How Uzbek sounds Talaffuz

1 · read it out loud

The trick: Uzbek in the Latin alphabet is read as it's written, and every letter is said. The alphabet is a b d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v x y z o‘ g‘ sh ch ng, plus the mark ’. There's no w, and c only turns up in ch.

Letters	Sounds like	Example
a	between the a in cat and the a in father	**ota / bola** father / child
o	a round o, like the o in British hot	**olma / non** apple / bread
O‘ o‘	a closer o, like the o in go, but short	**o‘n / do‘st** ten / friend
u	the u in rule	**uy / uzum** house / grapes
i, e	i as in machine, often short; e as in bed	**ikki / eshik** two / door
q	a k said deep in the throat	**qiz / qor** girl / snow
G‘ g‘	a soft gargle at the back, like a French r	**tog‘ / yomg‘ir** mountain / rain
x	the ch in Scottish loch	**xona / xayr** room / bye
h	a light h, always said	**havo / hamma** air / everyone
sh, ch	sh in shop, ch in chips	**shahar / choy** city / tea
ng	ng in sing, with no g after it	**ming / o‘ng** thousand / right
j	j in jam	**juma / joy** Friday / place
y	y in yes	**yaxshi / yil** good / year
v	v, but softer: close to w at the end	**suv / ovqat** water / food
r	a quick roll of the tongue	**rahmat / bir** thank you / one
’	a short break between sounds	**ma’no / san’at** meaning / art

o‘ · g‘

the little turned comma is part of the letter

ot horse · **o‘t** grass

to‘qqiz nine · **tog‘** mountain

’

tutuq belgisi: a short break, in a few borrowed words

ma’no ma-no, meaning

san’at san-at, art

Typing it: on phones and online, people often type o' and g' with a plain apostrophe. It's the same letter. This sheet prints the proper marks, o‘ and g‘, and you'll read both.

q, x and h: three different sounds. q is a k from deep in the throat, x is the rough ch in loch, and h is a light breath: qiz, girl; xona, room; havo, air.

Stress: usually on the last syllable: ki-TOB, rah-MAT, and it moves along when you add an ending: ki-tob-LAR.

How words work Grammatika

No gender, no the: Uzbek has no masculine or feminine and no word for the or a. kitob is a book or the book, and u is he, she and it.

Words in colour

noun
a thing, a person or a place
kitob book · **uy** house

describing word
comes before the noun
katta big · **yangi** new

verb
in the dictionary form, ending in -moq
bormoq go · **yemoq** eat

other
little words and phrases
va and · **bugun** today

Endings stack

kitob a book, the book	kitob**lar** books	kitob**im** my book	kitob**larim** my books	kitob**larimda** in my books

One ending, one job, always in the same order: the word, then -lar for more than one, then my, then where. After a vowel, my is just -m: ota, father; otam, my father.

Endings do the work of at, to, from and of

uy**da** at home: -da, at, in	uy**ga** home: -ga, to	uy**dan** from home: -dan, from	kitob**ni** o'qiyman I read the book: -ni marks the object	ota**mning** uyi my father's house: -ning

Mostly one form: the endings keep their vowels, whatever the word: uyda, maktabda, bozorda. After q, -ga becomes -qa: qishloqqa, to the village.

Be, and a regular verb: o'qimoq, to read

	I'm a student...	I read, I will read	I don't read
men	talaba**man**	o'qi**yman**	o'qi**mayman**
sen	talaba**san**	o'qi**ysan**	o'qi**maysan**
u	talaba	o'qi**ydi**	o'qi**maydi**
biz	talaba**miz**	o'qi**ymiz**	o'qi**maymiz**
siz	talaba**siz**	o'qi**ysiz**	o'qi**maysiz**
ular	talaba**(lar)**	o'qi**ydi(lar)**	o'qi**maydi(lar)**

The verb goes last: Men choy ichaman, I drink tea, word for word I tea drink. The ending already says who, so men is often left out: Choy ichaman.

Saying no: -ma- goes into the verb: o'qimayman, I don't read; bilmayman, I don't know. For isn't, use emas: Men talaba emasman, I'm not a student. For there isn't, use yo'q: Pul yo'q, there's no money.

Questions: add -mi to the word you ask about: Siz talabamisiz? Are you a student? Choy ichasizmi? Will you have some tea?

The first 257 words Birinchi so‘zlar

How: learn five a day, then listen for them in Uzbek films and series. *Pink italics* say how a word is used, not what it means.

Greetings and survival

Assalomu alaykum
hello: the respectful greeting

Vaalaykum assalom
the answer to Assalomu alaykum

Salom
hi

Xayrli tong
good morning

Xayrli kech
good evening

Xayrli tun
good night

Xayr
bye

Ko‘rishguncha
see you *(it means until we meet)*

Rahmat
thank you

Katta rahmat
thank you very much *(it means big thanks)*

Arzimaydi
you're welcome *(it means it's not worth it)*

Iltimos
please

Kechirasiz
excuse me, sorry

Yaxshimisiz?
how are you? *(it means are you well?)*

Yaxshi, rahmat
fine, thanks

Siz-chi?
and you?

Ismingiz nima?
what's your name?

Mening ismim ...
my name is ...

Tanishganimdan xursandman
nice to meet you

Xush kelibsiz
welcome

Ha / Yo‘q
yes / no

Inglizcha gapirasizmi?
do you speak English?

Tushunmayman
I don't understand

Bilmayman
I don't know

Question words

nima
what

kim
who

qayerda
where

qayerga / qayerdan
where to / where from

qachon
when

nega
why

qanday
how

qancha
how much

nechta
how many

qaysi
which

Qancha turadi?
how much is it?

Me and you

men
I

sen
you, to a friend or a child

u
he, she, it; also that

biz
we

siz
you, polite; also to more than one

ular
they

mening / sizning
my / your *(mening uyim, my house)*

bu
this *(bu kitob, this book)*

Little words

va
and

lekin
but

yoki
or

ham
also, too *(men ham, me too)*

juda
very

ko‘p
a lot, many

ozgina
a little

faqat
only

bilan
with, after the word *(do‘stim bilan)*

uchun
for, after the word *(siz uchun, for you)*

chunki
because

bu yerda / u yerda
here / there

bor
there is, there are; also have *(page 7)*

emas
not, isn't *(page 2)*

balki
maybe

Hello and goodbye: Assalomu alaykum is the polite hello, to anyone, at any time of day, and the answer is Vaalaykum assalom. Salom is hi between friends, and Xayr is bye.

sen or siz: sen is for friends, family and children. Say siz to strangers, older people and at work. siz is also you, to more than one, so it's never wrong to be polite.

People and time Odamlar va vaqt

Family

ona
mother, mum

ota
father, dad

ota-ona
parents

aka / uka
older brother / younger brother

opa / singil
older sister / younger sister

o‘g‘il
son *(o‘g‘lim, my son)*

qiz
daughter; also girl

bobo / buvi
grandad / gran

amaki / tog‘a
uncle: dad's brother / mum's brother

amma / xola
aunt: dad's sister / mum's sister

er / xotin
husband / wife

oila
family

People

odam
person *(odamlar, people)*

erkak / ayol
man / woman

bola
child *(bolalar, children)*

o‘g‘il bola
boy

do‘st
friend *(do‘stim, my friend)*

qo‘shni
neighbour

o‘qituvchi
teacher

talaba
student

shifokor
doctor

mehmon
guest

When

bugun
today

ertaga
tomorrow

kecha
yesterday; also night

hozir
now

keyin
later, then

ertalab
in the morning

kechqurun
in the evening

kun
day

hafta
week

oy
month; also moon

yil
year

soat
hour, clock *(Soat necha? What time is it?)*

vaqt
time

Days of the week

dushanba
Monday

seshanba
Tuesday

chorshanba
Wednesday

payshanba
Thursday

juma
Friday

shanba
Saturday

yakshanba
Sunday

Things

pul
money

kalit
key

kitob
book

eshik
door

deraza
window

chipta
ticket

kiyim
clothes

sovg‘a
present, gift

Weather and nature

quyosh
sun

yomg‘ir
rain

qor
snow

havo
weather; also air

tog‘
mountain

it / mushuk
dog / cat

Numbers

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	20	21
nol	bir	ikki	uch	to‘rt	besh	olti	yetti	sakkiz	to‘qqiz	o‘n	o‘n bir	yigirma	yigirma bir

30	40	50	100	1,000
o‘ttiz	qirq	ellik	yuz	ming

Numbers: say the tens, then the units: yigirma bir is 21, o‘ttiz besh is 35. After a number, no plural: ikki kitob, two books. In speech you'll often hear -ta on the number: ikkita kitob.

Older or younger: Uzbek says which: aka is an older brother and uka a younger one, opa an older sister and singil a younger one. Days are written small: dushanba, Monday.

Food, places, verbs Ovqat, joylar, fe'llar

Food and drink

suv
water

choy
tea *(ko'k choy, green tea)*

qahva
coffee

sut
milk

non
bread: the round loaf from a clay oven

go'sht
meat

tovuq
chicken

baliq
fish

olma
apple

uzum
grapes

qovun / tarvuz
melon / watermelon

osh
plov: rice with meat and carrots; also called palov

somsa
a baked pastry with meat inside

ovqat
food, a meal

nonushta
breakfast

tushlik
lunch

choynak / piyola
teapot / tea bowl

Qornim och
I'm hungry *(it means my stomach is hungry)*

Osh bo'lsin!
enjoy your meal!

Places and getting around

uy
house, home *(uyda, at home)*

maktab
school

ish
work, job

do'kon
shop

bozor
market, bazaar

choyxona
teahouse

mehmonxona
hotel *(it means guest house)*

shifoxona
hospital

hojatxona
toilet

shahar / qishloq
city / village

ko'cha
street

yo'l
road, way

chap / o'ng
left / right

to'g'ri
straight on; also right, correct

o'zbek tili
Uzbek, the language

Verbs: dictionary / I do it

bormoq / boraman
go

kelmoq / kelaman
come

ketmoq / ketaman
leave, go away

yemoq / yeyman
eat

ichmoq / ichaman
drink

ko'rmoq / ko'raman
see

qilmoq / qilaman
do, make

uxlamoq / uxlayman
sleep

gapirmoq / gapiraman
speak, talk

tushunmoq / tushunaman
understand

bilmoq / bilaman
know

xohlamoq / xohlayman
want

o'qimoq / o'qiyman
read; also study

yozmoq / yozaman
write

ishlamoq / ishlayman
work

yashamoq / yashayman
live

sotib olmoq / sotib olaman
buy

to'lamoq / to'layman
pay

o'rganmoq / o'rganaman
learn

aytmoq / aytaman
say, tell

sevmoq / sevaman
love

Describing words

yaxshi / yomon
good / bad

katta / kichik
big / small

issiq / sovuq
hot / cold

yangi / eski
new / old

qimmat / arzon
expensive / cheap

oson / qiyin
easy / hard

chiroyli
beautiful, pretty

mazali
tasty

xursand
happy, glad

oq / qora
white / black

qizil / ko'k / sariq
red / blue / yellow

Two forms: the dictionary form ends in -moq. Take that off for the stem, then add -aman after a consonant or -yman after a vowel: yoz-moq, yoz-aman, I write; o'qi-moq, o'qi-yman, I read. It means I do it, and also I will.

Describing words never change: they go before the noun and stay the same: katta uy, a big house; katta uylar, big houses.

Show words Ko‘p eshitiladigan so‘zlar

Reactions

Voy!
oh! wow! oh no!

Rostdanmi?
really?

Zo‘r!
great! brilliant!

Ofarin!
well done!

Qoyil!
impressive! hats off!

Ajoyib!
wonderful!

Albatta
of course

Mayli
OK, alright

Bo‘ldi!
that's it! enough! also done, agreed

Muammo yo‘q
no problem

Afsuski
unfortunately, sadly

Tabriklayman!
congratulations!

Nima gap?
what's up? what's new?

Xo‘sh
so, well *(see below)*

The big scenes

Seni sevaman
I love you

Seni sog‘indim
I missed you, I miss you

Yordam bering!
help!

Ehtiyot bo‘l!
be careful!

Shoshma!
wait! hold on! *(it means don't rush)*

Ketma!
don't go!

Qo‘rqma!
don't be scared!

Nima bo‘ldi?
what happened?

Tezroq!
hurry up! *(it means faster)*

Bas qil!
stop it!

Meni tinch qo‘y
leave me alone

Omad!
good luck!

Tug‘ilgan kuning bilan!
happy birthday!

What to call people

jonim
my dear *(it means my soul)*

azizim
my dear, darling

do‘stim
my friend, mate

ustoz
teacher, master: said with respect

janob / xonim
Mr / Mrs, formal

Xo‘sh: a little word you'll hear everywhere. It opens a sentence, like so or well: Xo‘sh, nima qilamiz? So, what shall we do?

aka and opa for everyone: people call any older man aka and any older woman opa, after the name: Anvar aka, Dilnoza opa. A shopkeeper or a taxi driver gets it too. It's warm and polite, not odd.

-jon: added to a name or a family word, it makes it warm and loving: Dilnozajon, onajon, mum dear. You'll hear it all the time.

Practice Mashqlar

How: cover the grey lines with a strip of paper. Read the Uzbek out loud, then slide it down to check. Can you read every line without peeking? You've got it.

Have: Uzbek says my book is there: Mening kitobim bor, I have a book. Vaqtim yo‘q, I haven't got time. mening is often left out, because the ending says it.

Like: Menga choy yoqadi. I like tea, word for word to me tea is pleasing. Men choyni yaxshi ko‘raman says it too: I see tea as good.

Right now: -yap- says it's happening now: o‘rganyapman, I'm learning; o‘qiyapman, I'm reading.

Read these sentences

1. Assalomu alaykum, mening ismim Dilnoza.
   Hello, my name is Dilnoza.

2. Siz qayerdansiz?
   Where are you from?

3. Kechirasiz, hojatxona qayerda?
   Excuse me, where is the toilet?

4. Bu qancha turadi?
   How much is this?

5. Bir choynak choy, iltimos.
   A pot of tea, please.

6. Men o‘zbek tilini o‘rganyapman.
   I'm learning Uzbek.

7. Bugun havo juda issiq.
   It's very hot today.

8. Ertaga bozorga boramiz.
   We're going to the market tomorrow.

9. Bu osh juda mazali!
   This plov is really tasty!

10. Hozir vaqtim yo‘q.
    I haven't got time right now.

Meet a word you don't know? In Kitsumi, hover any word in subtitles to see what it means.