

Biblical Hebrew Grammar for Beginners

Hebrew Vowels

Hebrew vowels are listed in the chart below with their names, pronunciation, in parenthesis the way we transliterate them, and the characters that represent them with *kof* ק for placement. As the transliterations demonstrate, Modern Hebrew has a five-vowel system, which is significantly reduced compared to the inventory of the ancient language.

Vowels

name	sound and transliteration	character
<i>kamáts</i>	like the "a" in "argue" (a)	קֶ
<i>patách</i>	like the "a" in "argue" (a)	קָ
<i>chataf patách</i>	like the "a" in "argue" (a)	קֶּ
<i>tseré</i>	like the "e" in "led" (e)	קֵ
<i>segól</i>	like the "e" in "led" (e)	קִ
<i>chataf segól</i>	like the "e" in "led" (e)	קִּ
<i>chirík</i>	like the "ea" in "ear" (i)	קִי , קִי
<i>cholám</i>	like the "o" in "bold" (o)	קֹ , קֹ
<i>kamats katán</i>	like the "o" in "bold" (o)	קֶ
<i>chataf kamáts</i>	like the "o" in "bold" (o)	קֶּ
<i>shurúk</i>	like the "oo" in "pool" (u)	קֹו
<i>kubúts</i>	like the "oo" in "pool" (u)	קֹּ
<i>schwá</i>	either no vowel, or a very short "e" like the last vowel in "sofa" (none)	קֶ

Kamats and *kamats katan* are represented by the same diacritic. Some knowledge of Hebrew grammar is required for distinguishing between the two as they appear in the text.

The following online exercises are recommended for practice:

[Hebrew Vowels](#)

[Reading Practice I](#)

[Reading Practice II](#)

[Reading Practice III](#)

[Reading Practice IV](#)