

## Lesson 1

Hebrew Letter Name	Hebrew Block	Hebrew Cursive	English Equivalent
Alef	א	א	vowel
Bet / Vet	ב / ׀	ב	b / v
Gimel	ג	ג	g
Dalet	ד	ד	d
Hey	ה	ה	h
Vav	ו	ו	v / vowel
Zayin	ז	ז	z
**Xet	ח	ח	x
Tet	ט	ט	t
Yod	י	י	y / vowel
Kaf / **Xaf	כ / ך / *ך	כ / ך	k / x
Lamed	ל	ל	l
Mem	מ / *ם	מ / ם	m
Nun	נ / *ן	נ / ן	n
Samex	ס	ס	s
Ayin	ע	ע	vowel
Pey / Fey	פ / ף / *ף	פ / ף	p / f
Tsadik	צ / *ץ	צ / ץ	ts
Kuf	ק	ק	k
Reysh	ר	ר	r
Shin / Sin	ש / ם	ש	sh / s
Tav	ת	ת	t

\*\* The letter "x" will be used in all transliterations throughout the book to represent the throaty sound (explained below).

\* These are the five "sofit" letters (ך, ם, ן, ף, ץ). "Sofit" simply means "final" or "end." There is no difference in their pronunciation, but they are written this way when they appear at the end of a word.

Below, in Examples 1 and 2 the Xaf/Kaf (כ/כּ) is written in its standard form, but in Example 3 a Xaf Sofit (ך) is used because it is the last letter in the word.

Example 1: כמה

Example 2: לכם

Example 3: לך

The five Sofit letters are:

Xaf Sofit	ך
Mem Sofit	ם
Noon Sofit	ן
Fey Sofit	ף
Tsadik Sofit	ץ

Five of the letters in the Hebrew Alef-bet make sounds that are different from any of our English letters.

The first is the letter Xet (ח), and the second is Xaf (כ). Both of these letters make the throaty sound that a lot of English speakers have a hard time making. It is similar to the sound made when clearing the back of your throat. In the transliterations the letter "x" is used to represent this sound.

The third is the letter Tsadik (צ). The best English example for the sound this letter makes is "ts," like on the end of the word "cats."

The fourth letter is Reysh (ר). The closest letter in English is the letter "r." However it is a very throaty "r," sort of like the sound made while gargling.

The last one is the letter Shin (ש). It is pronounced like "sh" in the word "shy."

Unlike in English where many people write in print and cursive, handwritten Hebrew is almost always written in cursive. So you do not need to practice writing the print/block letters.

Learn the Hebrew Alef-bet, and practice writing in cursive.

One great way to memorize it is with flashcards. Use the flashcards that came with the book and drill yourself with them until you know every letter.

Since the Alef-bet is the foundation of the language, be sure you have mastered it before you move on.

Write the Hebrew letter under its name. Since Hebrew is read and written from right to left, start on the right.

Hey Vav Tsadik Reysh Alef Bet Gimel Tav Tet Nun Dalet

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Mem Sofit Ayin Samex Xet Kaf Pey Nun Sofit Mem Shin

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Xaf Fey Sofit Kuf Yod Tsadik Sofit Xaf Sofit Zayin Lamed

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Write the English equivalent of each of the Hebrew letters.

פ ש ק ז ל ו ב מ נ ב ה

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י ט ר ת פ ש ס צ פ ג ד

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Write the corresponding cursive letter under each of the letters shown. Say the name of each letter as you write it, and start from the right-hand side.

ס ז ש ד נ ה ב ג ק ר ע כ א

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ץ ף ן ם ך ת ל ן ו ח צ מ י ט

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Answers are on page 101.

Use the letter practice sheet (next page) to practice your cursive handwriting.