

1.3. Alphabets

Latin and Cyrillic scripts are used in contemporary Serbo-Croatian texts. Serbs use both scripts while Croats and Bosnian Muslims use only the Latin scripts. Although the Cyrillic script is officialy the second script of both Croatian and Bosnian Muslim standard, it is practically not used at all. Moreover, given that the Cyrillic script is identified with the Serbian ethnic group, its usage is viewed unfavourably by Croatsians and Bosnian Muslim speakers.

Given that the Latin script by-and-large shares characters with the English alphabet, an English learner should learn that script first and then proceed with the Cyrillic one.

Both Latin and Cyrillic scripts have thirty characters, whereby all of them are simple characters in the Cyrillic script and the Latin script consists of twenty-seven simple characters and three digraphs. They are presented in the Latin alphabetic order with Latin characters requiring attention of an English speaker clearly marked.

Latin	Cyrillic	IPA	name	English spelling approximatives
a	а	[a]	a	a as in arm, harm
b	б	[b]	be	b as in bad, body pronounced in a less tense manner
c	ц	[ts]	ce	ts combination
č	ч	[tʃ]	č	ch or tch as in church, fetch, pronounced harder than the English sound
ć	ћ	[t]	ć	ch or tch as in church, fetch, pronounced softer than the English sound
d	д	[d]	de	d as in do, hard pronounced in a less tense manner
dž	џ	[dʒ]	dž	j as in jeep, jungle, pronounced harder than the English sound
đ	ђ	[d]	đ	j as in jeep, jungle, pronounced softer than the English sound
e	е	[e]	e	e as in red, bet
f	ф	[f]	ef	f as in fine, golf

g	г	[g]	ge	g as in go, long
h	х	[h]	ha	h as in head, hate
i	и	[i]	i	i or ee as in if, peel
j	ј	[j]	j	y as in yet, yolk
k	к	[k]	ka	c as in car, cast
l	л	[l]	el	l as in lip, lore
lj	љ	[ʎ]	lj	ly sequence
m	м	[m]	em	m as in mother, me
n	н	[n]	en	n as in next, north
nj	њ	[ɲ]	nj	ny sequence
o	о	[o]	o	o as in ox, ore
p	п	[p]	pe	p as in part, peace pronounced in a less tense manner
r	р	[r]	er	r as in rare, rob
s	с	[s]	es	s as in seldom, yes
š	ш	[ʃ]	š	sh as in shine, pronounced harder than the English sound
t	т	[t]	te	t as in top, hat
u	у	[u]	u	u or oo as in put, book
v	в	[v]	ve	v as in very, lively
z	з	[z]	z	s or z as in these, crazy
ž	ж	[ʒ]	ž	s as in pleasure, pronounced harder than the English sound

Table a3.1: Latin and Cyrillic Alphabets

The character c is always read as the [ts] combination, never as [k] or any other sound, j is always read as [j] never as [dʒ] or any other sound, g is always read as [g] never as [dʒ] or any other sound.

Principal rule of reading is one-to-one correspondence between characters and sounds.

The order of the Cyrillic alphabet is as follows: *а б в г д љ е ж з и ј к л њ м н њ о п р с ш т ћ у ф х ц ч џ ш*

The Cyrillic script maps the Latin one with the difference of having single characters form the Latin digraphs lj, nj and dž (represented as: њ, њ, џ in Cyrillics). As far as their shape is concerned, in relation to the Latin script they fall into three categories:

Characters with approximately equal shape and identical sound representation:

Cyr.	Lat.	Pron.
а	a	[a]
е	e	[e]
ј	j	[j]
к	k	[k]
м	m	[m]
о	o	[o]
т	t	[p]

Table a3.2: Characters with equal shape and identical sound

Characters with a completely different shape

Cyr.	Lat.	Pron.
б	b	[b]
ц	c	[ts]
ч	č	[tʃ]
ћ	ć	[t]
џ	dž	[dʒ]

ђ	đ	[d]
ф	f	[f]
г	g	[g]
л	l	[l]
љ	lj	[ʎ]
њ	nj	[ɲ]
ш	š	[ʃ]
з	z	[z]
ж	ž	[ʒ]

Table a3.3: Characters with completely different shape

Characters with approximately equal shape but different sound representation:

Cyr.	Lat.	Pron.
х	h	[h]
н	n	[n]
р	r	[r]
с	s	[s]
у	u	[u]
в	v	[v]

Table a3.4: Characters with equal shape but different sound

Handwritten variant of the Cyrillic and Latin characters looks as follows:

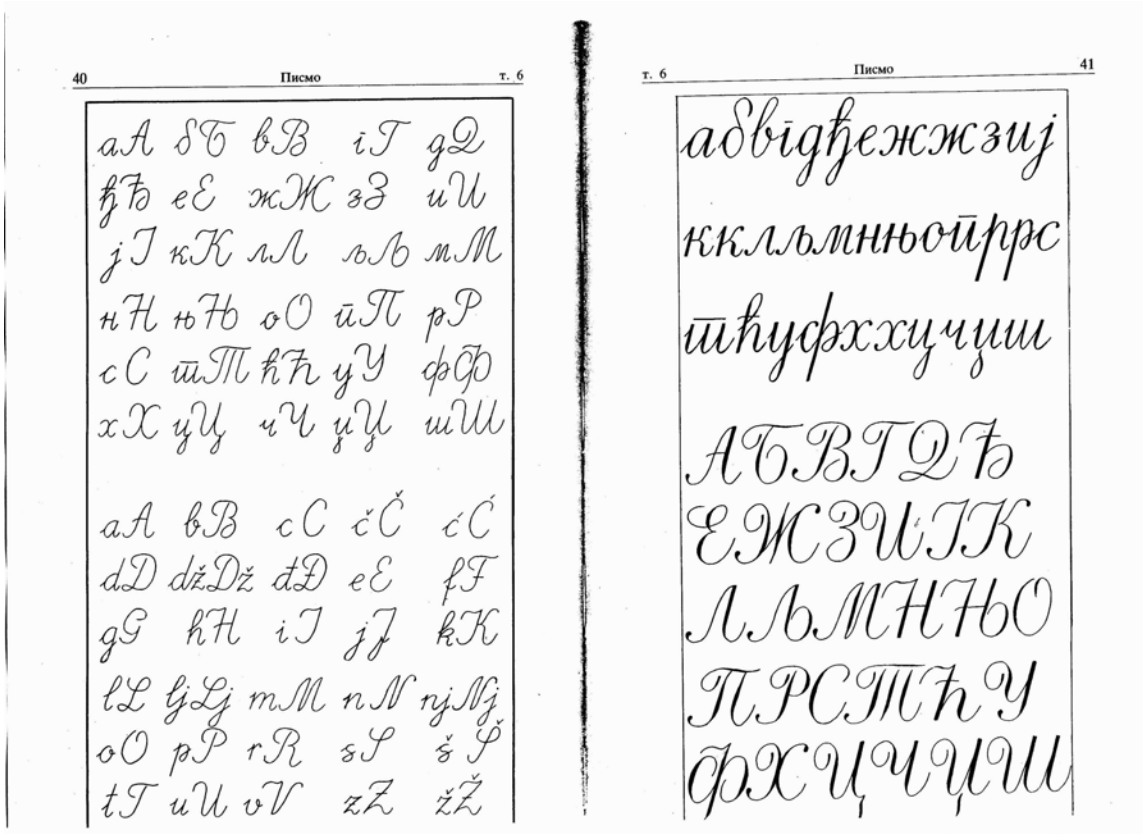


Table a3.3.2 Handwritten Latin and Cyrillic Script (from Pešikan et al., 1994)

Contemporary Serbo-Croatian alphabets are the result of the nineteenth century reforms. Prior to these reforms, various forms of both Cyrillic and Latin script have been used in addition to the Glagolitic and modified Arabic scripts.

u tiskanim knjigama		rukopisna bosančica			izgovor
velika	mala	u Bosni	u Splitskim Poljicima	u Dubrovniku	
А	а	ѣ, ѡ, ѡ, ѡ	ѣ, ѣ, ѣ, ѣ, ѣ, ѣ	ѣ, ѣ, ѣ	a
В	в	ѡ, ѡ, ѡ, ѡ	ѡ, ѡ, ѡ, ѡ	ѡ, ѡ	b
П	п	ѡ, ѡ, ѡ, ѡ	ѡ, ѡ, ѡ, ѡ	ѡ, ѡ	v
Г	г	ѣ, ѣ, ѣ, ѣ	ѣ, ѣ, ѣ, ѣ	ѣ	g
Д	ѡ	ѣ, ѣ, ѣ, ѣ	ѣ, ѣ, ѣ, ѣ	ѣ, ѣ, ѣ	d
Е	ѣ	ѣ, ѣ, ѣ, ѣ	ѣ, ѣ, ѣ, ѣ	ѣ, ѣ	e
Ж	ѡ	ѡ, ѡ, ѡ, ѡ	ѡ, ѡ, ѡ, ѡ	ѡ, ѡ	z
З	ѡ	ѡ, ѡ, ѡ, ѡ	ѡ, ѡ, ѡ, ѡ	ѡ	dz
И	и	и, и, и, и	и, и, и, и, и, и	и	z
—	ѣ	ѣ	ѣ, ѣ, ѣ, ѣ	ѣ	i
Љ	љ	љ, ѣ, ѣ, ѣ	љ, ѣ, ѣ, ѣ	—	ij
К	к	к, к, к, к	к, к, к, к	к, к	k
Л	л	л, л	л, л, л, л, л, л	л, л	l
М	м	м, м	м, м, м, м	м, м	m
Н	н	н, н, ѣ	н, н, ѣ, ѣ	н, ѣ	n
О	о	ѡ, ѡ, ѡ	ѡ, ѡ, ѡ	ѡ, ѡ	o
П	п	п, п, ѣ	п, п, п, п	п, ѣ	p
Р	р	р, ѣ, ѣ	р, р, р, ѣ	р	r
С	с	с, с, ѣ	с, с, с, ѣ	с, ѣ	s
Т	т	ѣ, ѣ, ѣ	ѣ, ѣ, ѣ, ѣ	ѣ, ѣ	t
Ѣ	ѣ	ѣ, ѣ, ѣ	ѣ, ѣ, ѣ	ѣ, ѣ	u
Ф	ѣ	ѣ, ѣ, ѣ	ѣ, ѣ, ѣ	ѣ	f
Х	х	х, х, ѣ, ѣ	х, х, ѣ, ѣ	х, х	h
Ѡ	ѡ	ѡ, ѡ, ѡ	ѡ, ѡ, ѡ	ѡ, ѡ	o
Ѣ	ѣ	ѣ, ѣ, ѣ	ѣ, ѣ, ѣ	ѣ	ot
Ѥ	ѣ	ѣ, ѣ, ѣ	ѣ, ѣ, ѣ, ѣ, ѣ	ѣ, ѣ	sc
Ѧ	ѣ	ѣ, ѣ, ѣ	ѣ, ѣ, ѣ, ѣ, ѣ	ѣ, ѣ	st
Ѩ	ѣ	ѣ, ѣ, ѣ	ѣ, ѣ, ѣ, ѣ, ѣ	ѣ, ѣ	c
Ѭ	ѣ	ѣ, ѣ, ѣ	ѣ, ѣ, ѣ, ѣ, ѣ	ѣ, ѣ	ć
Ѯ	ѣ	ѣ, ѣ, ѣ	ѣ, ѣ, ѣ, ѣ, ѣ	ѣ	š
—	—	—	—	ѣ, ѣ	y
—	ѡ	ѡ, ѡ, ѡ	ѡ, ѡ, ѡ	ѡ	—
—	—	—	ѣ, ѣ, ѣ, ѣ, ѣ	ѣ	j
—	—	—	—	ѣ	ja
—	—	—	ѣ	ѣ	je
—	—	—	ѣ	ѣ	ju
—	—	—	ѣ, ѣ	ѣ	ks
—	—	—	—	ѣ	ps
—	ѣ	ѣ, ѣ, ѣ	—	ѣ	th
—	—	—	—	ѣ	y

Table a3.3.3 Bosančica – one of historical Cyrillic scripts

آ نه ای و و ب پ ت ج ج ج ح د ر ز ژ
 ž z r d h c Ć ć dž t p b u o i e ■

س ش غ ف ق ل م ت و ی
 v nj n m lj l k f g š s

ALFABET AREBICE

Table a3.3.5 Arebica – modified Arabic script

In their handwritten form, some Serbo-Croatian Latin characters exhibit differences in relation to their English counterparts in particular capital G, I, L, and Lj, lowercase b, k, r, and t.

Same is true of the way numbers 1,4,7, and 9 are spelled

1.4. Orthographic Conventions

Orthographic rules are regulated for each for each of the three variants of Serbo-Croatian separately. The most commonly used manuals of orthography (somewhat of equivalents of the Chicago Manual of Style and similar American manuals) are: Pešikan et al. (1993) and Simić et al. (1993) for the Serbian variant, Babić at al. (2001) and Anić and Silić (1990) for the Croatian, and finally Halilović (1996) for the Bosnian Muslim variant. Differences between the rules in all previously mentioned manuals are practically irrelevant, i.e., limited to the solutions with particular words (such as putting a dot after dr ‘doctor, PhD’ in Croatian and Bosnian Muslim orthography and not putting the dot in Serbian orthography).

Basic principle of the Serbo-Croatian orthography is one-to one correspondence between characters and sounds. This means that each character is pronounced equally in all instances, unlike in English, where one character can be pronounced

differently in different, for example: the character c is pronounced [ts] in both car 'emperor' certifikat 'certificate', whereas the corresponding English character is pronounced as [k] in car and [s] in certificate.

There are some minor exceptions from this basic principle, as follows:

- a. Sequences dc, dč, dć, ddž, dđ, tc,tč, tdž, bp, dt, zs, zš, and any double characters (bb, dd, jj, nn, pp, tt, etc.) within word forms where the first character in the sequence remains unpronounced, for example: podčiniti [potf...initi] 'subordinate, subjugate', bitci [bici] 'battle' (Dat./Loc. Sg.), subpolaran [sup...olaran] etc. These sequences occur seldom in compound words and some morphological forms. A list of such examples is supplied in the appendix (%%%)
- b. Sequence t ć in the Croatian spelling of the Future tense, for example: radit ću [radiću] 'I will work
- c. Sequences d c, d č, d ć, d dž, d đ, t c,t č, t dž, b p, d t, z s, z š, and any double characters (b b, d d, j j, n n, p p, t t, etc.) in allegro speech where the first character remains unpronounced, for example: pred cestom [prec...estom] 'in front of the road'.

Contrastive remarks: Orthographic rules requiring English learner's attention are as follows:

- a. Serbo-Croatian rules of capitalizing substantially differ from the ones in the American tradition.

Adjectives and language names derived from proper names are not capitalized:

	country	person	language	adjective
English	France	French	French	French
S-Cr	Francuska	Francuz	francuski	francuski

Likewise verbs derived from proper names are not capitalized:

	noun	verb
English	America	Americanize
S-Cr	Amerika	amerikanizirati

b. In compound names all parts are capitalized only in the names of the continents, countries, states, cities and towns. In all other compound names (such as names of institutions, mountains, rivers, titles of books, etc.) only the first word is capitalized, for example:

English	Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Trinidad and Tobago	Adriatic Sea, Whitman's "Leaves of Grass"
S-Cr	Federalna Republika Jugoslavija, Trinidad i Tobago	Jadransko more, Vitmenove "Vlati trave"

c. When referring to the cities from the Western European languages, and when writing in the Latin script in most instances one can choose to leave the original spelling including the capitalizing rules. The Croatian and Bosnian Muslim tradition favors, however, the original spelling. One can thus spell either Njujork or New York. The exception from this rule are those cities which were historically important and accepted in phoneticized form or as egzonyms only, for example: Beč 'Vienna', Rim 'Rome'.

d. The rules of connecting the parts of a word with a hyphen versus spelling them separated with a space are as follows:

Nouns:

Both parts are declined? yes

no

Both parts have their own accent?

yes

no

separated by a space

Spelled with a hyphen

spelled together

Examples

Nom bàba róga,
Gen bàbe róge

Nom àuto-servís
Gen àuto-servísa

Nom autosugèstija
Gen autosugèstije

Adjectives:

Do parts refer to two different concepts

yes

no

separated by a hyphen

spelled together

Examples

bosansko-hercegovački
'pertaining to the relations between Bosnia and Herzegovina'

bosanskohercegovački
'pertaining to Bosnia and Herzegovina in its entirety'

e. The negative particle ne 'not, non-, un-, in- etc.' is spelled separated by a space from verbs and together with nouns, adjectives, and adverbs, for example

verb ne prekidam 'I am not interrupting'

adjective neprekidan 'non-interrupted'

noun neprekidnost 'condition of being non-interrupted'

f. Serbo-Croatian punctuation follows syntactic and semantic structures. It is by-and-large equivalent to the English punctuation rules (using the comma to separate items in a list, the vocative from the rest of the sentence, initial adverbial clauses and phrases, non-restrictive relative clauses, etc.) . Most notable difference in the use of the comma is that Serbo-Croatian orthography does not use the comma in front of the final i 'and' of a list, for example:

English Ivan, Mary, and Paul are here.

S-Cr Ivan, Marija i Pavle su tu.