

## Somali

# af Soomaali 457 3705909

**Spoken in:** Somalia, Ethiopia, Djibouti, Kenya

**Region:** East Africa

**Total speakers:** 15-25 million

**Genetic classification:** Afro-Asiatic Cushitic East Somali

**Official language of:** Somalia

The Somali language is a member of the Cushitic languages. It is spoken mostly in Somalia and adjacent parts of Djibouti, Ethiopia, and Kenya. The exact number of speakers is unknown because of the war and migration but is estimated to have 15 to 25 million speakers.

The Somali or Osmanya alphabet was created in between 1920 and 1922, then it was replaced by the Latin orthography. In 1972 The Latin alphabet was finally adopted and at the same time Somali was made the sole official language of Somalia.

The Osmanya alphabet is not used much these days, though during the 1970s quite a number of people used it for personal correspondence and bookkeeping. A few books and magazines have also been published in the alphabet.

Currently SSWAHS Health Care Interpreter Service employs 4 Somali sessional interpreters.

### Somali/Osmanya alphabet

Ø	Ƴ	Ƨ	ɪ	ɱ	ʁ	o	ɾ	ɔ	ɛ	ɸ	ʁ	ɥ	ʁ	
ØØØØ	ʁʁ	Ƨʁ	ɪʁ	ɱʁ	ʁʁ	oooo	ɾʁ	ɔʁ	ɛʁ	ɸʁ	ʁʁ	ɥʁ	ʁʁ	
alef	ba	ta	ja	xa	kha	deel	ra	sa	shiin	dha	cayn	ga	fa	qaaf
a	b	t	j	x	kh	d	r	s	sh	dh	c	g	f	q
Ƨ	ʁ	ɸ	ɔ	ɥ	ɛ	ɛ	ʁ	ɸ	ɾ	ʁ	ʁ	ɥ	ʁ	ʁ
ƧƧ	ʁʁ	ɸʁ	ɔʁ	ɥʁ	ɛʁ	ɛʁ	a	e	i	o	u	aa	ee	oo
kaaf	laan	miin	nuun	waw	ha	ya								
k	l	m	n	w	h	y								

### The Somali Latin alphabet

**B, T, J, X, KH, D, R, S, SH, DH, C, G, F, Q, K, L, M, N, W, H, Y.**

Also, it has short vowels **A, E, I, O, U**, and long vowels **AA, EE, II, OO, UU**.

The consonants **C, DH, KH, Q** and **X** have totally different sounds from the classic Latin one. Therefore it is not a direct interpretation of the Latin alphabet, as is common in its use.