

BRIEF GUIDE TO THE PRONUNCIATION OF BENGALI CHARACTERS

BENGALI VOWELS						
Short	অ ক	ই কি	উ কু	ঋ কৃ	এ কে	ও কো
	a ka	i ki	u ku	rri krri	e ke	o ko
	Washington (~“a”)	pill	pull	dribble	pegging	pond
Long	আ কা	ঈ কী	ঊ কূ		ঐ কৈ	ঔ কৌ
	aa kaa	ii kii	uu kuu		ee kee	oo koo
	far	pizza	pollution		point	pole, pound
Extra	অ্যা ক্যা	্ ক্		ং কং	ঃ কঃ	ঁ কঁ
	a ka (kyaa)	senza vocale		n° kan°	hha kahh	^ ka^
	apple	black		sing	Judah had	ankle

BENGALI CONSONANTS							
Guttural - in the throat	ক	খ	গ	ঘ	ঙ	হ	ঃ
	ka	kha	ga	gha	n¹a	ha	hha
	keen	rockhead	got	slagheap	donkey	happy	Judah had
Palatal - on the palate	চ	ছ	জ	ঝ	ঞ	য	শ
	ca	cha	ja	jha	n²a	ya	sha
	match	matchhead	Jehovah, joy	hedgheg	enjoy	yes	dishes
Cerebral or Retroflexive - with the tongue bent back on the roof of the mouth	ট	ঠ	ড	ঢ	ণ	র	ষ
	ṭa	ṭha	ḍa	ḍha	ṇa	ra (rotolo)	ṣa
	alter	malthouse	holder	goldhammer	filename	red	rashly
			ড়	ঢ়		য়	
		ra	rha		ya	Jehovah, joy	
		millrun	myrrh lump				
Dentale - on the teeth	ত	থ	দ	ধ	ন	ল	স / স+ত/প
	ta	tha	da	dha	na	la	sa / s+t/p
	panting	anthill	beds	bedheads	bending	led	washroom / stop
Labial - on the lips	প	ফ	ব	ভ	ম	(ব) / ব	ঃ
	pa	pha	ba	bha	ma	(va) / ba	hha
	peace	uphold	bob	nibholder	mop	(advise) bob	Judah had
Other					ং	ঁ	ওয়া
					n°	n^	oyaa (waa)
					sing	ankle	qualms, (web)

Note in particular: -

The vowels can be short or long

- “a” is pronounced with the short “a” sound (~“ă”) in “W**a**shington” (and a short “o” in “**o**ff”)
- “aa” has a long sound like “aa” in “**A**ardvaak” (and “a” in “**f**ar”)
- “e” sounds like “e” in “**J**ehovah” and “**p**egging”
- “ee” has a long sound modified into a diphthong like “oi” in “**p**oint”
- “oo” has a long sound modified into a diphthong either like “**ou**” in “**p**ound” and “**ow**” in “**p**ower” or like “**oa**” in “**o**ak”

The consonants can be either held or huffed (breathed)

- “g” sounds like “g” in “**g**ood” (not like “g” in “**g**eneral”)
- “c” sounds like “c” in “**c**ello” and “**tch**” in “**m**atch” (not like in “**c**ellar” or in “**c**ook”)
- “j” and “y” both have the sound of “j” as in “**j**azz” or in “**J**ehovah”
- “-oyaa” (a compound syllable in the absence of a “w” character in Bengali) sounds like “**ua**” in “**q**ualms” or “**wa**” in “**H**ow are you?”
- The three different sibilants (sh, s, s) all sound almost like “j” in “**d**ishes”, but they do differ slightly
- “s” before “t”, “th”, “p”, or “ph” sounds like “s” in “**s**tare”
- “h” must always be heard, breathed with some force as in “**h**appy” and “**h**i-fi”

Lei è a : [\[Website - Home\]](#) > [\[Read or Speak a Language\]](#) > [\[Speak a Language\]](#) > [\[Speak Bengali\]](#) > [\[Teaching Truth in Bengali – through English\]](#) > [\[Bengali Sound Grid - English\]](#)
[\[Contact Us!\]](#)

© 2017 Jaspell (Jasper Burford and Ellen Burford) Date of last edit: 2 April 2017