



Finding literature in the Arabic script

In the **UvA Catalogue** two transliteration schemes are used for Arabic script:

- The International standard ISO 233 for works catalogued before 2011 (column 2).
- The ALA-LC transliteration for works catalogued after 2011 (column 3).
This is the transliteration of the *American Library Association - Library of Congress*, which is frequently used on the internet.

Since there are different transliterations for Arabic, it may be necessary to repeat your search using another transliteration.

Until 2011, the UvA Catalogue used a thesaurus for personal names, so that the standardised spelling of the name was shown in a catalogue record. For example: Maḥfūz, Naǧīb. If you use this name to search, you will get a more complete survey of works by this author in the catalogue, *i.e.* works published until ca 2011. Unfortunately, the author names of works added to the catalogue since then are no longer standardised.

CataloguePlus contains all records from the Catalogue (*i.e.* of works in the UvA collection), plus part of the content to which UvA has digital access. So both transliteration schemes occur here as well. Furthermore, CataloguePlus allows searching in the original script. To do this, just paste an Arabic search term into the search window. However, CataloguePlus does not yet offer many records in Arabic text.

Some hints on how to enter search terms in transliterated Arabic

Enter the letters without diacritics (any marks, dots etc.) and do this consistently, according to one scheme. There is no distinction between short and long vowels. Ignore the hamza at the beginning of a word when entering a search term, *e.g.* ilā not 'ilā, but do enter a ra. Ignore the ayn, *e.g.* said not sa'id.

Suffixes are part of the word, *e.g.* baytihā.

Prefixes are followed by a hyphen. This goes for the article, one-letter prepositions and the conjunctions wa and fa. For example, wa-al-waqt.

Please note: both computer systems read a hyphen as a space, so search terms may just as well be entered without any prefixes. Searching for waqt would also give the required result.

The article is not assimilated, so not aš-šams but al-šams.

Consonants with a tašdīd are doubled, *e.g.* Muḍakkirāt. The nisba becomes iyya.

Verb endings are always transliterated. Noun endings are not.

The endings of prepositions in the accusative are transliterated in the ALA-LC transliteration but not in the ISO transliteration. In the ISO transliteration Qabla becomes qabl and ba'da becomes bad.

A tā' marbūṭa is not transliterated unless after an Alif:- āt or in the status constructus –at. In the ALA-LC transliteration the tā' marbūṭa is represented as –ah.

See the tables below.

Transliteration of Arabic

Arabic letters	ISO Transliteration	Deviation in ALA-LC Transliteration
ء	'	
ب	b	
ت	t	
ث	ṭ	th
ج	ǧ	j
ح	ḥ	
خ	k	kh
د	d	
ذ	ḏ	dh
ر	r	
ز	z	
س	s	
ش	š	sh
ص	ṣ	
ض	ḍ	
ط	ṭ	
ظ	ẓ	
ع	‘	
غ	ǧ	gh
ف	f	
ق	q	
ك	k	
ل	l	
م	m	
ن	n	
ه	h	
و	w	
ي	y	
ة	See notes	ah

Vowels

Short ي	-a, -i, -u	
Long (و ا ي)	-ā, -ī, -ū	

Diphthongs

ي (as in تيب)	-ay	
و (as in عوض)	-aw	