

Urdu and Hindi

Spoken Urdu and Hindi are very similar, but they are written in different scripts. Urdu is the national language of Pakistan and therefore, the language of schooling. The grammar of the two languages is identical as it is for all North Indian languages.

Urdu script

خوش آمدید

Urdu is written in Arabic script and borrows many words from Persian and Arabic. It is written from right to left, It has 38 letters and some of these feature as both consonants and vowels. There is no distinction between upper and lower case.

Hindi script

स्वागतम्

Hindi is written in Sanskrit script and borrows words from Sanskrit. It is written from left to right but under the line rather than on it. There is no distinction between upper and lower case.

Hindi has 33 consonants and 10 vowel sounds. It has a phonetic script where the letter sound is also its name. There are full stops but no commas. There is no equivalent sound for short 'a' or 'w\

Sentence structure and word order

- The basic word order in a sentence is subject-object-verb (SOV) compared with the English order of SVO.
- Post positions are used instead of prepositions.

Articles: There is no definite or indefinite article before the noun.

Nouns and pronouns: A second form of the second person pronoun is used with elders/strangers as a mark of respect. Nouns are either masculine or feminine.

Verbs: The verb component of a sentence can consist of one, two or three parts. The first part of the verb is in root form with inflection to indicate tense.

Adverbs usually precede the noun.

Typical errors

- Putting verbs at the end of sentences: "He crayons not giving"
- Leaving out articles before a noun: "She give me sweet"
- Using prepositions after a noun or inserting them where unnecessary: "I told to my mum"
- Confusing placement of plurals, especially noun-adjective concord: "biggs dogs"
- Incorrect use of third person pronouns, particularly overuse of: "he", "him"
- Inappropriate use of 'no'; 'not': "He no play with me", "I not got my pencil"
- Omitting auxiliary verb: "My dad going Bangladesh", "He reading"
- Placing adverbs or adverbial phrases inappropriately: "He too much cursing"
- Wrong use (or lack) of preposition: "He hit me in the arm."