

Writing Darija in Latin script

We introduce here a new system to write Darija with Latin script.

Darija is written with Arabic script and with Latin script, the choice is up to the writer.

For writing with Latin script we propose a new system, which can be explained with a few simple rules.

1. All the characters that are used can be written with a normal keyboard (computer, phone, tablet).
2. Each sound of Darija is written with a unique symbol.
3. Each symbol consists of only one character (letter, number, other character).
4. Only 4 vowels are used: a, u, i, e
5. If a consonant is pronounced double (with shadda) then it is also written double.
6. To separate prefixes and suffixes we use the hyphen.
7. Capital letters are only used as a symbol for certain sounds.
8. These rules do not apply to loanwords from other languages.

1 All the characters that are used can be written with a normal keyboard (computer, phone, tablet).

a	bab	باب
b	bab	باب
B	TeBla	طبلّة
d	dar	دار
D	DaR	ضار
e	kteb	كتب
f	fas	فاس
g	gal	غال
G	Gir	غير
h	hada	هذا
H	Hanut	حانوت
i	kbir	كبير
j	jdid	جديد
k	kas	كاس
l	lil	ليل
L	buLa	بولة
m	mus	موس
n	nas	ناس
q	qanun	قانون
r	ri\$	ريش
R	RaS	راس
s	sif	سيف
S	Sif	صيف
t	tub	توب

T	TiR	طير
u	mus	موس
w	walu	والو
x	xiR	خير
y	yekkeb	يكتب
z	zwin	زوين
Z	Zwaq	زواق
\$	\$uf	شوف
3	3eyn	عين
'	Ra'is	رئيس

In order to conform to what is customary in Morocco, it is possible to use some extra numbers instead of the characters proposed here.

2	Ra2is	رئيس
3	3eyn	عين
5	5iR	خير
7	7anut	حانوت
9	9anun	قانون

2 Each sound of Darija is written with a unique symbol.

Each sound really means each sound. So a separate sign for the dal and for the Dad, for the sin and for the Sad.

We use capital letters to make these distinctions.

sif	سيف
Sif	صيف
dar	دار
Dar	ضار

3 Each symbol consists of only one character (letter, number, other character).

So not sh, ch, kh etc.

If we would use compound symbols, it would be impossible to make a consistent unambiguous transcription with a normal keyboard.

\$	ش
x	خ
j	ج

4 Only 4 vowels are used: a, u, i, e

bab	باب
\$uf	شوف
sif	سيف
kteb	كتب

5 If a consonant is pronounced double (with shadda) then it is also written double

kebber	كَبَّر
sejjel	سَجَّل

6 To separate prefixes and suffixes we use the hyphen.

l-bab	الباب
\$af-ni	شافني
f-le-blad	فالبلاد

The symbol ^ is used to express the rounding of the lips while pronouncing a consonant
k^bar, S^GaR (صغار، كبار)

7 Capital letters are only used as a symbol for certain sounds.

And therefore they are NOT written at the beginning of a sentence or for proper names.

8 These rules do not apply to loanwords from other languages.

Comment

When applying these rules, it will also be clear to learners of Darija what is meant. Most learners of Darija are members of the Moroccan community abroad. In this way, they can also gain access to sources that are important to them in order to build or maintain a bond with Morocco.

Here is an example text written according to the system and rules described above:

I-Hejjam

waHed I-Hejjam kan ka-yHessen l-waHed R-Rajel be-l-mus.

u kanet waHed l-qeTTa ka-tGewweT bezzaf.

maw maw

u naD I-Hejjam u xerrej l-qeTTa men l-Hanut.

walakin Rej3at l-qeTTa meRRa taniya.

u xerrej-ha l-Hejjam meRRa x^Ra.

u Rej3at tani.

u \$af l-Hejjam bezzaf u xemmem bezzaf u l-qeTTa kanet ka-tGewweT.

u l-Hejjam qTe3 \$wiya men le-wden dyal R-Rajel lli kan ka-yHessen l-u u 3Ta-ha le-l-qeTTa.

u R-Rajel bqa ka-yGewweT bezzaf 'ai ai'.

qal l-u l-Hejjam: a\$ 3end-ek? wa\$ fqedti 3eql-ek?

sekketna l-qeTTa u bditi nta ka-tGewweT.