

Kurdish

<i>Roman (Hawar)</i>	<i>Cyrillic</i>	<i>Arabic</i>
Vowels		
A a	A a	ا / ئا *
E e	Ә ә	ه / نه *
Ê ê	E e	ئى / ئى *
I i	Ь ь	ِ / ِ *
Î î	И и	ئى [vowel] / ئى *
O o	O o	و / ئو *
U u	Ö ö	ئو [vowel] / و
Û û	У у	ئوو / وو *
'E (E') 'e (e')	Ә' ә'	عه
Consonants		
B b	Б б	ب
C c	Щ щ	ج
Ç ç	Ч ч	چ
Ç' ç'	Ч' ч'	چ
D d	Д д	د
[D] [d]		ض
'E (E') 'e (e')	Ә' ә'	عه
F f	Ф ф	ف
G g	Г г	گ
H h	Һ һ	ه
Ĥ (H') ĥ (h')	Һ' һ'	ح
J j	Ж ж	ژ
K k	К к	ك
K' k'	К' к'	ك
L l	Л л	ل
Ł ł	Ľ ľ	ل
M m	М м	م
N n	Н н	ن

* Initial vowels begin with a *kursî hamza* (î).

<i>Roman (Hawar)</i>		<i>Cyrillic</i>		<i>Arabic</i>
P	p	П	п	پ
P'	p'	П'	п'	پ
Q	q	Q	q	ق
R	r	P	p	ر
R̄	r̄	P'	p'	ر
S	s	С	с	س
Ş	ş	Ш	ш	ش
Ş̇	ş̇			ص
T	t	Т	т	ت
T'	t'	Т'	т'	ت
Ṭ	ṭ			ط
V	v	В	в	ف
W	w	W	w	و [consonant]
X	x	Х	х	خ
Ẃ	ẃ	Г'	г'	ع
Y	y	Й	й	ي [consonant]
Z	z	З	з	ز
-	'	-	'	ع

Notes

1. In Sorani, the conjunction “and” (و) should be rendered *u* if the preceding word ends in a consonant, and *w* following a vowel. In Kurmanji, it is spelled *û* in Latin orthography and should be romanized that way as well.

2. In the Arabic orthography for Kurdish, all vowels are written out, with the exception of *i* (short i), which is expressed by a *kasrah* under the preceding consonant, although that *kasrah* is rarely written. At the beginning of a word, the *i* is preceded by a *kursî hamza* (see note 3).

kirin (“to do”)	кърън	کرن
k'îrîn (“to buy”)	к'ър'ин	کړین
int'în (“to sigh”)	ьнт'ин	ئنتین

3. In the Arabic orthography for Kurdish, when a vowel comes at the beginning of a word, or when a vowel directly follows another vowel, a *kursî hamza* precedes it.

agir (“fire”)	агър	ئاگر
oẁir (“luck”)	ог'ър	ئوغر
exte (“nag horse”)	эхтә	ئەختە

naêm (“I don’t come”)	наем	نائيم
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4. In the Arabic orthography for Kurdish, the four forms of the Arabic letter *hā'* (هههه) have been reinterpreted. Two forms (initial ه and medial ه) are the letter H, while two forms (final ه and independent ه) are the letter E. Final and independent H are both expressed by the initial form (ه). Hence, the full paradigm for H is: initial ه; medial ه; final ه; independent ه.

initial ه:

her (“each”)	hәр	ههر
hatin (“to come”)	hатын	هاتن
lehî (“flood”)	ләһи	لههه

medial ه:

bihîstin (“to hear”)	бьһистын	بههستن
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final ه:

cih (“place; bed”)	щьһ	ه>
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independent ه:

meh (“month”)	mәһ	مهه
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E (ه) behaves like the letters *alif* (ا), *wāw* (و), *dāl* (د), and *rā* (ر) in that it never joins to the following letter (i.e., it has no medial form). Consequently, the following letter must start over with the initial form (unless there is only one following letter, in which case it will be written in the independent form). As with other vowels, initial E (ه) is preceded by the *kursî hamza* (ئ), yielding initial هئ. Hence, the full paradigm for E is: initial هئ; [medial ه]; final ه; independent ه.

initial هئ:

enî (“forehead”)	әни	ئههه
esp (“horse” (Sorani))	әсп	ئههه

[medial : medial is replaced by final, as with alif, wāw, etc.]

final ه:

lehî (“flood”)	ләһи	لههه
ç'em (“river”)	ч'әм	چهه
ême (“we” (Sorani))	емә	ئههه
p'îne (“patch”)	п'инә	ههه

independent ه:

dest (“hand”)	дәст	دههه
wek (“like, as”)	wәк	وههه

5. The Arabic letter *yā'* (ي) has two equivalents in the roman orthography: it can be the vowel *î* and the consonant *y*. Likewise, the Arabic letter *wāw* (و) can be both the vowel *u* and the consonant *w*. If preceded by a consonant, *yā'* (ي) and *wāw* (و) are the vowels *î* and *u* respectively.

dîîf ("s/he saw" (Sorani))	[дити]	ديتي
bîbînim ("if I see it" (Sorani))	[бибиньм]	بيينم
Soranî ("Sorani")	Сорани	سۆراني
K'urd ("Kurd")	К'өрд	كورد
tu ("thou, you")	tö	تو

Likewise, *yā'* (ي) and *wāw* (و) are the consonants *y* and *w* respectively:

a) at the beginning of a word:

yarmetî ("help" (Sorani))	[йармәти]	يارمه تي
witin ("to say" (Sorani))	[wътън]	وتن
wutin ("to say" (Sorani))	[wöтън]	ووتن

b) if preceded by a vowel (including short i, which is not written):

şayan ("worthy" (Sorani))	[шайан]	شايان
naybînim ("I don't see it" (Sorani))	[найбиньм]	نايينم
aw ("water" (Sorani))	[aw]	ئاو
bedew ("beautiful")	бәдәw	به دهو
diwêre ("s/he dares")	дъwерә	دویره
biyanî ("foreign") [†]	бъйани	بياني
şiyān ("to be able")	шъйан	شيان

c) if preceded by a consonant and followed by a vowel:

birwa ("belief" (Sorani))	[бърwa]	بروا
xwarin ("to eat")	xwарьн	خوارن
dîtyān ("they saw" (Sorani))	[дитйан]	ديتيان
asyaw ("mill" (Sorani))	[асйaw]	ئاسياو

6. In the Cyrillic orthography for Kurdish, the distinction between aspirated stops (ç', k', p', t') and unaspirated stops (ç, k, p, t) is always written, and Soviet scholars also preserve this distinction in the roman orthography. Elsewhere it is generally ignored, and consequently this distinction does not exist in the Arabic orthography for Kurdish.

[†] Also biyanî (бийани, بياني).

7. Soviet scholars created the *e'* (Cyrillic *ə'*), which represents two different sounds. When the sound is [‘ayin] + e, as at the beginning of a word (in Arabic script written **ع**), a preferable spelling is *e'*, placing the apostrophe *before* the vowel. By analogy, one also finds *a'* (عأ), *ī'* (عی), *o'* (عۆ), *ū'* (عوو). The original *e'* (with the apostrophe *after* the vowel) is reserved for cases where the vowel [e] is followed by the [‘ayin], as in the word *me'r* (مهع), a dialectal variant of *mar* (“snake”). Since *e'* could be identified either as a vowel or as a consonant, it has been added to both categories in the Kurdish orthographic table.

Standard reference dictionaries for Kurdish include:

Kurmanji (northern dialects)

Michael L. Chyet. *Kurdish-English dictionary = Ferhenga Kurmancî-İnglîzî* (New Haven and London : Yale University Press, 2003).

Ferdîdon Çelebî and Danko Sipka. *Kurmanji Kurdish-English glossary* (Springfield, VA : Dunwoody, 2002).

Sorani (central dialects)

Shafiq Qazzaz. *The Sharezoor : Kurdish-English dictionary* (Erbil : Aras, 2000).