

Table showing the various alphabets used in Mithilā.

Devā-nāgarī.	Kaithī.	Maithilī.	English Transliteration	Devā-nāgarī.	Kaithī.	Maithilī.	English Transliteration
अ	𑒀	𑒁	a	आ	𑒂	𑒃	ā
आ	𑒃	𑒄	ā	इ	𑒅	𑒆	i
इ	𑒅	𑒇	i	ई	𑒆	𑒈	ī
उ	𑒇	𑒉	u	ऊ	𑒈	𑒊	ū
ऊ	𑒇	𑒋	ū	ऋ	𑒉	𑒌	ṛi
ऋ		𑒍	ṛi	ॠ	𑒊	𑒎	ṛī
ऌ		𑒏	ḷi	ॡ	𑒋	𑒐	ḷī
ऍ	𑒌	𑒑	ē	ऎ	𑒍	𑒒	ē
ऎ	𑒌	𑒓	ai	ए	𑒎	𑒑	ai
ए	𑒍	𑒔	ō	ऐ	𑒏	𑒒	ō
ऐ	𑒎	𑒕	au	ऑ	𑒐	𑒓	au
ऑ	𑒎	𑒖	am	ऒ	𑒑	𑒔	am
ऒ	𑒎	𑒗	ah	ओ	𑒒	𑒕	ah
क	𑒏	𑒘	ka	ख	𑒓	𑒖	ka
ख	𑒏	𑒙	kha	ग	𑒔	𑒗	ga
ग	𑒏	𑒚	ga	घ	𑒕	𑒘	gha
घ	𑒏	𑒛	gha	ङ	𑒖	𑒙	ṅa
ङ	𑒏	𑒜	ṅa	च	𑒗	𑒚	cha
च	𑒏	𑒝	cha	छ	𑒘	𑒛	chha
छ	𑒏	𑒞	chha	ज	𑒙	𑒜	ja
ज	𑒏	𑒟	ja	झ	𑒚	𑒞	jha
झ	𑒏	𑒠	jha				

* The semi-vowel य is not used by Kayasths in writing Maithilī, the vowel ऋ being substituted for it.

No less than three different alphabets are in use in the tract in which Maithilī is spoken. The Maithilī character proper is that used by

Written Character.

Maithil Brāhmaṇs, and is closely akin to the Bengali. It is not used by persons of the other castes. The character which is used by all the other castes, and which is generally employed, with a few local variations, over the whole of Northern India, from Bihar to Gujerat, is the Kaithī. It is not a complete alphabet, using only the long form of the vowel 'i' for both the short and the long vowels, and the short form of 'u' for similar purpose. A fount of Kaithī type is adopted by the Bengal Government for official publications in the vernacular, intended for publication in Bihar, in which this deficiency has been supplied, and books are now printed in Patna in the same type, so that gradually the written character is becoming more correct in this respect. The Dēva-nāgarī character is used by a few of the educated classes who have come under the literary influence of Benares, and it is understood and read by all persons who pretend to a liberal education.

The table opposite shows the three alphabets current in Mithilā in juxtaposition. Specimens will subsequently be given in all three. In transliterating those in Kaithī, the necessary correction of distinguishing between the long and short 'i' and 'u' will be made.

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