

# Latinized Kabardian Alphabet

Proposed by Amjad Jaimoukha

The following are Latinized representations of official and literary Kabardian-Cherkess alphabet. Please note that the Kabardians and Cherkess use the same official and literary language. There are only a few lexical differences. All examples are taken from *Kabardian-English Dictionary* by Amjad Jaimoukha, Amman: Sanjalay Press, 1997.

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Latinized alphabet	English equivalent	Kabardian examples	Cyrillic equivalent
A a	dad, mad, bad	<u>a</u> de: there; father; <u>d</u> ame: shoulder, wing; <i>Mira?</i> : Is it this?	А а
B b	B b	<u>b</u> alije: radish; <u>n</u> obe: today; <i>birib</i> : pomposity	Б б
Ch ch	chest, chair	<u>ch</u> in: whirligig; <i>pichin: to tear off; <i>helech: bad, spoilt</i></i>	Ч ч
Ch' ch'	ch followed by glottal stop	<u>ch'e</u> : tail, end; <i>xech'in</i> : to emerge (from some mass); <i>f'ech'</i> : except	КІ кІ
D d	D d	<u>d</u> ene: where; <i>dade</i> : grandpa; <i>jed</i> : hen	Д д
Dz dz	adze	<u>dze</u> : tooth; army; <i>yedzin</i> : to hurl; <i>gwedz</i> : wheat	Дз дз
E e (initial only in loan words)	<i>schwa</i> ; heaven	<i>eksponat</i> : exhibit; <i>lhepq</i> : nation; race; breed; <i>nape</i> : face	Э э
ei (never in initial or final position)	day (short and undiphthongized)	<i>zeik'we</i> : campaign, outing	Е е

ey (never in initial position)	day (diphthongized)	<i>f'ey</i> : dirty	Ей ей
F f	F f	<i>fe</i> : skin; <i>qefen</i> : to dance; <i>nef</i> : blind	Ф ф
F' f'	<b>f</b> followed by glottal stop	<i>f'i</i> : of good quality; <i>zef'ech'</i> : initiative; <i>l'if'</i> : good man	ФI фI
G g	Spanish/Dutch <b>g</b> , e.g. lago	<i>gin</i> : gunpowder; <i>ghwegin</i> : to weep; <i>zhig</i> : tree	Г г
Gh gh	Parisian <b>r</b>	<i>ghasch'e</i> : life; <i>ghegha</i> : flower; <i>ghedirgh</i> : clang	Гъ гъ
Ghw ghw	<b>gh + w</b>	<i>ghwegw</i> : way, road; <i>mighwe</i> : misfortune; <i>ghwneghw</i> : neighbour	Гъу гъу
Gw gw	<b>Gwent</b>	<i>gw</i> : heart; <i>gwegwen</i> : large metal pitcher; <i>degw</i> : deaf	Гу гу
H h	Arabic <b>ح</b>	<i>he</i> : dog; <i>pihen</i> : to weap; <i>q'wh</i> : ship	Хъ хъ
I i (only initial in interjections)	<b>bin, din, sin</b>	<i>i'i</i> : no; <i>fiz</i> : woman; <i>qamishi</i> : whip	Ы ы
iy (never initial)	see	<i>txilhiybl</i> : seven books; <i>siy</i> : my	И и
J j	J j	<i>jegwn</i> : to play; <i>yejap'e</i> : school; <i>dij</i> : bitter	Дж дж
K k	K k	there are no native words in literary Kabardian that have this sound; the equivalent is <i>ch</i> ; used only in dialects and loan words, e.g. <i>kasse</i> : cash-desk; <i>stekan</i> : cup; <i>rak</i> : cancer	К к
Kw kw	<b>could</b>	<i>kw</i> : middle, centre;	Ку ку

		<i>dekwn</i> : to cram; <i>xekw</i> : country	
K'w k'w	<b>kw</b> with glottal stop after <b>k</b>	<i>k'wen</i> : to go; <i>qek'wen</i> : to come; <i>yemik'w</i> : improper	КIу κIу
L l	L l	<i>li</i> : meat; <i>delen</i> : pie; <i>mil</i> : ice	Л л
L' l'	<b>lh</b> followed by glottal stop	<i>l'i</i> : man; <i>mil'en</i> : not to die; <i>pschil'</i> : slave	ЛI лI
Lh lh	Welsh <b>ll</b> , e.g. Llewellyn	<i>lhap'e</i> : expensive; <i>delhen</i> : to stroke; <i>gwlh</i> : bud	ЛЬ лЬ
M m	M m	<i>mode</i> : there; <i>qame</i> : dagger; <i>weram</i> : street	М м
N n	N n	<i>ne</i> : eye; <i>dene</i> : where; <i>sin</i> : statue, monument	Н н
O o (initial only in loan words, final in very few words)	<b>So</b> (not diphthongized)	<i>opit</i> : experiment, test; <i>sode</i> : I accept; <i>psq</i> : unharmed, intact; <i>lheposchhepo</i> : barrier, hurdle	О о
P p	P p	<i>pe</i> : nose; <i>nape</i> : face; <i>nip</i> : flag	П п
P' p'	<b>p</b> followed by glottal stop	<i>p'ere?</i> : really?; <i>p'ap'u</i> : milk (child's word); <i>'erip'</i> : domesticated, tame	ПI пI
Q q	Arabic <b>ق</b>	<i>qak'we</i> : come here; <i>adaqe</i> : cock; <i>qiq</i> : stammerer	КЪ кЪ
Q' q'	<b>q + x'</b>	<i>q'able</i> : grave; <i>f'eq'iu</i> : absolutely; <i>beq'</i> : cow-shed	КХЪ кХЪ
Qw qw	<b>q + w</b>	<i>qwelen</i> : speckled, spotted; <i>digwaqwe</i> : fork, bifurcation; <i>meqw</i> : hay	КЪу кЪу
Q'w q'w	<b>q' + w</b>	<i>q'we</i> : pig, swine; <i>ch'ag'wiyt'</i> : two cocking pieces; <i>ch'ag'w</i> : gun cocking	КХЪу кХЪу

		piece	
R r (initial only in loan words)	rat ('rolled')	<u>r</u> oman: novel; <u>m</u> ereim: Friday; <u>m</u> ir: this	P p
S s	S s	<u>s</u> imaje: sick, ill; <u>k</u> 'wesen: to elope; <u>t</u> 'is: sit down	C c
Sch sch	alveolo-palatal sh	<u>s</u> chen: to sell; <u>ps</u> chas <u>sch</u> e: girl; <u>w</u> esch: axe	Щ щ
Sch' sch'	<b>sch</b> followed by glottal stop	<u>sch</u> 'ale: boy, lad; <u>hes</u> ch'e: guest; <u>psch</u> 'ips <u>sch</u> ': sparkling	ЩИ щИ
Sh sh	shoot	<u>sh</u> ate: soured cream; <u>q</u> eshen: fiancée; <u>yem</u> izesh: indefatigable	Ш ш
T t	T t	<u>t</u> ane: calf; <u>sat</u> u: trade; <u>qat</u> : level, layer	T т
T' t'	<b>t</b> followed by glottal stop	<u>t</u> 'i: ram; <u>yat</u> 'e: mud; <u>wet</u> 'psit': damp (of weather)	ТИ тИ
Ts ts	cats, bits	<u>ts</u> i: hair; <u>bat</u> se: shaggy; <u>l</u> its: moss	Ц ц
Ts' ts'	<b>ts</b> followed by glottal stop	<u>ts</u> 'e: name; <u>mats</u> 'e: grasshopper; <u>k</u> 'wets': internal	ЦИ ци
U u (never initial)	moon	<u>pud</u> : cheap; <u>qaru</u> : strength	У у
V v	V v	<u>v</u> i: bull; <u>ghev</u> en: to boil; <u>bev</u> : abundant (of crops)	В в
W w	well	<u>w</u> ane: saddle; <u>qew</u> at: nutritious; <u>ps</u> insch' <u>ew</u> : quickly	У у
'W 'w	' + w	<u>'w</u> : mouth; <u>zhi</u> 'eda' <u>we</u> : obedient; <u>sch</u> 'i' <u>w</u> : top; button	Иу Иу
X x	Scottish/German ch, e.g. loch, ich	<u>x</u> ade: garden; <u>m</u> axe: weak; <u>ziqiyzix</u> : well-dressed	X x
X' x'	Spanish j, e.g. jarra Arabic ج	<u>x</u> 'arbiz: water-melon; <u>malhx</u> 'e: son-in-law;	Хъ хъ

		<i>tsirx'</i> : flimsy	
Xw xw	x + w	<i>xw</i> : millet; <i>qeschexwn</i> : to buy; <i>delhxw</i> : brother (of a woman)	Xy xy
X'w x'w	x' + w	<i>x'wmen</i> : to guard, protect; <i>Mix'wr</i> : seal; <i>zchex'w</i> : rude person	XЪу хЪу
Y y	yes	<i>yape</i> : first; <i>miyin</i> : not large; <i>bzchamiy</i> : pipe; <i>zurna</i>	— —
Z z	Z z	<i>zi</i> : one; <i>'eze</i> : skilful; <i>mez</i> : forest	З з
Zch zch	alveolo-palatal <b>zh</b>	<i>zche</i> : mouth; <i>mazche</i> : comb; <i>leghwpezch</i> : leader of herdsmen	ЖЪ жЪ
Zh zh	genre, erasure	<i>zhem</i> : cow; <i>qwazhe</i> : village; <i>lhemizh</i> : bridge	Ж ж
' '	glottal stop	<i>'ene</i> : three-legged table; <i>Q'i'e!</i> : Please!; <i>We'!</i> : Oh!	I I

**NOTE:** In some cases where confusion may arise when reading **sh**, **sch**, etc, either as one or two letters, a hyphen could be inserted in the latter case, thus, **sh** vs. **s-h** and **sch** vs. **s-ch**. There are precedents in European languages. In Catalan, for example, a period is used to distinguish between two consecutive **ls** (**l.l**) and the combined letter **ll**, while in Scotland a hyphen is sometimes found in words like 'Ross-shire'.

### Official Kabardian alphabet<sup>1</sup>

А	Ә*	Б	В	Г	Гу	Гъ	Гъу	Д	Дж
Дз	Е	Ё	Ж	Жъ	З	И	Й	К	Ку
КІ	КІу	Къ	Къу	Кхъ	Кхъу	Л	Лъ	ЛІ	М
Н	О	П	ПІ	Р	С	Т	ТІ	У	Ф
ФІ	Х	Ху	Хъ	Хъ	Хъу	Ц	ЦІ	Ч	Ш
Щ	ЩІ	Ы	Ә**	Ю	Я	І	Іу	Ъ	Ъ

<sup>1</sup> B. M. Kardanov (ed.), *Kabardinsko-russki slovar'* [Kabardian-Russian Dictionary], Kabardino-Balkarian Science and Research Institute, Moscow: State Press of Foreign and National Dictionaries, 1957, p12.

### Official Adigean alphabet<sup>2</sup>

А	Б	В	Г	Гъ	Д	Дж	Дз	Е	Ё
Ж	Жъ	Жъ	З	И	Й	К	Къ	КІ	Л
Лъ	ЛІ	М	Н	О	П	ПІ	Р	С	Т
ТІ	У	Ф	Х	Хъ	Хъ	Ц	ЦІ	Ч	Чъ
ЧІ	Ш	Шъ	ШІ	Щ	Ы	Ә	Ю	Я	І
Ъ	Ъ								

<sup>2</sup> A. A. Hat'ene & Z. I. Ch'erashe, *Adigabzem Yizexef Gwshi'alh* [Explanatory Dictionary of the Adigean Language], Bzem, Literaturam, Istoriem ya Adige Nauchne-Issledovatelske Institut [Adigean Science and Research Institute of Language, Literature and History], Maikop: Circassian Book Press, 1960, pxvi.

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\* Schwa in Circassian words.

\*\* In loan words.