

The Hebrew Alphabet

Letter	Name	Transliteration	Pronunciation
א	aleph	ʾ	(silent)
ב	bet	b/v	b/v
ג	gimel	g	g
ד	dalet	d	d
ה	hey	h	h
ו	waw (vav)	w/v	w/v
ז	zayin	z	z
ח	het	h	ħ (<i>ch</i> as in <u>Bach</u>)
ט	tet	t	t
י	yod	y	y
כך	kaph	k/kh	k/kh
ל	lamed	l	l
מם	mem	m	m
נו	nun	n	n
ס	samek	s	s
ע	ʾayin	ʿ	(silent)
פה	peh	p/ph	p/ph
צץ	tsade	ts	(ts as in <u>watts</u>)
ק	qoph	q	q
ר	resh	r	r
שׁ	sin	s	s
שׂ	shin	sh	sh
ת	tav	t	t

These letters are all consonants, including the first letter, א (aleph). English speakers have a difficult time pronouncing it because it is a glottal stop, meaning that it is a closure deep in the back of the throat, unvoiced (the vocal cords do not vibrate). Five consonants have two different written forms: כך (kaph), מם (mem), נו (nun), פה (peh), צץ (tsade). The first letter listed in these pairings (remember to read right to left) is the letter written when it appears at the beginning or within a word (word initial or word medial position). When the letter is the final letter of a word, the second (left) form is written (word final position). The letters שׁ שׂ are typically written together as a pair when listed in alphabet form, but for simplicity's sake, that convention is not followed above. שׁ and שׂ are pronounced differently (sh and s), but either one can appear at any position in a word: initially, medially, or finally.