

PAKISTAN-STYLE READING PRIMER

Quranic Arabic Qaida

Learn to read Classical Arabic for Quran recitation using
zabar, zher, and pesh.



How to Use This Qaida

Purpose

This qaida teaches recognition and reading. It is not a substitute for oral correction from a teacher. Read every line aloud, slowly, and clearly.

Daily Method

- 1. Name the letters.
- 2. Read the vowel sound.
- 3. Join the letters without spelling them out.
- 4. Repeat the same line until it is smooth.
- 5. Memorize one short dua or ayah at a time.

Terms Used

Qaida term	Arabic grammar name	Sound
Zabar	Fathah	a
Zher	Kasrah	i
Pesh	Dammah	u
Jazm	Sukun	stop consonant
Tashdid	Shaddah	doubled consonant
Madd	Lengthening	held vowel

The Arabic Alphabet

Read from right to left. Point to each letter, say its name, then say its sound.

 alif long a carrier	 be b	 te t	 se th (tongue at the teeth)	 jeem j	 bari he deep h from the throat	 khe kh
 daal d	 zaal dh (tongue at the teeth)	 re r	 ze z	 seen s	 sheen sh	 suaad heavy s
 zuaad heavy d	 to'e heavy t	 zo'e heavy dh	 ain deep throat sound	 ghain gh	 fe f	 qaaf deep q from the back of the tongue
 kaaf k	 laam l	 meem m	 noon n	 choti he soft h	 wao w / oo	 ye y / ee

Dots Change the Letter

Many letters share the same body. The dots tell you which letter it is.

ب

One dot below

ت

Two dots above

ث

Three dots above

ح

No dot bowl

خ

Dot above bowl

ذ

Dot above curve

ز

Dot above re
shape

ش

Three dots above
seen

ظ

Dot above zo'e
body

غ

Dot above ain
shape

ف

Dot above fe

ق

Two dots above
qaaf

ن

Dot above noon

ي

Two dots below
ye

ب ت ث ح خ د ذ ر ز س ش ص ض ط ظ ع غ ف ق ن ي

Letter Shapes

A letter may look different at the start, middle, end, or by itself.

Letter	Name	Sound	Alone	End	Middle	Start
ا	alif	long a carrier	ا	ا	—	—
ب	be	b	ب	ب	ب	ب
ت	te	t	ت	ت	ت	ت
ث	se	th (tongue at the teeth)	ث	ث	ث	ث
ج	jeem	j	ج	ج	ج	ج
ح	bari he	deep h from the throat	ح	ح	ح	ح
خ	khe	kh	خ	خ	خ	خ
د	daal	d	د	د	—	—
ذ	zaal	dh (tongue at the teeth)	ذ	ذ	—	—
ر	re	r	ر	ر	—	—
ز	ze	z	ز	ز	—	—
س	seen	s	س	س	س	س
ش	sheen	sh	ش	ش	ش	ش
ص	suaad	heavy s	ص	ص	ص	ص
ض	zuaad	heavy d	ض	ض	ض	ض
ط	to'e	heavy t	ط	ط	ط	ط
ظ	zo'e	heavy dh	ظ	ظ	ظ	ظ

Letter	Name	Sound	Alone	End	Middle	Start
ع	ain	deep throat sound	ع	ع	ع	ع
غ	ghain	gh	غ	غ	غ	غ
ف	fe	f	ف	ف	ف	ف
ق	qaaf	deep q from the back of the tongue	ق	ق	ق	ق
ك	kaaf	k	ك	ك	ك	ك
ل	laam	l	ل	ل	ل	ل
م	meem	m	م	م	م	م
ن	noon	n	ن	ن	ن	ن
ه	choti he	soft h	ه	ه	ه	ه
و	wao	w / oo	و	و	—	—
ي	ye	y / ee	ي	ي	ي	ي

Joining Letters

Most Arabic letters connect to the next letter. Six letters connect only to the letter before them: اذ ز و.

ب + ا با	ب + ت بت	ك + ت + ب كتب	ق + ل + ب قلب
س + ل + م سلم	ر + ح + م رحم	ع + ل + م علم	ص + د + ق صدق
ف + ت + ح فتح	م + ل + ك ملك	ن + ص + ر نصر	غ + ف + ر غفر

Read Smoothly

بسم	حمد	رحم	ملك
نصر	علم	صدق	فتح
غفر	كبر	سجد	ذكر

Zabar, Zher, and Pesh

A short vowel is read immediately with the letter. Do not stretch it.

Zabar

Sound: short a

بَ	تَ
جَ	دَ
رَ	سَ
صَ	قَ
مَ	نَ

Zher

Sound: short i

بِ	تِ
جِ	دِ
رِ	سِ
صِ	قِ
مِ	نِ

Pesh

Sound: short u

بُ	تُ
جُ	دُ
رُ	سُ
صُ	قُ
مُ	نُ

Mixed Short Vowels

Now mix the three short vowels. Read by sound, not by guessing.

بَتِ	تُبَّ	جِدْ	خَرَ	رُزِ	سَمِ
قَلْ	فُتِ	نَصْ	عَبَدَ	حَمِدَ	كُتِبَ
رَبُّ	لَكَ	مِنْ	إِلَى	عَلَى	هُوَ
بِسْمِ	رَبِّ	مَلِكِ	أَحَدٌ	صَمَدٌ	عِلْمًا

Teacher check: The student should not add an extra vowel after a consonant. Read بَتِ as ba-ti, not ba-ta-i.

Two Zabar, Two Zher, Two Pesh

Tanween adds an **n** sound to the end of a word.

Qaida name	Sign	Sound	Practice
Two zabar	◌=	an	بَا خَيْرًا حَسَنَةً
Two zher	◌=	in	بِ يَوْمٍئِذٍ
Two pesh	◌=	un	بِ أَحَدٍ سَمِيعٍ عَلِيمٍ

أَحَدٌ

صَمَدٌ

غَفُورٌ

رَحِيمٌ

سَمِيعٌ

عَلِيمٌ

حَسَنَةً

رَحْمَةً

Jazm or Sukun

A letter with jazm/sukun has no vowel. Join it to the sound before it.

بَ + نْ = بَنْ

مِنْ

عَنْ

قَدْ

لَمْ

كُنْ

هَلْ

قُلْ

خُذْ

أَنْ

إِذْ

رَبْ

سَبْ

Build the Word

حَمْدُ

عَبْدُ

خَلْقِ

فَلَقِ

مُلْكِ

قَلْبِ

Tashdid or Shaddah

Tashdid doubles a letter. First hold it closed, then read its vowel.

رَبُّ = بَ + رَبَّ

رَبُّ

إِنَّ

مِنَّا

عَمَّ

ثُمَّ

كُلُّ

حَقُّ

مُحَمَّدٌ

اللَّهُ

الرَّحْمَنِ

الرَّحِيمِ

النَّاسِ

Do not skip the doubled sound in رَبُّ and إِنَّ.

Long Vowels and Madd

A short vowel becomes long when it meets its matching madd letter.

Pattern	Example	Read
Zabar before alif	بَا قَالَ	baa, qaala
Zher before yaa sakin	بِي قِيلَ	bee, qeela
Pesh before waaw sakin	بُو يَقُولُ	boo, yaqoolu

بَا

تَا

جَا

حَا

قَا

لَا

بِي

تِي

قِيلَ

فِي

بُو

نُورٌ

يَقُولُ

رَسُولٌ

Hamzah, Ta Marbutah, and Special Endings

Hamzah

ء أ إ و ئ

Hamzah is a real stop sound. Read it clearly.

Ta Marbutah

ة

In connected reading it sounds like **t**. When stopping, it is often read like **h**.

Alif Maqsurah

ى

It is read as long aa at the end of many words.

أَحَدٌ

إِلَهُ

مُؤْمِنٌ

شَيْءٌ

رَحْمَةً

حَسَنَةً

الدُّنْيَا

الْآخِرَى

Alif Lam, Sun Letters, Moon Letters

The word **ال** means "the". With moon letters, the laam is read. With sun letters, the laam blends into the next letter.

Moon Letters

ا	ب	ج	ح	خ
ع	غ	ف	ق	ك
م	ه	و	ي	

Read the laam: الْقَمَرُ الْكِتَابُ الْحَمْدُ

Sun Letters

ت	ث	د	ذ	ر
ز	س	ش	ص	ض
ط	ظ	ل	ن	

Blend the laam: الشَّمْسُ الرَّحْمَنُ
النَّاسُ

Beginner Tajwid Signs

These are first-recognition notes. Learn the full rules from a qualified teacher.

Heavy letters: خ ص ض غ ط ق ظ Keep them full and heavy.

Qalqalah letters: ق ط ب ج د If sakin, give a light echo.

Noon sakin and tanween: sometimes clear, sometimes nasal, sometimes hidden.

Meem sakin: watch for clear, nasal, and hidden readings.

Madd signs: stretch only as your teacher instructs.

قَدْ

أَحَدٌ

خَلَقَ

صِرَاطَ

ضَالِّينَ

غَفُورٌ

طَيِّبٌ

ظَلَمْنَا

Stopping and Starting

When you stop at an ayah or pause sign, the ending often changes in sound.

Ending	While continuing	When stopping
Short vowel	الرَّحِيمِ	Stop without the final short vowel.
Two pesh or two zher	أَحَدٌ عَلِيمٍ	Drop the tanween sound.
Two zabar	عِلْمًا	Often stop with long aa.
Ta marbutah	رَحْمَةً	Often stop with h sound.

Students should practice stopping only where a teacher permits stopping.

Sound Families

This page helps the teacher point out where sounds come from. It is a reminder, not a full makharij chart.

Throat

ء ه ع ح غ خ

Tongue

ق ك ج ش ي ض ل ن ر ت د ط ز
س ص ظ ذ ث

Lips

ف ب م و

Nasal sound

with ghunnah نْ مْ

Pay special attention to ح ع خ غ ق ص ض ط ظ because English and Urdu speakers often soften or replace them.

Revision Word Bank

One-syllable reading

بَ	بِ	بُ	تَ	تِ	تُ
ثَ	ثِ	ثُ	جَ	جِ	جُ

Two-letter drills

بَتَ	تَبَ	جَعَ	خَرَ	رَزَ	سَمَ
	نَصَ	قَرَ	فَتَ	لَمَ	

Sukun drills

مِنْ	عَنْ	قَدْ	لَمْ	كُنْ	هَلْ
	حُذْ	قُلْ	سَبْ	نَفْ	

Tashdid drills

رَبَّ	حَقَّقْ	مِنَّا	إِنَّ	كُلُّ	عَمَّ
		ثُمَّ	مُحَمَّدٌ		

Long vowel drills

بَا	بِي	بُو	تَا	تِي	تُو
	قَالَ	قِيلَ	يَقُولُ	نُورٌ	

Tanween drills

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عَلِيمٌ

سَمِيعٌ

خَيْرًا

بِ

بِ

بَا

حَسَنَةً

رَحْمَةً

Common Phrases

These familiar phrases help students move from drills to real reading. Verify local pronunciation with the teacher.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ

اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ

مُحَمَّدٌ رَّسُولُ اللَّهِ

رَبِّ زِدْنِي عِلْمًا

رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّا

Surah Al-Fatihah

Daily recitation, zabar/zher/pesh, shaddah, long vowels, and waqf.

Reference: 1:1-7.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ
الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
مَلِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ
إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ
اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ
صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا
الضَّالِّينَ

First pass: underline zabar, zher, and pesh.

Second pass: circle sukun and tashdid.

Third pass: read without stopping inside a word.

Surah Al-Ikhlās

Short surah practice with sukun, shaddah, and tanween. Reference: 112:1-4.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ
اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ
لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ
وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ

First pass: underline zabar, zher, and pesh.

Second pass: circle sukun and tashdid.

Third pass: read without stopping inside a word.

Surah Al-Falaq

Repeated min and sharri help fluency and joining. Reference: 113:1-5.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ الْفَلَقِ
مِنْ شَرِّ مَا خَلَقَ
وَمِنْ شَرِّ غَاسِقٍ إِذَا وَقَبَ
وَمِنْ شَرِّ النَّفَّاثَاتِ فِي الْعُقَدِ
وَمِنْ شَرِّ حَاسِدٍ إِذَا حَسَدَ

First pass: underline zabar, zher, and pesh.

Second pass: circle sukun and tashdid.

Third pass: read without stopping inside a word.

Surah An-Nas

Repeated endings and clear heavy/light contrast. Reference: 114:1-6.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ النَّاسِ
مَلِكِ النَّاسِ
إِلَهِ النَّاسِ
مِنْ شَرِّ الْوَسْوَاسِ الْخَنَّاسِ
الَّذِي يُوَسْوِسُ فِي صُدُورِ النَّاسِ
مِنَ الْجِنَّةِ وَالنَّاسِ

First pass: underline zabar, zher, and pesh.

Second pass: circle sukun and tashdid.

Third pass: read without stopping inside a word.

Common Quranic Duas 1

Rabbana Taqabbal Minna

A dua for acceptance.
Reference: 2:127.

رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ

Rabbana Atina

A balanced dua for dunya and akhirah. Reference: 2:201.

رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ

Rabbi Ishrah Li Sadri

A dua for clarity and ease.
Reference: 20:25-28.

رَبِّ اشْرَحْ لِي صَدْرِي وَيَسِّرْ لِي أَمْرِي
وَاحْلُلْ عُقْدَةً مِّن لِّسَانِي يَفْقَهُوا قَوْلِي

Rabbi Zidni Ilma

A short dua before study.
Reference: 20:114.

رَبِّ زِدْنِي عِلْمًا

Common Quranic Duas 2

Rabbana Hab Lana

A dua for family and
righteous leadership.
Reference: 25:74.

رَبَّنَا هَبْ لَنَا مِنْ أَزْوَاجِنَا وَذُرِّيَّتِنَا قُرَّةَ أَعْيُنٍ
وَأَجْعَلْنَا لِلْمُتَّقِينَ إِمَامًا

Rabbana La Tuzigh

A dua for steadfastness.
Reference: 3:8.

رَبَّنَا لَا تُزِغْ قُلُوبَنَا بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدَيْتَنَا وَهَبْ لَنَا مِنْ
لَدُنْكَ رَحْمَةً إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْوَهَّابُ

Rabbana Zalamna

A dua of repentance.
Reference: 7:23.

رَبَّنَا ظَلَمْنَا أَنْفُسَنَا وَإِنْ لَمْ تَغْفِرْ لَنَا وَتَرْحَمْنَا
لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ

Rabbi Ij'alni Muqim As-Salah

A dua for salah and
forgiveness. Reference:
14:40-41.

رَبِّ اجْعَلْنِي مُقِيمَ الصَّلَاةِ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِي رَبَّنَا
وَتَقَبَّلْ دُعَاءِ ﴿١٤٠﴾ رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لِي وَلِوَلَدِي
وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَوْمَ يَقُومُ الْحِسَابُ

Final Reading Check

A student is ready for guided mushaf reading when these checks are steady.

☐

Recognizes all letters by name and sound.

☐

Reads joined forms without hesitation.

☐

Reads zabar, zher, and pesh without stretching.

☐

Handles sukun and tashdid correctly.

☐

Distinguishes short vowels from madd letters.

☐

Notices sun letters and moon letters.

☐

Reads short surahs with teacher correction.

☐

Memorizes at least five Quranic duas.

Next step: begin daily reading from a mushaf with a teacher, one short section at a time.

Sources and Verification

The Quran excerpts in this teaching draft were extracted from a Unicode Uthmani text derived from the Tanzil Project. The source must remain linked when the text is used.

- Tanzil Project: <https://tanzil.net/download/>
- Nuqayah Quran text repository: <https://github.com/nuqayah/quran-text>

Before classroom printing, compare every excerpt with the mushaf used by the teacher and check the exact waqf signs.