
ISAM

Transliteration

System v.2

Introduction

1. This system is intended for the transliteration of all expressions from languages written in non-Latin alphabets. That includes:
 - 1.1. personal names,
 - 1.2. names of written works (books, journals, magazines, encyclopedias, articles, etc.),
 - 1.3. names of institutions, organizations, companies, parties,
 - 1.4. names of madhhabs, sects, cults, tribes, dynasties,
 - 1.5. names of places (settlements, regions, countries, geographical names),
 - 1.6. publisher information,
 - 1.7. words, terms, concepts, phrases, and longer citations.
2. All these expressions must be italicized and fully transliterated with diacritical marks.
3. There is no need to transliterate words that have been established and widely used in English, and cited in well-known dictionaries.

Basic Rules for Arabic, Persian, Ottoman, and Turkish

1. *Hamza*.

asad (not *'asad*), *idhā*, *mas'ala*, *tā'ib*, *fuḡarā'*, *sa'al* (no word-initial *hamza*)

2. *'Ayn*.

'ushr, *ma'rifa*, *ijmā'*, *fa'al*

3. *Tā'* *marbūta* (written as *-a*, in *iḏāfa -at*, and after a long vowel *ā -āt*).

qiyāfa, *al-qirā'a al-jadīda*, *risālat al-ustādh* (not *risāla al-ustādh*), *ṣalāt* (not *ṣalā*, *ṣalāh*)

4. Long sounds are transcribed with straight line on top of vowels.

ā, *ī*, *ū*

5. Diphthongs.

mawt, *ṣayd* (not *maut*, *ṣaid*)

6. *Wāw* with *shadda*.

quwwa (not *qūwa*)

when final.

'aduww (not *'adū*)

7. *Yā'* with *shadda*.

niyya (not *nīya*), *'illiyya* (not *'illīya*)

when final.

'Alī, *nisbī*

8. Definite article *al-*.

al-burhān, *al-shams* (not *ash-shams*)
tadbīr al-manzīl, *al-qiyās al-jalī*, *al-nahḏa al-'arabīyya*

9. Pronoun suffixes are not hyphenated.

lahu, *ṭaradahum* (not *la-hu*, *ṭarada-hum*)

10. Pronoun suffix *-hu*, *-hi* is always written short.

bihi, *kitābuhu* (not *bihī*, *kitābuhū*)

11. Compound names with *Allāh* are in general written as two words.

'Abd Allāh

12. *Tanwīn al-fatḥh* in adverbial uses.

ṣabāḥan, ‘ādatan

13. And all other *tanwīn al-fatḥh* when supported by alif.

ra’aytu asadan

14. Last vowels of verbs are transliterated.

jalasa, tanzilu

15. Last vowels of personal pronouns, demonstrative pronouns (*ism al-ishāra*), and relative pronouns (*ism al-mawṣūl*) are transliterated.

anta, huwa, hādhihi, dhālika, kitābuhu (not *kitābuhū*), *alladhī, alladhīna*

16. Last vowels of particles and conjunctions are transliterated.

bayna, taḥta, anna, thumma, ma’a

17. Ibn and bint written as b. and bt., except when it is part of the name by which the person is known.

‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, but *Ibn Ḥazm, Ibn Khaldūn*.

18. Letters which are written but not pronounced are not transliterated.

أنا (*ana* (not *anā*), أولئك (*ulā’ika*), يائة (*mi’a*), عمرو (*‘Amr*), دخلوا (*dakhalū*)

19. In principle, each word is transliterated separately, but joined pronoun suffixes are not transliterated separately.

kitābuhā (not *kitābu-hā*), *bihi* (not *bi-hi*), *aṭaytukahu* (not *aṭaytu-ka-hu*)

20. In the titles of the scholarly works, the first letter of each word should be capitalized (with the exception of particles).

Majālis al-Abrār, Majma‘ al-Baḥrayn, al-Kitāb fī Sharḥ al-Mukhtaṣar

21. Long vowels which are not written openly are transliterated. But-hu/-hi joined pronoun suffix is not transliterated when it is pronounced as long vowel.

تَلْتُ *thalāth*, هَذِهِ *hādhihi, kitābuhu*
(not *kitābuhū*)

22. For Persian and Ottoman, noun constructs are transliterated *-i* after consonants; *-yi* after vowels.

23. For Persian, the construct *خو* is transliterated *khvā*.

Khvārizmī (not *Khvārizmī*, *Khavārizmī*)

24. Qur'ān references: Q sūra number:verse.

Q 2:255

25. The final short vowel (*i'rāb*) and *tanwīn* in a word are not transliterated.

kitāb (not *kitābun*), *fī kitāb* (not *fī kitābin*), *fī Kitāb Sibawayh* (not *fī Kitābi Sibawayhi*)

26. Full *i'rāb* is to be marked only for the Qur'an, poetry, and quotations longer than one line.

*al-ḥamdu li-llāhi rabbi l-'ālamīn^a * al-raḥmāni l-raḥīmⁱ * māliki yawmi l-dīnⁱ **
*īyyāka na'budu wa-īyyāka nasta'īn^u * ihdinā l-ṣirāṭa l-mustaqīm^a * ṣirāṭa*
lladhīna an'amta 'alayhim ḡhayri l-maḡdūbi 'alayhim wa-lā d-dāllīn^a

İSAM Transliteration System for Arabic, Persian, Ottoman, and Turkish¹

	A	P	OT	MT
أ	ʾ	ʾ	ʾ	-
ب	b	b	b	b, p
پ	-	p	p	p
ت	t	t	t	t
ث	th	ṯ	ṯ	s
ج	j	j	c	c
چ	-	ch	ç	ç
ح	ḥ	ḥ	ḥ	h
خ	kh	kh	ḫ	h
د	d	d	d	d
ذ	dh	ḏ	ḏ	z
ر	r	r	r	r
ز	z	z	z	z
ژ	-	zh	j	j
س	s	s	s	s
ش	sh	sh	ş	ş
ص	ṣ	ṣ	ṣ	s
ض	ḍ	ḏ	ḏ, ḍ	z
ط	ṭ	ṭ	ṭ	t

	A	P	OT	MT
ظ	ẓ	ẓ	ẓ	z
ع	ʿ	ʿ	ʿ	-
غ	gh	gh	g, ğ	g, ğ
ف	f	f	f	f
ق	q	q	q	k
ك	k	k	k, ñ, y, ğ	k, n, y, ğ
گ	-	g	g	g
ل	l	l	l	l
م	m	m	m	m
ن	n	n	n	n
ه	h	h	h*	h*
و	w	v, u	v, u	v
ي	y	y	y	y
ا	a	a	a, e	
ا	u	u	u, ü, o, ö	
ا	i	i	ı, i	
آ	ā	ā	ā	
او	ū	ū	ū	
ای	ī	ī	ī	

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¹ A: Arabic, P: Persian, OT: Ottoman Turkish, MT: Modern Turkish.

* When h is not final.