

General description of the Italarab alphabet (ایتالعرَب)

- The letters ب [b], پ [p], د [d], ت [t], گ [g], ك [k], گ [gw], ك [kw], ر [r], ل [l], م [m], ن [n] س [s~z], ف [f], ی [j] and و [w] are simply used for their pronunciation. Examples: bello بل, pino پین, adatto ادت, cormorano کرمران, sole سول, fata فات, minotauro مینوتور, limone لیمون, grattare گرتار, agosto اگست, colore کلور, ramo رام, nastro نستر, campanile کمپانیل, fiato فیات, guardare گردار, guidare گیدار, questo کست, questione کپستیون

- Unlike languages such as Persian, Arabic and Urdu, the letter س can commonly represent both voiceless [s] and voiced [z]. The variation in pronunciation across the italoophone world is ignored. Examples: casa کس ([s~z]), cosa کوس ([s~z]), sasso سس ([s]), naso ناس ([s~z]), scala سکال ([s]), sbrigare سبرگار ([z]), parasole پراسول ([s]), risalire رسلیر ([s])

- Stems that always have [dʒ tʃ ʃ] use the letters ج چ ش, and stems that always have [g k sk] use the letters گ ک سک. Examples: mangio–mangi منج–منجی, cucio–cuci کوچ–کوچی, lascio–lasci لشی–لشی, pago–paghi پگو–پگی, fuoco–fuochi فوک–فوکى, bosco–boschi بسک–بسکی, pèsca–pèsche پسک–پسکې

- In stems where there is an alternation between “hard” [g k sk] and “soft” [dʒ tʃ ʃ] the choice is more complex. If a word alternates between hard and soft consonant pairs within its own paradigm, then گ ک بنس are used when the consonant is hard and گِ کِ سِ are used when the consonant is soft. Examples: fuggo–fuggi فوگ–فوگى, amico–amici امیک–امیکى, nasco–nasci ناس–ناسى. The same is common with suffixed stems. Examples: mago–magia مگ–مگى, farmaco–farmacista فرمک–فرمکىست

- When the most basic or common occurrences of the stem consistently contain a soft consonant while derived forms switch back to the hard consonant, then the choice is stylistic, personal and/or customary; both spellings are to be allowed, but one of the two might be preferred. The same happens when an ancient vowel change obscured the common origin of closely related morphemes. Examples: voce–vocale وچ/وچ–وچ, pace–pacato پاک–پاک, taccio–tacqui تچ/تچ–تچ

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فكّو-فیکو (the suffix -ficare as in modificare, purificare, faccio—fico, تگی, پوریفیکار etc.)

- In such roots where there is a [sk]–[ʃ] alternation, سک for [sk] isn't used and بنس is used in its place even when the individual word doesn't have any forms with [ʃ]; words from those same roots where there are only forms with [ʃ] usually use پس. Examples: péscō–peschi–pésca–pesce (fish-related words) vs pèsca پسک (the fruit)

- The letter پس [ʃ] is also used in a few words where a stem-initial [tʃ] comes together with a [s] to form [ʃ]. Sometimes the [stʃ] cluster can be left untouched by some speakers, in which case سچ can be used to show their pronunciation of the word. Examples: cernere–discernere چرنر-دیسرنر, cervello–scervellarsi چرفل-چنتر-پسنترار/سچنترار, centro–scentrare پسررفلارسی/سچرفلارسی

- In a way similar to [g k sk]–[dʒ tʃ ʃ], when morphemes display a [d t]–[dʒ ts] alternation, د ت are often used instead of دّ تّ. Letters دّ تّ aren't used when the palatalization of [d t] yielded [dʒ tʃ]. Examples: moto–mozione موت-موتیون, medio–mezzo مدّ/مدّی-مدی, rata–razione–ragione رت-رتیون-رجون, diurno–giorno دیورن-جرن. The other occurrences of [dʒ] and [ts] have a variety of spellings.

- The letter د can only be [dʒ] and is often used in words that contained [dʒ] or [z] in the source language. It is commonly used in Greek roots, but not only. Examples: -izzare زیدار (< Greek -ίζω -izo), zona دون (< Greek ζώνη zone), zagara ذگر (< Arabic زهرة zahra)

- The letter ذ is used for [ts] when it's hard to link it to a root having a [t], and it is also used in a few cases in which [dʒ] and [ts] can both be heard or where [dʒ] stems from a historical [ts]. Examples: zaino زین, pozzo پچ, pezza پچ, -ezza -ذ (the suffix -ezza as in bellezza بلخ, tristezza ترستخ etc.)

- In words where [s]-like sounds became [ts] or [dʒ], both ذ and ض can be used. In words from Semitic languages, ض is often used when [dʒ ts] derive from emphatic

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consonants, while **ث** is used for non-emphatic origins. When related words have [s] and [dz ts], usually **س-ث** and **ص-ض** are the way the letters match. Examples: zero **صِيْرِيْ/رِيْ/ثِيْرِيْ** (< Arabic صفر *ṣifr*), zolfo–solfato **صِلْفَات/سِلْفَات**, zucchero–saccarina **صُكْرِيْ/كْرِيْ/ثُكْرِيْ** (< Arabic سكر *sukkar*)

- In a few cases, [l n] become [ʎ n] in closely related words or in other forms of the same word. In such cases it is common to write [ʎ n] as **نِ لِ**. In the other cases **لِ نِ** are used; although in verbs where an intervocalic [ʎ n] alternates with a syllable-final [l n], **لِ نِ** are preferred. Examples: cane–cagna **كِنِ/كِنِ**, volere–voglio–voglia **شِيْ لِيْ/شِيْ لِيْ** vs scegliere–scelgo **شِيْ لِيْ/شِيْ لِيْ**, spegnere–spengo **سِيْ نِيْ/سِيْ نِيْ**

- A few morphemes have a [r]–[rj]–[j] alternation. In such cases [j] can be spelled as **رِيْ**, while [r] and [rj] are regularly **ر** and **رِيْ** respectively. Examples: morire–moriamo–muoio **مُورِيْ/مُورِيْ**, cartolaio–cartoleria **كِرْتَلَايْ/كِرْتَلَايْ**

- The letters **ف** **و** **و** all denote the same sound [v] but are used in different situations. The letter **و** is used when [v] comes from [w]. Examples: vivere **وِيْوِيْ**, vedere **وِيْوِيْ**, pavore **پُوْر**, carovana **كارُوَان**

- The letter **ف** is used when [v] comes from [b] or [p]. In related words or forms a stop is often still found. Examples: bevo–bibita **بِيْوِيْ/بِيْوِيْ**, riva–ripa **رِيْوِيْ/رِيْوِيْ**, avere–abbiamo **اِوِيْ/اِوِيْ**, devo–dobbiamo **دِيْوِيْ/دِيْوِيْ**

- The letter **ف** is used in the remaining morphemes: usually the etymology is uncertain or the source language already had [v] in that position. Examples: slavo **فِلَادِيْمِيْر**, Vladimiro **فِلَادِيْمِيْر**

- The letters **ي** **ي** **ي** **ه** **ع** **ا** are all generally silent, but they aren't equivalent to each other. The letter **ا** is the least specific and is used by default at the beginning of vowel-initial words, unless other rules apply. When the following vowel is also spelled as **ا**, then the two merge into one single **آ**. When a prefix ending with a consonant is added, this letter is dropped. See further below for the case in which a

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vowel-final prefix is added, creating a hiatus. Examples: albero البر, altro التّر, uovo اوؤ, uno اون, era اېر, infinito اينفينيت, occhio اكي, adocchiare ادكيار, ardere آردير

- The letter ع is used in Semitic borrowings according to its original distribution, and it is also used where an original [g] has disappeared in native words. It is also unpredictably used at the beginning of a few words (among which there is the very common verb essere عسېر). Examples: essere عسېر, opera عېر, cooperare كعېرار, ossigeno عسيجن, otto عت/عتو, maestro معستر (< Latin magister), arabo عرب (< Arabic عرب arab), ebraico عبريك (< Hebrew עִבְרִית e-b-r)

- The letter غ is used when [v] has disappeared. It isn't very common and it can generally be replaced by ع, but its replacements is discouraged. It is more common in informal words from those dialects where [v]-dropping is a wider phenomenon. Examples: paura پؤور (< pavore پؤور), poretto پوؤرت (< poveretto پوؤرت), ciao چغ (< s-ciavo سچف)

- The letter ھ is used whenever a [h] has been dropped. It is also used at the end of monosyllabic words with a short vowel and their compounds, and at the end of some words that lost a fricative. In a few cases it occurs word-finally simply to show a short vowel, especially if it is stressed and no other rule applies. Examples: ora ھور (< Latin hora), avere ھېر (< Latin habeo), oggi ھجی (< Latin hodie), ieri ھېری (< Latin heri), anche ھنك (< Latin hanc), che ھه, perché ھپرکھ (< per ھپر + che ھه), già ھه (< Latin iam), più ھيوه (< Latin plus), -erà/-irà/-rà ھرھ/ھيرھ/ھرھ (future indicative 3rd person singular, < -are/-ere/-ire ھه + ha ھه)

- The letter ى is employed whenever a [j] isn't pronounced anymore. It can sometimes be used in place of ع when the disappearing sound is a [dz] derived from [g]. It is common at the beginning of suffixes after [dʒ tʃ ʃ ʌ ʌ]. Examples: mangiamo منچيام, facciamo فکيام, vogliamo وؤليام, francio فرنكى (containing the -io ى suffix typical of the elements), maestro معستر/مېستر

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- Unless other rules apply, hiatuses are written by putting ُى between the vowels.

Examples: beato بنات, coarticolare كترتيكلار, coordinare كىوردينار, riuscire

رنوس یر/رنس یر

- The letter ِى is used when consonants (often together with nearby vowels) are

elided. Examples: fare فىر (< facere فکِیر), bere بىر (< bevare بىر), dire

ضىر (< dicere دىر), -ità یتى (< -itate), -itù یتى (< -itute), zero ىر (< Arabo صفر şifr)

- The letter ۀ (sometimes written without the dots) is added to the end of feminine proper names to graphically distinguish them from masculine ones, as the difference wouldn't be clear otherwise. Its use can be inconsistent or completely absent in words ending with long vowels and foreign names. Names ending with a consonant sound generally never make use of ۀ. Place names ignore their syntactic agreement.

Examples: Italia ایتلیة, Francesca فرنکِیسکة, Cipro چیپرة, Elena هلنة, Michela مىکېلة, Roma رومة vs Milano میلان, Francesco فرنکِیسک, Luca لوكا, Michele مىکېل

- Given the foreign origin of the script, there are certain letters that are mostly unused for native Italian words but are used in foreign borrowings or local words. These are ھ ح خ ذ ز ژ ص ض ط ظ غ ق ھ. To a certain extent ع and ف also fall into this category. Examples: ibadita اباضیت (< Arabic إباضی 'ibāḏī), Iraq عراق (< Arabic العراق al-ʿIrāq), garage گاراژ (< French garage [garaʒ]), Sion صیون (< Hebrew ציון Ṣiyōn), Qatar قطر (< Arabic قطر Qaṭar)

- The vowels have two ways of being written: either short or long. This spelling difference is broadly based on historical vowel length and it doesn't represent the current length of vowels, since the latter is fully predictable and variable. Short vowels are only diacritics, while long vowels have both dedicated letters and diacritics. Diacritics are usually omitted.

- Long vowel letters are ا [a], و [u], َو [o, ɔ], ى [i], ې [e, ε]. Short vowel diacritics are َ [a], ِ [e, ε], ُ [o, ɔ]. The common diacritic ُ [a] counts as a long vowel. As in the Latin script, ِ و and ِ ُ aren't specified for the exact quality of the mid vowels they

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represent (“open” [ɔ ɛ] or “closed” [o e]); this choice is based of the great variation across the italoophone population. The additional diacritics َ [ə], ِ [i], ُ [u] are mainly used in foreign and local words, but they also have limited use in Italian words. Examples: bello بِلُّ, pino پِينُ, adatto اَدَتُّ, cormorano كُرْمُرَانِ, sole سُول, fata فَاتِ, limone لِيمُونِ, grattare گَرَتَارِ, agosto اَغَسْتُ, colore كُور, ramo رَامُ, nastro نَسْتَرُ, campanile كَمپَانِيلِ, fiato فَيَاتِ, casa كَسَا, cosa كُوسَا, sasso سَسُّ, naso نَاسُ, scala سَكَالِ, sbrigare سَبْرِيگَارِ, parasole پَرَاسُولِ, risalire رَسَلِيرِ, computer كَمپِيوتَرِ, città چِيْتِي, schiavitù سُكْيِفِيْتِي, stasera اَسْتَسَيَر/سْتَسَيَر, Abramo اَبْرَامُ, zero خَيْرُ, fare كُورْتِ

- Choosing the way to write each vowel isn't always straightforward. As a rule of thumb, high vowels [i u] are always written long, while all other vowels are written short if historically short, and long if historically long. Words of which the origin is unknown tend to have the stressed vowels in open syllables written as long and the other vowels as short (following the general realization), though this isn't a very strict rule and multiple spellings can be allowed in such words. Stress-based vowel length is otherwise ignored. When a vowel comes from the fusion of multiple vowels (perhaps following the deletion of some consonant), it is usually written as long: a long vowel letter can replace a silent letter in certain words and writing styles. Examples: corte كُورْتِ (< coorte كُورْتِ), poretto پُورْتِ (< poretto پُورْتِ < poveretto پُورْتِ), mastro مَاسْتَرِ (< maestro مَاسْتَرِ/ميسْتَرِ), nero نَيْرِ (< nero نَيْرِ), dire دِيرِ (< dire دِيرِ), zero خَيْرِ (< zero خَيْرِ)

- The absence of a vowel is normally written as َ (which is mostly omitted like all diacritics), but when its absence is due to word-initial or -final elision, it is written as َ on most letters and as ُ word-initially when ُ was used to denote the word-initial vowel. Examples: cormorano كُرْمُرَانِ, minotauro مِينُوتُورُ, grattare گَرَتَارِ, agosto اَغَسْتُ, nastro نَسْتَرِ, campanile كَمپَانِيلِ, fiato فَيَاتِ, scala سَكَالِ, sbrigare سَبْرِيگَارِ, computer كَمپِيوتَرِ, schiavitù سُكْيِفِيْتِي, stasera اَسْتَسَيَر/سْتَسَيَر, Abramo اَبْرَامِ

- Diphthongs are treated like vowel–consonant sequences. At the beginning of words, if the vowel is a diacritic, َ is added to ُ in order to distinguish diphthongs

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from a long vowel. Examples: mai مای, augurare أوگورار, Europa إوروپة, aureo أوری, Leida لیدة, faida فید, dinosauro دینسور, minotauro مینوتور

- The two diphthongs [jɛ ɔ] use special letters and are instead treated like simple vowels: و [ɔ] and ی [jɛ]. These letters are used when they derive from [ɛ ɔ] that got diphthongized, with the addition of a few more words. Examples: cuore–coraggio کور–کُراج, fuoco–sfocare فوک–سُفکار, suora–sorella سُور–سُورل, fieno–fienile فین–فینیل, tiene–tenere تین–تینر, miele مِل–میل, chiede–questione کِچ–کِچستون, niente نینت, gelo–gelare جِل–جِلار, cielo–celeste چیل–چیلست, cieco–accecace چیک–اچچیکار vs pieno–plenilunio پین–پینیلونی, quoto–quotiente کُت–کُتینت

- The letter ی is used in place of the otherwise expected ی when a root ending in [j] (spelled with ی) is followed by a suffix beginning with [i] (also spelled with ی). The sequence is mostly pronounced as a single vowel [i], and that is the reason for the single letter. Its main function is to distinguish different forms of a word or root that would otherwise be indistinguishable if one simple ی were used. The letter ۆ functions analogously but with an [u] added to a [w], but I haven't found any instances of such occurrence, which makes this use of ۆ only hypothetical. Examples: occhio–occhi اکی–اکي, genio–geni جنی–جني, maschio–maschi مسکی–مسکي, macchio–macchi–macchia مکی–مکي–مکي

- The diacritic ء is placed between two vowels above (or sometimes below) a letter to show a hiatus. It is graphically placed within the morpheme causing the hiatus. When adjacent to a long vowel, it is often written on the long vowel, but it is otherwise written on ی as explained above. When a prefix ending in a vowel is added to a word graphically beginning with l, the hiatus can also be written by adding ء to the l, especially if both vowels are diacritics. Examples: beato بئات, coarticolare کئرتیکلار/کارتیکلار, coordinare کئوردینار/کوردینار, riuscire کئورنت/دئادورنت, sia س یا رئوس/بر/رئوس, بر/رئوس/یر/رئوس/یر

- The hiatus can also be represented by any of the other silent letters without the need of any ء. Despite this, in poetry vowels that usually form a hiatus can be put together in a diphthong or triphthong, while vowels that usually form a diphthong can

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be separated and forced to form a hiatus. For this reason, in poetry ء occurs whenever there is a hiatus (even on other letters: أ | آ | إ | ع | غ | ه | ي), or before a consonant where its presence doesn't affect the metrics, while it doesn't occur in other places where it would be otherwise required. This applies across word boundaries. Examples: sapienza سڤينتا [sa.pi.ɛn.tsa] (normally sapienza سڤينتا [sa.pjɛn.tsa]), beato بيات [bɛa:.to] (normally beato بيات [be.a:.to])

- Another use of ء is to mark the loss of a plosive at the end of a word. In a few words it is simply used for distinguishability from other words that are spelled without it. Examples: qui كىء, qua كاء, li لىء, là لاء, sì سىء, verrò ؤرؤء/ؤرؤ*, dormì درمىء, è عهء

*The future indicative 1st person singular ending -erò/-irò/-rò (< -are/-ere/-ire لار/لير/لير + ho هو) was consistently spelled with a final ء because of its stress placement, but since the rules regarding ء have changes, this ending might not be qualified to have a ء anymore; the decision isn't final, yet, but I now tend to spell it without: -erò/-irò/-rò ليرؤ/ليرؤ/ليرؤ.. The remote past still uses ء in the 3rd person: amò اموء, partì پرتىء, batté بتىء vs present amo امو, parti پرتى, batte بت

- Geminate consonants are shown with the diacritic ّ over the consonant. Examples: bello بلّ, asciutto اشؤؤتّ, occhi اكّى, sasso سسّ, adatto ادتّ

- More diacritics, letters and letterforms can be used in unadapted borrowings.