

# Rules for Pronunciation

This page describes the rules of pronunciation, as used by the Amsterdam Portuguese community. See references below.

Some browsers do not show the punctuation correctly, therefore you can find all, including the hyperlinks to the recordings in this pdf file.

## Rules for pronunciation of letters.

For ease of reading, Hebrew words are transliterated in this site, based on <http://www.jewfaq.org/alephbet.htm>.

Recording of the letters (JBS)

Recording of two verses which contain all letters: שמות טז-טז and דברים ד-לד

Letter	Pronunciation	Transliteration	Pronunciation Example
א	Silent	‘	
ב	B	V	בְּרוּב berob
בּ	B	B	
ג	Ch	G	חַח chach
גּ	G	G	like in gram: גַּם gam,
ד	D	D	
ה	H	H	
ו	V	V	
ז	Z	Z	
ח	Ch	Ch	
ט	T	T	
י	Y	Y	
כ	Kh	Ch	
כּ	K	K	
ל	L	L	
מ	M	M	
נ	N	N	
ס	S	S	
ע	Ng	‘	like in wrong עֲלֵינוּ ngalenu

# Rules for Pronunciation

פ	F	F	
פ	P	P	
צ	Tz	Tz	
ק	K	K	
ר	R	R	
שׁ	Sh	Sh	
שׂ	S	S	
ת, תּ	T	T	

# Rules for Pronunciation

## Rules for Pronunciation of vowels.

[Recording](#) of the examples (JBS)

אָ אַ אֵ	A	End of word חָא = xah	Like in apple: Addon אָדוֹן
וּ	O		Like in hope לְאַהֲלֵיכֶם
יִ	I		Like in “it”: Shinatata שְׁנַתָּה
יְ	I		Like in “it”: baruch Shim בְּרוּךְ שִׁים
יֵ	I		Like in “it”: bibne בִּבְנֵי
וּ וִ	U		Like in brute, ubjom וּבְיֹם
וּ וִ	O		Like in hope
חָ	Uh/silent		Like in hurt, buchor בְּחוֹר, or silent, see sheva rules below

## Rules for Pronunciation of special vowels.

[Recording](#) of the examples (JBS)

Vowels	Pronunciation	Example
אָ	a	קַדָּשִׁים Kadashim, אָהֲלֵיחֶם aholhem
וּ	o	(open unaccented syllable) כֶּקַרְבְּכֶם kekarobkhem
אָה	aha	Halelujaha הַלְלוּיָהּ (mapik)
אָה	aha	Nochaha נֹחָה (mapik)
אָה	ehe	Purkanehe פִּרְקָנָה (mapik)
אָ	a	כָּמוֹ עֶשֶׂב Kamo ngeseb
וּ	Sheva is silent	וּבְיֹם ubjom
יֵ	i	וְיָשֵׁם viyaseem

# Rules for Pronunciation

וּ	u	בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל buyisrael (exception on above rule)
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In 1956, Mr Jacq. Pais, the teacher of our community, made a booklet to teach the children Hebrew reading. The first 8 pages have Hebrew words transliterated to Dutch. Below I bring some examples. It shows how to pronounce the letters and the vowels for Dutch speakers.

Although the booklet's name is "שפה ברורה", it was referred to as "koe doet boe boe", the last line of the first page, see last example below.

Recording of the examples (JBS)

Dutch	transliterated
je jas zit goed	יֵס זֵת גּוּט
de jacht hond zit hier	דֵּ יַחַת הֶנֶט זֵת הִיר
dat gewicht is goed	דַּת גְּנֹכַת אִס זֵת
als nicht komt ga ik	אַלֶּס נִגַּת קֹמַת גַּ אֶק
koe doet boe boe	קֹ דַּת בֹּ בֹּ

Sheva rules.

A short summary of the shuva rules can be found here. For a more complete list see e.g. <http://www.torahresource.com/Hebrew%20MP3/Sheva%20rules.pdf>

**Sheva Na** rules, as formulated by R' Eliyahu Bachur (16th cent.). It

- 1) occurs under the first letter of a word;
- 2) is the second of two Shevas in the middle of a word;
- 3) occurs after a long unaccented vowel;
- 4) occurs under a letter which has a Dagesh;
- 5) occurs between identical letters.

All other Shuvas are Nach ('silent'). The letters begad kefat normally receive a Dagesh at the beginning of a word or in the middle of a word after a Shuva Nach