Other languages transcribed into Arabic characters are called Ajami (“ignorant”).

Some countries have an official Ajami alphabet.

The general rules of Arabic orthography apply to Ajami.

1. Transcribe consonants from right to left.
2. There is no distinction between upper and lower cases.
3. Consonants are written on an invisible grid of four invisible lines. Most stay between levels two and three; some ascend to level one, and some others descend to level four. Thus: ا ب ݖ د ف گ ه ج ک ل م ن ݒ ق ر س ت و ي ز.
4. Every consonant has four forms: initial, median, final and isolate. A consonant in any position of a word may take any one of the four forms, depending on whether it is connected to a preceding or a following consonant. E.g., b = بــبــب ب.
5. Some final and isolate forms take a flourish: E.g., b = بـب, n = نـن, j = جــج, s = سـس, y = يـي.
6. Most consonants connect to a following consonant. There are four consonants that never connect to a following consonant: alif (ا), d (د), r (ر) and w (و). These four connect with a preceding consonant but not with a following one.
7. Transcribe vowels a (َ), o (ٝ) and u (ُ) above a preceding consonant; i (ِ) and e (ٕ) below a preceding consonant.
8. Very short vowels can be left unwritten, unless they are required for clarity.
9. A consonant that is not followed by a vowel takes a sukuun (ْ) over it. Sukuuns may be left unwritten unless needed for clarity.
10. A consonant that has neither a vowel nor a sukuun serves to lengthen a preceding vowel. E.g., moon = مٝـونْ, mean = مِـيـنْ, maan = مَـانْ, laam = لام.
11. L + aa represents a special case; instead of لَـا one writes لاَ.
12. One may transcribe a vowel-less consonant instead of a vowel: ا for a, ي for e or i, and و for o or u. E.g., Galen may be written گَـلـٕنْ or گـالـن.
13. Double or geminated consonants are written as a single character with a chadda (ّ) over it, as does a vowel-less final consonant that is released or aspirate. E.g., babble = بَـبّـل, shell = شٕـلّ, liph = لِـݒّ.

Write your name in Ajami. Look up the consonants in the table on the next pages. Start on the right and write leftwards. Write the consonants first. Remember to connect the consonants, except following alif, d, r and w. Then, add in the vowels. Optionally, leave out weak vowels, or use one or two vowel-less consonants in place of strong vowels.

American: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Ajami: |  | | | | |
| American | | Ajami | American | Ajami |
| Glottal stop | | ا ـا ـا ا | apple | اَݒّٖـل |
| a | | َ | bad | بَـدْ |
| aa | | َـا |  | بـاد |
| e | | ٕ | bed | بٕـدْ |
| ee | | ٕـي |  | بـيـد |
| é | | ٖ | bid | بٖـدْ |
| éé | | ٖـي |  | بـيـد |
| i | | ِ | bead | بِـدْ |
| ii | | ِـي |  | بـيـد |
| o | | ٝ | baud | بٝـدْ |
| oo | | ٝـو |  | بـود |
| ó | | ٗ | bode | بٗـدْ |
| óó | | ٗـو |  | بـود |
| u | | ُ | booed | بُـدْ |
| B b | | بـبـب ب | Bible | بـابـل |
| C c | | ݖـݖـݖ ݖ | church | ݖـُورݖ |
| D d | | د ـد ـد د | Dwaddle | دوَدّل |
| F f | | فـفـف ف | forfeit | فٗـورفت |
| G g | | گـگـگ گ | google | گُـوگـل |
| H h | | حـحـح ح | hurdle | حُـوردل |
| J j | | جـجـج ج | Jordan | جٗـوردن |
| K k | | کـکـک ک | kick | کۭـکّ |
| L l | | لـلـل ل | ladle | لَادل |
| M m | | مـمـم م | memory | مٕـمٝـرِ |
| N n | | نـنـن ن | nany | نـَانِ |
| P p | | ݒـݒـݒ ݒ | papa | ݒَـاݒَ |
| Q q | | قـقـق ق | queen | قـوِين |
| R r | | ر ـر ـر ر | roar | رٗور |
| S s | | سـسـس س | sissy | سِـسِّـي |
| T t | | تـتـت ت | tattle | تَـتّـل |
| W w | | و ـو ـو و | way | وَيْ |
| X x | | کسکسکس کس | wax | وَکس |
| Y y | | يـيـي ي | Yes | يـٕسْ |
| Z z | | ز ـز ـز ز | zanny | زَانِّـيْ |
| Sukuun | | ْ | mud | مـدْ |
| Chadda | | ّ | muddy | مـدِّ |