

BENGALI ALPHABET AND PRONUNCIATION**CLASSIFICATION OF BENGALI SOUNDS**

C O N S O N A N T S						V O W E L S		
Family	Hard	Soft	Soft	Soft	Hard	Short	Long	Diphthong
	Held Huffed	Held Huffed	Nasal	Semi-vowel	Spirant			
Guttural	ka kha	ga gha	n ¹ a	ha	hha	a	aa	e, ei ee, oy
	ক খ	গ ঘ	ঙ	হ	ঃ	অ	আ	এ ঐ
Palatal	ca cha	ja jha	n ² a	ya	sha	i	ii	
	চ ছ	জ ঝ	ঞ	য়	শ	ই	ঈ	
Cerebral	ta tha	da dha	na	ra	sa	rri		
	ট ঠ	ড ঢ	ণ	র	ষ	ঋ		
		ra rha		ya				
		ড় ঢ়		য				
Dental	ta tha	da dha	na	la	sa			
	ত থ	দ ধ	ন	ল	স			
Labial	pa pha	ba bha	ma	ba	hha	u	uu	o oo, au
	প ফ	ব ভ	ম	ব	ঃ	উ	ঊ	ও ঔ
Other			n ^o	n [^]				
			ং	ঁ				

You can see this table and hear audio files of the characters at www.jaspell.uk/readbeng.htm.

You can progress in mastering the sounds at www.jaspell.uk/bengalicourse2007/wb070pronunciation_practice_unicode.htm.

The table below appears with online audio files at www.jaspell.uk/learnbengalionline.htm

PRONUNCIATION OF VOWELS

INDEPENDENT OR INITIAL FORM	ROMANIZED	ENGLISH SOUND	AS IN THE ENGLISH WORD	AFTER A CONSONANT	ROMANIZED
				(e.g. after প্)	(e.g. after “p`”)
্	`	(no vowel)	tip_	প্	p`
অ	a	“a” or, “o”	(inherent “a”) <i>wander</i> (/ off)	প	pa (~“pâ”)
inherent vowel “a” (~ “â”)		very short			
আ	aa	long “a”	<i>Aardvaak, far</i>	পা	paa
অ্যা	<u>a</u> [yaa]	flat “a”	<i>apple</i>	প্যা	pa [pyaa]
ই	i	short “i”	<i>pill</i>	পি	pi
ঈ	ii	long “i” long “ee”	<i>pizza</i> (/ <i>peel</i>)	পী	pii
উ	u	short “u”	<i>pull</i>	পু	pu
ঊ	uu	long “u” long “oo”	<i>pollution</i> (/ <i>pool</i>)	পূ	puu
ঋ	rri	short “ri”	<i>dribble</i>	প্ৰ	prri

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এ	e	short “e”	pegging	পে	pe
ঐ	ee	long “oi” (diphthong for long “ee”)	point	পৈ	pee (~“poi”)
ও	o	medium “o”	pond	পো	po
ঔ	oo	long “o”, “ou”, “ow”	pound, power or oak, poke	পৌ	poo (~“pou”) or (~“pau/ pow”)
ং	n ^o	nasal “ng” (but no “g”)	singer	পং	pan ^o (~“pāng”)
ঃ	hh	abrupt “hh”	Judah had	পঃ	pahh (~“pāhh”)
ঁ	^	faint nasal “n” as in French	sing-along (/ ton son est bon)	পঁ	p^a (~“pāng”)

PRONUNCIATION OF CONSONANTS

Note that the sounds whose Romanization contains “-h” must be breathed. So, “খ” “kha” is like “ক” “ka” but breathed. (There is nothing similar in English.)

PHYSICAL CLASS		INDEPENDENT OR INITIAL	ROMANIZED SPELLING	ENGLISH SOUND	AS IN THE ENGLISH WORD
Guttural	in the throat	ক	k	k	<i>keen</i>
		খ	kh	kh	<i>rockhead</i>
		গ	g	g	<i>got</i>
		ঘ	gh	gh	<i>slagheap</i>
		ঙ	n ¹	n	<i>donkey</i>
Palatal	on the palate	চ	c	c, tch	<i>cello, match</i>
		ছ	ch	chh	<i>matchhead</i>
		জ	j	j	<i>Jehovah, joy</i>
		ঝ	jh	dgeh	<i>hedgehog</i>
		ঞ	n ²	n	<i>enjoy, pinch</i>

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Cerebral	on the roof of the mouth	ঢ়	ṭ	ṭ	alter
		ত	th	th	malthouse
		ড	ḍ	ḍ	holder
		ড়	dh	dh	goldhammer
		ড়	ṛ	ṛ, rṛ	millrun, barrel
		ঢ়	rh	rrh	myrrh lump
		ণ	ṇ	ṇ	filename
Dental	on the teeth	ত	t	t	panting
		থ	th	th	anthill
		দ	d	d	beds
		ধ	dh	dh	bedheads
		ন	n	n	bending
Labial	on the lips	প	p	p	peace
		ফ	ph	ph	uphold
		ব ব্	b, (/ v)	b, (or v)	bob, (or advise)
		ওয়া	oyaa (or waa) (spe cial sylla ble)	oua, (or wa)	qualms, (or How are you?)
		ভ	bh	bh	nibholder
		ম	m	m	mop
Forward	semi- vowels	য	y	j	Jehovah, joy
		য়	y	y	yes
		র	r	r	red

		ল্	l	l	<i>led</i>
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Sibilant	hissing	শ, ষ	sh	sh	dishes
		ষ	ʃ	sh	rashly
		স, স	s	sh, s	washroom, ensure
			s before t, th, p, ph	s	stop
Semi-guttural	semi-vowel	হ	h	h	happy