



Beginner's Hindi Script (Teach Yourself)

Rupert Snell

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The Hindi script - called Devanagari - is a beautifully logical writing system. Its phonetic arrangement makes it quite easy to learn and once you know the basic four dozen or so characters, you will be well on your way to reading the signs, posters, notices, street names, signposts and advertisements that are part of the everyday scene in North India. This book introduces the characters of Devanagari one by one in phonetic groups, steadily building up your ability to read and write. It also gives you some information on the cultural orientation of the language, explaining where Hindi belongs in the history of Indian languages and showing where its words come from. There are hints for authentic handwriting skills and plenty of exercises throughout so that you can practise what you've learnt. Examples from real-life signs, notices and advertisements show you the language in context.

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From Reader Review Beginner's Hindi Script (Teach Yourself) for online ebook

Nicole Pramik says

For anyone who wishes to learn to read or speak Hindi, this text is a must-have. I'm glad I read this first before delving into any other Hindi language text since this book focuses almost exclusively on Devanagari, the Hindi "alphabet" as it were (though technically Devanagari is a syllabary, not an alphabet). The lessons are relatively short and delivered in "bite-sized" portions, which gives you time to take in, review, and practice their content. Likewise, this text covers some basics of Hindi grammar, so if you want to tackle more intermediate aspects, you'll need a more advanced text. But this is a great beginner's guide, and I have found it most helpful in learning a language that I knew next to nothing about.

Christopher says

Rupert Snell's TEACH YOURSELF BEGINNER'S HINDI SCRIPT is a friendly introduction to Devanagari, the script used to write Hindi and Sanskrit. Whenever learning a language with a different writing system, I personally always find it helpful to use a separate preliminary book to get up to speed with the writing system, that way when I'm working with my main textbook, I don't feel like my unfamiliarity with the writing system is holding me back from fully absorbing the lessons. Snell's book works quite well as this initial step. He introduces the components of Devanagari step by step, with plenty of exercises so that the student can apply his knowledge and internalize the script. There are photos of signs from India, including some with errors so that the student can see how the script works in daily life. There's even a bit on handwriting, which is a nice touch.

And it's not just about Hindi! Devanagari is used to write Sanskrit as well, and Snell does cover the letters found in Sanskrit. If you want to embark on a Sanskrit course like Coulson's TEACH YOURSELF SANSKRIT, I cannot recommend enough that you use this first.

My only complaint about this book--and it may well be the unrealistic expectations of a linguaphile--is that it doesn't talk about how the Hindi script differs from other Brahmi-derived scripts. A short appendix along the lines of "If you want to eventually learn Gujarati or Bengali, here are some ways you can apply your knowledge of Hindi script..." would have been nice. Snell does of course talk about how Hindi's relationship to Urdu in being a sometimes mutually intelligible language but written completely differently.

Claire S says

Love this book! It held my hand as I was just first learning how to write Devanagari script, was very simple and reassuring. The only thing is, for the conjuncts, the presentation was much less useful. There were many of them in a small space, no information about how to draw them, not big enough (for me) to see clearly. So I was frustrated at that. But the handwriting samples at the back were great, etc.. - all in all a great investment.

Terri says

I read it, but I'm not finished with it. This is an excellent book on the syllabary, and I'll be studying it for quite some time.

E says

A very, very clear introduction to devanagari.

Sheila says

The basic syllabary is Ok but these conjugant consonants are very hard for my first attempt at language with a different script.
