
Nisan	נִיסָן
nun	נוּן

O

olam haba	עוֹלָם הַבָּא
Oneg Shabbat*	עֲנַג שַׁבָּת

P

parochet	פָּרֹכֶת
Pesach	פֶּסַח
Pidyon Haben	פִּדְיוֹן הַבֵּן
Pirke Avot	פִּרְקֵי אָבוֹת
piyut	פִּיּוּט
Purim	פוּרִים

R

Rashi	רִשִׁי
rimonim	רִמּוֹנִים
Rosh Chodesh	רֹאשׁ חֹדֶשׁ
Rosh Hashanah*	רֹאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה
Rosh Yeshivah	רֹאשׁ יֵשִׁבָה

S

Sanhedrin	סַנְהֶדְרִין
Seder	סֵדֶר
Sefaradit	סֶפְרָדִית
Sefer Torah	סֵפֶר תּוֹרָה

Sefirah	סְפִירָה
Selichot	סְלִיחוֹת
seudah or se'udah	סְעוּדָה
Shabbat* Chazon	שַׁבָּת חֲזוֹן
Shabbat* Hagadol	שַׁבָּת הַגָּדוֹל
Shabbat* Nachamu	שַׁבָּת נַחֲמוּ
Shabbat* Shalom	שַׁבָּת שְׁלוֹם
shadchan	שֹׁדְכָן
Shalom Aleichem	שְׁלוֹם עֲלֵיכֶם
shamash	שַׁמָּשׁ
Shavua Tov	שָׁבוּעַ טוֹב
Shavuot	שַׁבוּעוֹת
Shechinah	שְׁכִינָה
Shehecheyanu	שֶׁהַחַיְנוּ
Shema	שְׁמַע
Shemini Atzeret*	שְׁמִינִי עֲצָרֶת
Shemitah	שְׁמִטָּה
Shemoneh-esreh	שְׁמוֹנֵה-עֶשְׂרֵה
Shevat	שֵׁבֶט
shin	שִׁין
Shivah or Shiv'ah (mourning)	שִׁבְעָה
shochet	שׁוֹחֵט
shofar	שׁוֹפָר
Shofarot (prayer)	שׁוֹפְרוֹת
Shulchan Aruch	שֻׁלְחַן עֲרוּךְ
siddur*	סִידוּר
sidrah	סִדְרָה
simchah	שִׂמְחָה
Simchat Torah	שִׂמְחַת תּוֹרָה
Sivan	סִיָּן
Sukot	סֻכוֹת

	T
takanah	תְּקִנָּה
talit	טְלִית
Talmud Torah	תַּלְמוּד תּוֹרָה
Tamuz	תַּמּוּז
Tanach	תַּנְ"ךְ
Tanaim	תַּנָּאִים
Targum	תַּרְגוּם
Tashlich	תַּשְׁלִיחַ
tefilah	תְּפִלָּה
tefilin	תְּפִלִּין
tekiah	תְּקִיעָה
terefah	טְרֵפָה
teruah	תְּרוּעָה
teshuvah	תְּשׁוּבָה
Tevet	טֵבֵת
Tikun Shavuot	תִּקּוּן שַׁבּוּעוֹת
Tishah (or Tish'ah) Be'av	תַּשְׁעָה בְּאָב
Tishri or Tishrei	תִּשְׂרִי, תִּשְׂרִי
Tohorot (Mishnah)	טְהוּרוֹת
Torah	תּוֹרָה
tsedakah	צְדָקָה

	צ"ו
Tsion	צִיּוֹן
Tu Bishvat	טו בְּשֵׁבַט
	V
Vaad Arba Aratzot*	וַעַד אַרְבַּע אַרְצוֹת
	Y
yad	יָד
Yamim Noraim	יָמִים נוֹרָאִים
Yerushalayim	יְרוּשָׁלַיִם
yeshivah	יֵשִׁיבָה
yeshivot	יֵשִׁיבוֹת
Yizkor	יִזְכּוֹר
Yom Kippur*	יוֹם כִּפּוּר
Yom Teruah	יוֹם תְּרוּעָה
Yovel	יּוֹבֵל
	Z
zemirot	זְמִירוֹת
Zichronot (prayer)	זִכְרוֹנוֹת

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Acting Director
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KEY

1. Consonants

נ מ ל כ פ י ט ח ז ו ה ד ג ב פ
n m l ch k y t ch z v h d g v b

ת ת ש ש ר ק צ פ פ ס
t t s sh r k ts f p s

The א and ע are disregarded, except sometimes in the middle of a word where they may be indicated by an apostrophe for better enunciation of the word.

For example, תְּשִׁיבָה בְּאֵב *Tish'ah Be'av.*

The ה at the end of a word is to be represented by an h.

For example, מַצָּה *matzah.* (צ is normally rendered ts, except in words where the writing tz has become conventionalized.)

2. Vowels and Diphthongs

(Kamats katan אָ as in כָּל)

ֶ	ֵ	ִ	= a
ֶ	ִ	ִ	= o
	ִ	ִ	= u
	ֶ	ִ	= e
	ִ	ִ	= i
	ִ	ִ	= ai
		ִ	= oi
		ִ	= ei or e

3. Sheva

Silent sheva (sheva nach) is not to be represented.

For example, **הַבְּדִלָּה** *Havdalah*.

Vocal sheva (sheva na) is to be represented, when sounded, by the letter “e.”

For example, **מְנוֹרָה** *menorah*.

There are exceptions such as B’nai B’rith where, by virtue of common usage, the vocal sheva is represented by an apostrophe. In Israeli pronunciation the sheva is sometimes disregarded as in Knesset (Israel’s Parliament).

4. Strong Dagesh

Strong dagesh (chazak) is not to be represented, except in words where the doubled letter has become widely accepted through usage, as in the word Shabbat.

5. Prefixes

Prefixes are written together with the word. For example, **הַבַּיִת** *habayit*, **מִבַּיִת** *mibayit*.

If the word proper begins with **א** or **ע** the resulting two vowels may be separated by an apostrophe.

For example, **הָאָרֶץ** *ha'aretz*.

6. Common Biblical Names and Terms

For common biblical names, the transliteration of the Jewish Publication Society translation of the Bible is to be followed. Whenever it is desired, for some special reason, to emphasize the exact Hebrew spelling or pronunciation, the rules for transliteration should be used.