

Despite the fact that the Hebrew alphabet has no upper case letters, to facilitate the reading of the transliterated forms of proper names, their first letter was capitalized. For the same reason, in titles of Yiddish works, the first letter of the first word is also capitalized.

Cyrillic

Russian, Ukrainian and Belarusian words in this dictionary are represented by Roman characters. The rules of letter substitution for Russian and Ukrainian are as follows:

Table 0.2 Transliteration of Cyrillic letters

| Cyrillic | English | Comment |
|----------|------------------------------------|---|
| А, а | A, a | Like <i>a</i> in <i>part</i> . |
| Б, б | B, b | |
| В, в | V, v | |
| Г, г | G, g (Russian) H, h (Ukrainian) | In Russian, like <i>g</i> in <i>dog</i> . In Ukrainian, a fricative glottal voiced sound: the closest English sound is <i>h</i> . |
| Ґ, ґ | G, g | In Ukrainian, like <i>g</i> in <i>dog</i> . The letter is absent from the Russian alphabet. |
| Д, д | D, d | |
| Е, е | E, e | In Russian, at the beginning of the word and after a vowel like <i>ye</i> in <i>yes</i> . In other positions as <i>e</i> in <i>set</i> but at the same time indicates the softness of the preceding consonant. In Ukrainian, similar to Russian Э, э. |
| Є, є | É, é | In Ukrainian, similar to Russian <i>E, e</i> . The letter is absent from the Russian alphabet. |
| Ж, ж | Zh, zh | Like <i>g</i> in <i>rouge</i> ; equivalent to French <i>j</i> . |
| З, з | Z, z | |
| И, и | I, i (Russian) Y, y (Ukrainian) | In Russian, like <i>ee</i> . In Ukrainian, pronounced close to Russian <i>yi</i> , but more open and rather near front than central. |
| І, і | I, i | In Ukrainian, like <i>ee</i> . The letter is absent from the Russian alphabet. |
| Ї, ї | Ï, ï | In Ukrainian, like <i>yi</i> . The letter is absent from the Russian alphabet. |
| Й, й | J, j | Like <i>y</i> in <i>boy</i> , equivalent to German and Polish <i>j</i> . |
| К, к | K, k | |
| Л, л | L, l | |
| М, м | M, m | |
| Н, н | N, n | |
| О, о | O, o | Like <i>o</i> in <i>port</i> . |
| П, п | P, p | |
| Р, р | R, r | |
| С, с | S, s | |
| Т, т | T, t | |
| У, у | U, u | Like <i>oo</i> . |
| Ф, ф | F, f | |
| Х, х | Kh, kh | Like <i>ch</i> in <i>loch</i> . |
| Ц, ц | Ts, ts | |
| Ч, ч | Ch, ch | |
| Ш, ш | Sh, sh | |
| Щ, щ | Shch, shch | |
| Ъ | " | In Russian, the <i>hard sign</i> designating the hardening of the preceding consonant. The letter is absent from the Ukrainian alphabet. |
| ‘ | " | Ukrainian apostrophe is equivalent to Russian <i>Ъ</i> (<i>hard sign</i>). Not used in Russian. |
| Ы | y | Close to <i>i</i> in <i>pin</i> . The letter is absent from the Ukrainian alphabet. |
| Ь | ‘ | The <i>soft sign</i> designating the softening of the preceding consonant. |

| Cyrillic | English | Comment |
|----------|---------|---|
| Э, э | È, è | Like <i>e</i> in <i>set</i> . The letter is absent from the Ukrainian alphabet. |
| Ю, ю | Yu, yu | Like <i>u</i> in <i>mute</i> . |
| Я, я | Ya, ya | Like <i>ya</i> in <i>yard</i> . |

The Russian letter *Ë, ë* is not used in the dictionary portion of this book when transliterating surnames. It appears only in (1) some examples given in the introductory portion; (2) the transcription of a few Russian source words in the dictionary portion. In both cases, the same letters *È, è* are used for the transliteration. It is pronounced as *ya* in English *yawn*. In Russian printed documents, however, this letter is used rarely and is regularly replaced by *E, e*. Among the examples of Jewish surnames in which *e* corresponds to this sound are: Agrachev, Aen, Chernyj, Degot', Drukarev, Fonarev, Kovalev, Krasnoper, Shlesberg, Slez, Teplen'kij, Vorob'ev, Zelenyj. Certain surnames have both pronunciation variants, with /e/ and with /yo/: Aleshinskij, Kishinevskij, Temkin, Temchin, and Zimilevich.

In order to avoid confusion, the combination of the two Cyrillic consonants *mc*, which appears in some Slavic words, is rendered *t_s*, since *ts* represents *u*.

Note that the above transliteration scheme permits retransliteration back to the original Cyrillic alphabet. To arrive at the original surname, place name, common nouns, verbs and adjectives in the Russian or Ukrainian spelling, first transliterate *shch*; then the character combinations *sh, ch, kh, ts, ya, yu* and *zh*; finally, the remaining letters of the Roman alphabet.

Belarusian words are mainly cited in this book in their Russified form found in the dictionary by Nosovich (1870); it ignores the global reform of 1933 that made the Belarusian spelling conform to the way the words are pronounced. As a result, the rules for the transliteration of Russian presented in Table 0.2 are valid for Belarusian too. A few spellings taken from modern dictionaries include the contemporary Belarusian letter *Ź, ź*. It is pronounced similarly to English *w* and transliterated in this book as *W, w*.

Phonetic Equivalents of Certain Polish, German and Romanian Letters

The rules are presented in the tables below.

Table 0.3 Phonetic Equivalents of Certain Polish Letters and Letter Combinations

| Polish | English equivalent |
|--------|--|
| c | <i>ts</i> |
| ć, ci | soft <i>ch</i> |
| cz | hard <i>ch</i> |
| ch | like <i>ch</i> in <i>loch</i> |
| ę | <i>em</i> (before <i>b</i> or <i>p</i>) or <i>en</i> or nasal <i>e</i> (in other cases) |
| ó | <i>oo</i> |
| ż | hard <i>zh</i> |
| ź, zi | soft <i>zh</i> |
| y | as <i>i</i> in <i>pin</i> |

| Polish | English equivalent |
|--------|--|
| ś, si | soft <i>sh</i> |
| sz | hard <i>sh</i> |
| rz | hard <i>zh</i> (or hard <i>sh</i> when following a voiceless consonant) |
| ń | <i>ny</i> , soft <i>n</i> |
| ą | <i>om</i> (before <i>b</i> or <i>p</i>) or <i>on</i> or nasal <i>o</i> (in other cases) |
| ł | close to <i>w</i> |
| j | like <i>y</i> in <i>boy</i> |
| w | <i>v</i> |
| | |