

SANSKRIT PRONUNCIATION GUIDELINE KEY

a á b c d d́ e g h i j k l m n ń ñ o p r s t t́ u ú v y

It is possible to pronounce Saṁskṛta, or Sanskrit, using only twenty-nine letters of the Roman script. The letters ‘f’, ‘q’, ‘qh’, ‘z’, etc., are required in Arabic, Persian, and various other languages, but not in Saṁskṛta.

‘da’ and ‘dha’, occurring in the middle of a word or at the end of a word, are pronounced ‘fa’ and ‘fha’, respectively. Like ‘ya’, they are not independent letters. In non-Saṁskṛta words, ‘fa’ and ‘fha’ may be written.

This key is a guide to the pronunciation of the Sanskrit words in this book, as adopted by Ananda Marga. In the case of those words of other languages (such as Bengali and Hindi) slight variations in the pronunciation will occur.

a = ‘a’ as in ‘mica’.

á = ‘a’ as in ‘father’.

i = ‘i’ as in ‘folio’.

ii = a somewhat prolonged *i*.

u = ‘u’ as in ‘lute’.

ú = a somewhat prolonged *u*.

r (alone or followed by a consonant) = *ri* as in Spanish *carido*.

rr = *rri* as in Spanish *corrida*.

lr = *l + ri*.

lrr = *l + rri*.

e = ‘e’ as in ‘cachet’.

ae = ‘ai’ as in ‘kaiser’.

o = ‘o’ as in ‘open’.

ao = ‘au’ in ‘sour’.

ń = a nasalisation of the preceding vowel, somewhat similar to ‘ng’ in ‘sung’.

h (following vowel, but not followed by a vowel) – an aspirated version of the vowel, or *ha* sound appended to the vowel. E.g., *vah* = either *va* with aspiration (expelling breath), or *vaha* sound.

kh, gh, ch, jh, th, dh, th, dh, ph = aspirated forms of the consonants (expelling breath).

uṅa = nasalised 'wa' ('a' being pronounced as in 'mica'). Combining form *uṅ* before *k, kh, g, gh* = 'n' pronounced naturally for that location.

iṅa = nasalized 'ya' ('a' in 'mica'). Combining form *iṅ* before *c, ch, j, jh* = 'n' pronounced naturally for that location.

í = cerebral 't' (tip of tongue touches centre of palate).

ḍ = cerebral 'd' (tip of tongue touches centre of palate).

ṇ = cerebral 'n' (tip of tongue touches centre of palate).

t = dental 't' (tip of tongue touches upper teeth).

d = dental 'd' (tip of tongue touches upper teeth).

y at beginning of a word = 'j' as in 'jump'. In middle of a word = 'y' is pronounced as in 'you'.

v at beginning of a word = is pronounced 'v' as in 'victory'. In middle of a word = 'w' as in 'awaken'.

sh = palatal 's' (tip of tongue touches back of palate), 'sh' as in 'shall' or 'ss' in 'issue'.

ś = cerebral 's' (tip of tongue touches centre of palate), 'sh' as in 'shun' or 'bush'.

kś = is either an aspirated version of 'k' (expelling the breath), or 'k' + 'sh'.

ṅ (preceded by a vowel other than *i* or *u*) = is nasalized.

jīṅa = 'gya' ('a' as in 'mica').

jīṅá = 'gya' ('a' as in 'father').