**Country name in English:** Israel

**Country name in official language(s):** *ישראל*

**Language in English:** Hebrew

**Language name in official language(s):** *עברית*

**Last updated: August 2018**

[Note: Modern Israel is a multi-cultural society and names follow the rules of the specific country and language community with which the person identifies. This document details the elements of names written in Hebrew characters – Hebrew, Aramaic, Yiddish, Ladino, and various Judeo- languages. Romanization is included to assist those who cannot read Hebrew characters.]

**Biblical and post-Biblical period**

**NAME ELEMENTS**

**Elements normally forming part of a name**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Element* | *Type* | *Examples – Hebrew* | *Examples - Romanization* |
|  |  |  |  |
| 1. Forename | simple | כלב | Kalev |
|  |  |  |  |
| 2. Particle | indicating relationship | *בן*  (son of)  *בר*  (son of, in Aramaic) | *ben* (son of)  *bar* (son of, in Aramaic) |
| + |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
| 3. Patronymic |  | יפונה | Yefune |
|  |  |  |  |
| 4. Epithet | usually topographical | הקניזי | ha-Ḳenizi (i.e., *The Kenizzite* ) |
| *Note*: Elements 2, 3, and 4 were not always used. | | | |

**Additional elements to names**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Element* | *Use* | *Examples - Hebrew/Aramaic* | *Examples - Transliteration* |
|  |  |  |  |
| 1. Honorific and religious titles used by important authors, known as Sages or Rabbis, in the post-Biblical period, e.g., *Rabbi* (my master), *Rav* (my master, in Aramaic), *Rabbenu* (our master), *Rabban* (our master, in Aramaic, designating national spiritual chief), *Gaon* (Excellency) | before the forename | ***רבי*** *עקיבא בו יוסף*  ***רבן*** *יוחנן בן זכאי*  ***רב*** *נחמן בר יצחק*  ***רבנו*** *גרשום בן יהודה*  ***רבנו*** *יעקב תם* | *Rabbi* Aqiva ben Yosef  *Rabban* Yohanan ben  Zakkay  *Rav* Nahman bar Yizhaq  *Rabbenu* Gershom ben  Yehuda  *Rabbenu* Ya’aqov Tam |
| after the forename | סעדיה **גאון** | Seadya *Gaon* |

**Middle Ages onwards**

A large number of rabbinic authorities, and some other writers, became known by universally-used abbreviations derived from the forms of names described above. These abbreviated names were often applied posthumously. References from abbreviated to full forms are essential.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| *Name* | *Abbreviation used - Hebrew* | *Abbreviation used* - *Romanization* |
|  |  |  |
| *Ra*bbi *Sh*elomo *Y*izhaḳi (i.e., son of Isaac) | רש"י | Rashi |
| *Ra*bbi *M*oshe *b*en *M*aimon | רמב"ם | Rambam |
| *M*orenu *h*a-*R*av *Y*a’aqov ha-*L*evi | מהרי"ל | Maharil |
| *S*amuel *D*avid *L*uzzatto | שד"ל | Shadal |
| *Y*e*h*uda *L*ev *L*evin | יהל"ל | Yahalal |

Jews generally began to assume forms of names analogous to their surroundings, e.g., from the end of the Middle Ages for Jews in Spain and from the Napoleonic order of 1808 in France. The adoption of family names (surnames) by different groups of Jews took place at various times. Jews may have names which reflect the languages of the countries in which they lived or the Jewish languages used locally (Yiddish, Ladino, Judeo-Arabic, Judeo-German, etc.) Though the languages all share a character set, the rules of spelling are different and those differences are honored in determining the preferred name.

These non-Hebrew names were often kept by Jewish immigrants into Israel during this century. Others, particularly before and immediately after the establishment of the State of Israel, converted their names into Hebrew forms. For modern names prefer the form and spelling used by the person in the majority of resources.

**NAME ELEMENTS**

**Elements normally forming part of a name**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Element* | *Type* | *Examples* | | |
|  |  | *Hebrew* | *Found Romanization* | *Systematic Romanization* |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Forename(s) | simple | יעקב | Yaacov | Yaʻaḳov |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 2. Particle | indicating relationship | בן | ben | ben |
| + |  |  |  |  |
| 3. Patronymic |  | דוד | David | Daṿid |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 4. Title of descent |  | הכהן  הלוי | ha-Kohen, Hakohen, Hacohen  ha-Levi, Halevi,  ha-Levy, Halevy, etc. | ha-Kohen  ha-Leṿi |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 5. Surname | simple | עדס | Addes | ʻAdes |
|  | compound | רון-פדר-עמית | Ron-Feder-Amit | Ron-Feder-ʻAmit |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| *Note:* Elements 2, 3, and 4 are unusual as additions to Israeli names in speech but are commonly recorded in religious publications. Element 4 may also serve as a surname. | | | | |

**ORDER OF ELEMENTS IN CATALOGUE HEADINGS**

**General rule**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Type of name* | *Entry element* | *Examples* | |
|  |  | *Hebrew* | *Romanized* |
|  |  |  |  |
| 1. Names without a family name | forename | שמעון בר-גיורא | **Simon** bar Giora |
|  |  |  |  |
| 2. Simple surname | surname | מזרחי, אברהם | **Mizrahi**, Avraham |
|  |  |  |  |
| 3. Compound surname | first part of compound | רדלר-פלדמן, יהושע  רון-פדר-עמית, גלילה | **Radler-Feldmann**, Joshua  **Ron-Feder-Amit**, Galila |
|  |  | *Note*: Names which look like compound surnames may not truly be. In the absence of information about the person's own preference, names attached by a hyphen are considered compound and those separated by a space are considered simple, with the final name being considered the surname. | |

**National cataloguing code**

New records in the national authority file are based on Resource Description and Access (RDA). Older records which have not yet been updated were created under the Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules (AACR) 2nd edition rev. 1988. Israeli rules can be found in the book *Omanut ha-Ḳitlug* (Adler & Kedar, 2013) and the protocols of the Inter-University Cataloguing Committee (2017).

**Transliteration scheme in use**

Romanization found in the resource or the person's known preference is strongly preferred over systematic Romanization. When the person's preference is unknown, LC's Romanization scheme is used.

**Authorities responsible for issuing library rules about names**

National Library of Israel

Inter-University Cataloging Committee

**National authority file of names**

The Israel national authority file is created by a cooperative of over 20 libraries and is maintained by the National library of Israel. The records are multi-lingual and multiscript, including available preferred forms of name in the country's four languages of cataloging (Hebrew, Arabic, English, and Russian). The OPAC can be found at <http://uli.nli.org.il/F?func=find-b-0&local_base=nlx10&con_lng=heb>. An XML file of personal name authorities including a Hebrew character heading (as of August 2018) is available for download at <http://web.nli.org.il/sites/NLI/Hebrew/infochannels/librarians/National-Authority-File/Documents/heb100.zip>

**Sources and recommended references**

Adler, E., & Kedar, R. (2013). *Omanut ha-Ḳiṭlug: Teʼur ṿe-hangashat mashʼabe medaʻ halakhah u-maʻaśeh al pi kelale ha-ḳiṭlug ha-ben-leʼumiyim ṿe-nohale ha-ḳiṭlug ha-meḳubalim be-Yiśra’el [The art of cataloging]*. Jerusalem: The National Library of Israel. Retrieved from <http://web.nli.org.il/NLI/Hebrew/infochannels/librarians/Catalogong_Art/Pages/default.aspx>

Catane, M. (1951). "Les changements de noms en Israel". *Revue internationale d'onomastique*, vol. 3, no. 4, pp. 301-313.

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Inter-University Cataloging Committee. (2017). Inter-University Cataloging Committee – Protocols and documents. Retrieved November 18, 2015, from http://web.nli.org.il/sites/NLI/Hebrew/infochannels/librarians/cataloging\_committee/Pages/default.aspx

Levy, P. (1960). *Les noms des Israelites en France.* Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1960.

Zunz, Leopold (1971). *Namen der Juden : eine geschichtliche Untersuchung*. Hildesheim: Gerstenberg.

**Authority for information provided**

National Library of Israel

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