

ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਪਰਾਈਮਰ
PANJABI PRIMER

Scientifically-designed for easy learning

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DEDICATED
TO

Those who promote the Panjabi language and culture.

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Publisher's Note:

The Panjabi language is rapidly being recognised by the North American people as one of the most modern languages of the world. Keeping in mind the increased demand for learning the Panjabi language, this Panjabi Primer is scientifically designed after a long period of practical experiments with the North American youth.

Originally the Panjabi Primer was published by the Sikh Education & Research Centre of Windsor, Ontario, Canada, but the stocks were sold out in a short period of time. Now, a thoroughly revised 2nd edition is hereby published by the Canadian Sikh Study and Teaching Society.

The Society is highly indebted to Dr. Gurbakhsh Singh (former professor and Dean, Panjab Agriculture University, Ludhiana, India), who has prepared this book with tremendous dedication and hard work. Through advanced techniques the author has made learning Panjabi language an easy task. We hope this book would be a great asset to the students and the teachers of the Panjabi language.

PANJABI FOR FAST LEARNERS

Panjabi is the language of the native people of Panjab, a land of five(panj) rivers in northwestern India. The script was improved and popularized by the Sikh Gurus. It was adopted by them to write Gurbani hymns, hence it became known as Gurmukhi. As the Gurmukhi script is used to write Panjabi only, the word Panjabi has also come to mean Gurmukhi. When we actually speak of learning Gurmukhi, more often we say Panjabi. Thus, Gurmukhi and Panjabi became synonymous.

This is a SCIENTIFICALLY-DESIGNED PANJABI PRIMER (Revised Edition) for fast learners. It has been prepared primarily for those people, who can read English and are 10 years or older. Younger people may find this is very helpful for learning to read Gurmukhi. It is based on the conversion method of learning Panjabi. According to this method, one learns to convert the Panjabi alphabet and vowels into corresponding English forms, the use of which the student already knows. It, therefore, enables a person to read Panjabi in about two weeks time. Learning by this technique becomes interesting because one starts reading and writing words the very first day. This is another reason that the trainees can learn reading Panjabi very quickly by this method.

Every language has its own set of consonants and its own method of assigning vowels to them. The Gurmukhi alphabet has 35 letters and 5 sets of vowels. Some consonants and vowels are unique to a particular language and may not be present in others. As of interest, Gurmukhi has about a dozen more consonants than English. To indicate the sound of many of these additional consonants, "h" is used as suffix to the English consonant. Two Panjabi consonants "ਝ" and "ਢ" have no parallel in English. We use the harder forms "t" and "d" to represent them, as in the name Gurdit Singh. The consonant "ਢ" is also unique to Panjabi and is represented by "rh" or "d".

English has three more sounds for "j" and they are represented by "z", "ge" and "ise". In Panjabi only one consonant "ਜ" was used for all these sounds. Later on to represent "z" sound, a dot was

placed below it "ਙ". This was necessitated to write the Persian and Arabic words which were adopted by the Panjabi people because of the influence of the ruling class. There are five consonants with a dot at the bottom. They have not been used in the Guru Granth Sahib as these additions in the script were adopted after its compilation. The tenth Guru, however, used them lavishly in his compositions.

The Panjabi script is simple and easy to understand because it has very definite rules of pronunciation. For those who know English, learning Panjabi is very easy. Observe the similarity of vowels, but differences in the pronunciation of the sets of following words:

a. Boot, Foot b. Sir, Sit c. But, Put

In Panjabi (Gurmukhi) there is no such variation or ambiguity in pronouncing Panjabi words. One letter has only one sound and for one sound, there is only one letter. If you already know English and have decided to learn Gurmukhi, you will find it quite easy. A person who spends one hour a day to understand Panjabi and another hour to practice it, can start reading Panjabi in about two weeks time.

The study of Part II will enable any person to read Panjabi newspapers and books in a couple of weeks. One can improve one's proficiency in it by reading books and by writing essays and stories in Panjabi regularly. Along with this, the study of idioms, phrases and grammar can be of great help to write in Panjabi or translate English into Panjabi and vice versa.

To make the learning interesting and easy for the youth, only four to six consonants and one set of vowels are introduced at a time. Further, short words with just two letters were chosen for a quick and better understanding of consonant and vowel sounds. The repetition of the same letter in multiple combinations is planned to help the student to correlate the shape and the sound of the letters with ease.

For fast and easy learning of Panjabi, be regular and carefully follow the directions.