

Sounding out Hebrew and Greek Words – HEBREW

	Name	Sounds Like
א	aleph	silent
ב	bet	b
בֿ	vet	v
ג	gimel	g
ד	dalet	d
ה	heh	h
ו	vav	v
וֿ	holem-vav	oh
ז	shureq	oo (u)
ז	zayin	z
ח	chet	ch
ט	tet	t
י	yod	y
כ	kaf	k
כּ	khaf	kh
ך	final khaf	kh
ל	lamed	l
מ	mem	m
ם	final mem	m
נ	nun	n
ן	final nun	n
ס	samech	s
ע	ayin	silent
פ	peh	p
פּ	feh	f
צ	tzade	tz
ץ	final tzade	tz
ק	qof	q
ר	resh	r
ש	sin	s
שׁ	shin	sh
ת	tav	t

Originally Hebrew had only the aleph-bet letters at left; there were no vowels, except sometimes vav and yod functioned as vowels, much as the letter Y does in English.

In the 5th to 10th centuries CE, scholars known as Masoretes added vowel markings (“pointing”) to help readers know how to pronounce the words. Most Hebrew Bibles today include the vowel pointing.

Here are some common Hebrew names. Notice the vowel points, but don’t worry about memorizing them. Concentrate on the aleph-bet.

אָדָם	<i>ah-DAHM</i>	Adam; man; humankind
אַבְרָהָם	<i>ahv-rah-HAHM</i>	Abraham
רָחֵל	<i>rah-CHEYL</i>	Rachel
בְּעֵר שֶׁבַע	<i>b’eer-SHEH-vah</i>	Beersheva
בַּיִת לֶחֶם	<i>bayt LECH-em</i>	Bethlehem
יִצְחָק	<i>yitz-CHAQ</i>	Isaac
יִשְׂרָאֵל	<i>yis-rah-AYL</i>	Israel
יוֹסֵף	<i>yo-SAYF</i>	Joseph
יְרוּשָׁלַם	<i>y’roo-sha-LAHM</i>	Jerusalem
נֹחַ	<i>NO-ach</i>	Noah
דָּנִיֵּאל	<i>dahn-ee-EHL</i>	Daniel
דָּוִד	<i>dah-VEED</i>	David
קַיִן	<i>QAY-in</i>	Cain
הָבֵל	<i>HEH-vel</i>	Abel
יַעֲקֹב	<i>y’ah-QOV</i>	Jacob
בְּנֵימִין	<i>bin-ya-MEEN</i>	Benjamin
כְּנָעַן	<i>k’NA-ahn</i>	Canaan
אֶסְתֵּר	<i>ESS-tayr</i>	Esther
יֵרֵמְיָהוּ	<i>yeer-mee-AH-hoo</i>	Jeremiah
יְהוָה	<i>a-do-NAI*</i>	Yahweh (God)

*IMPORTANT NOTE: יְהוָה is the "Tetragrammaton" yod-heh-vav-heh (YHWH); it is written in English Bibles as LORD or Yahweh or Jehovah, and pronounced in Hebrew as *Adonai* ("Lord") or *HaShem* ("The Name")

Capital / Small	Name	Pronunciation	Greek	Pronunciation	Meaning
A α	alpha	a as in <u>fa</u> ther	ἀρχή	ar-KAY	beginning
B β	beta	b	βαπτίζω	bap-TIDZ-o	baptize
Γ γ γγ	gamma	g as in <u>get</u> ng as in <u>Eng</u> lish	γραφή ἄγγελος	gra-PHAY AN-ge-los	writing, scripture angel, messenger
Δ δ	delta	d	ἰδοῦ	i-DOO	behold! look!
E ε	epsilon	e as in <u>get</u>	ἐγώ	e-GO	I
Z ζ	zeta	dz, as in <u>add</u> s	βαπτίζω	bap-TIDZ-o	baptize
H η	eta	ā, as in <u>gr</u> ay	ἀρχή	ar-KAY	beginning
Θ θ	theta	th, as in <u>th</u> ing	θεός	the-OS	God
I ι	iota	i, as in <u>hit</u>	ἰδοῦ	ih-DOO	behold! look!
K κ	kappa	k	καιρός	kai-ROS	time, season
Λ λ	lambda	l	ἄγγελος	AN-ge-los	angel, messenger
M μ	mu	m	μόνος	MOH-nos	only, alone
N ν	nu	n	νύν	nun	now
X ξ	xi	x, as in <u>ax</u> e	ἐξουσία	ex-oo-SEE-a	authority, power
O ο	omicron	o, as in <u>pot</u>	ὁδός	ho-DOS	way, road, journey
Π π	pi	p	ποταμός	pot-a-MOS	river
P ρ	rho	r	γραφή	gra-PHAY	writing, scripture
Σ σ ς	sigma final sigma	s s	σάββατον προφήτης	SAH-bah-ton pro-PHAY-tayce	Sabbath prophet
T τ	tau	t	μετάνοια	me-TA-noy-a	repentance
Υ υ	upsilon	ü, as in German gr <u>ün</u>	ὑποκριτής	hü-po-kri-TAYS	hypocrite
Φ φ	phi	ph, as in <u>ph</u> ilosophy	προφήτης	pro-PHAY-tays	prophet
X χ	chi	ch, as in <u>Bach</u>	Χριστός	chris-TOS	anointed one, Christ
Ψ ψ	psi	ps, as in <u>dip</u> stick	ὄψιμος	OPS-i-os	late
Ω ω	omega	o, as in <u>not</u> e	ἐγώ	e-GO	I

Diphthongs – vowel combinations

αι	ai, as in <u>ai</u> slе	ἔνεκεν δικαιοσύνης	HEN-eh-ken di-kai-oh-SU-nayce	for-the-sake-of righteousness
ει	ay, as in <u>hay</u>	ἡ βασιλεία	hay ba-si-LAY-ah	the kingdom
οι	oi, as in <u>oi</u> l	μακάριοι	ma-KA-ree-oy	blessed, fortunate, well off
αυ	ow, as in <u>cow</u>	αὐτοὶ	ow-TOI	they
ευ	eu, as in <u>feud</u>	οἱ πτωχοὶ τῷ πνεύματι	hoi pto-CHOI toe PNEU-ma-ti	the poor in spirit
ου	oo, as in <u>sou</u> p	ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν	hay ba-si-LAY-ah tone oo-ra-NOHN	the kingdom of the heavens
υι	we, as in <u>que</u> en	υἱοὶ θεοῦ	hwee-OI the-OO	sons of God

Try These – Sound out the words

Hebrew

אֶסְתֵּר		
שָׂרָה		
אָדָם		
מֶלֶךְ-צֶדֶק		
בֵּית לֶחֶם		
אֲבֵרָהֶם		
רָחֵל		
שָׁלוֹם		
יוֹסֵף		
יַעֲקֹב		
יוֹנָה		
דָּוִד		
שָׂאוּל		
יִשְׂרָאֵל		

Greek

Μελχισεδεκ		
Χριστός		
Σολομών		
βαπτίζω		
ῥαββί		
Ἰσαάκ		
Ἰακώβ		
Ἰωσήφ		
Δαυίδ		
Ῥούθ		
Βαβυλών		
Ναζαρέτ		
Γαλιλαία		
Ἰσραήλ		