

Arabic Vowels and Pronunciation Quick Reference

One-Page Reference — All Harakat + Long Vowels + Examples

Arabic vowels work differently from English. Short vowels are shown by small marks (harakat) placed above or below letters. Long vowels are shown by three letters that extend the vowel sound. In everyday Arabic text, short vowel marks are omitted — but they appear in the Quran, children's books, and learning materials.

SECTION 1: THE THREE SHORT VOWELS (Harakat)

Name	Arabic Name	Mark	Position	Sound	Example Letter	Example Word	Meaning
Fatha	فَتْحَة	-	ABOVE the letter	Short "a" — like "cat" or "bat"	بَ = "ba"	كَتَبَ (kataba)	He wrote
Kasra	كَسْرَة	-	BELOW the letter	Short "i" — like "sit" or "bit"	بِ = "bi"	كِتَابَ (kitaab)	Book
Damma	ضَمَّة	-	ABOVE the letter	Short "u" — like "put" or "bull"	بُ = "bu"	كُتُبَ (kutub)	Books

SECTION 2: SUKOON AND SHADDA

Name	Arabic Name	Mark	What It Means	Example	Pronunciation
Sukoon	سُكُون	-	No vowel — the consonant is stopped	يَنْتِ	bayt (not "bayit")

Shadda	شَدَّة	-	The consonant is doubled	مَدَّ	madd (not "mad")
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- Shadda + Harakat together:
- بَّ (Shadda + Fatha) = "bba"
 - بِّ (Shadda + Kasra) = "bbi"
 - بُّ (Shadda + Damma) = "bbu"

SECTION 3: TANWIN (Indefinite Noun Endings)

What is Tanwin? Double harakat at the end of indefinite nouns — adds an "N" sound.

Name	Mark	Sound	Example	Pronunciation	Meaning
Tanwin Fath	-	"an"	كِتَابًا	kitaaban	a book (accusative)
Tanwin Kasr	-ِ	"in"	كِتَابٍ	kitaabin	a book (genitive)
Tanwin Damm	-ُ	"un"	كِتَابٌ	kitaabun	a book (nominative)

SECTION 4: THE THREE LONG VOWELS

Long vowels extend the short vowel sounds. They are represented by three Arabic letters that serve dual roles as consonants and vowels.

Letter	Name	Extends	Sound	Duration	Example	Meaning
ا	Alif	Fatha (-)	Long "aa"	Double the short "a"	كِتَاب (kitaab)	Book
و	Waw	Damma (-)	Long "uu"	Double the short "u"	نُور (noor)	Light
ي	Yaa	Kasra (-)	Long "ii"	Double the short "i"	قَرِيب (qareeb)	Near

SECTION 5: COMPLETE VOWEL COMPARISON TABLE

Type	Mark	Duration	Arabic	Transliteration	English Sound
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Short A	ـَ	Short	بَ	ba	"a" in bat
Long A	+ ا	Double	بَا	baa	"a" in father
Short I	ـِ	Short	بِ	bi	"i" in bit
Long I	+ ي	Double	بِي	bee	"ee" in see
Short U	ـُ	Short	بُ	bu	"u" in bull
Long U	+ و	Double	بُو	boo	"oo" in moon

SECTION 6: PRACTICAL READING EXAMPLES

Read these words — all fully vowelled:

Arabic	Harakat Used	Transliteration	Meaning
بَيْت	Fatha + Sukoon	bayt	house
كِتَاب	Kasra + Fatha + Long Alif	kitaab	book
قُرْآن	Damma + Sukoon	Qur'an	the Quran
رَحْمَة	Fatha + Sukoon + Fatha	rahma	mercy
مُسْلِم	Damma + Sukoon + Kasra	Muslim	Muslim
الْحَمْد	Sukoon + Fatha + Sukoon	al-hamd	the praise
سَلَام	Fatha + Fatha + Long Alif	salaam	peace
إِيمَان	Kasra + Long Yaa + Fatha	eemaan	faith

SECTION 7: ARABIC VOWEL KEYBOARD SHORTCUTS

Haraka	Mark	Windows Shortcut
Fatha	-َ	Shift + Q
Kasra	-ِ	Shift + A
Damma	-ُ	Shift + E
Sukoon	-ْ	Shift + X
Shadda	-ّ	Shift + ~
Tanwin Fath	-َٓ	Shift + W
Tanwin Kasr	-ِٓ	Shift + S
Tanwin Damm	-ُٓ	Shift + R