

# U+0980 – U+09FF Bengali

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**Bengali or Bāṅlā**, as it is called in the tongue itself, is very similar to the Devanāgarī script and has similar roots. Both scripts evolved from the Nāgarī script. The main differences between them derive from sound changes that happened in the Bengali language. Like Devanāgarī, Bengali is an abugida (a script with consonants that have inherent vowels unless otherwise indicated). It is a cursive (connected) script and has 12 vowel characters and 52 consonant characters. When written, it appears more winded and less blocky than Devanāgarī. The modern script was formalized in 1778 when it was first typeset by Charles Wilkins.

[EDIT](#)

## Language

Bengali is spoken as mother tongue by over 220 million people (2002), 130 million of which live in Bangladesh where Bengali is official language. A further 85 million people in India speak Bengali where it is one of 13 approved indian languages. The rest of the speakers lives in Malawi, Nepal, Saudi-Arabia, Singapore, the United Arab Emirates, Great Britain and the USA. According to some statistics, it is the fourth most-spoken language if the world after Chinese-Mandarin, Spanish and English (some say it is Hindi, depending of if the Hindi dialects are viewed separately or as one).

[EDIT](#)