

urdukutabkhanapk.blogspot

Ethnicolinguistic

Regions of
Pakistan

Languages Of Pakistan



urdukutabkhanapk.blogspot



اردو کتب خانہ

URDUKUTABKHANAPK.BLOGSPOT

Languages of Pakistan

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Jump to: [navigation](#), [search](#)



Official language(s) [Urdu](#), [English](#)

National language(s) [Urdu](#)

Main language(s) [Punjabi](#) (44%), [Pashto](#) (15%), [Sindhi](#) (14%), [Saraiki](#) (12%), [Urdu](#) (7.6%) (understood & spoken by 90%), [Balochi](#) (3.6%)

Sign language(s) [Pakistan Sign Language](#)

Common keyboard layout(s) [Urdu keyboard](#)



Part of [a series on](#) the

[Culture of Pakistan](#)



Pakistan Monument, Islamabad

[History\[show\]](#)

[People\[show\]](#)

[Languages\[show\]](#)

[Traditions](#)

[Mythology and folklore](#)

[Cuisine](#)

[Festivals\[show\]](#)

[Religion\[show\]](#)

[Art\[show\]](#)



[Literature\[show\]](#)

[Music and performing arts\[show\]](#)

[Media\[show\]](#)

[Sport](#)

[Monuments\[show\]](#)

Symbols[show]
 Culture portal
 Pakistan portal
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• v• t• e

Languages of Pakistan include two official languages: [Urdu](#) and [English](#) and four major provincial languages: [Punjabi](#), [Pashto](#), [Sindhi](#) and [Balochi](#). Urdu is also [Pakistan's national language](#) and *lingua franca*. Other major regional languages include [Saraiki](#), [Hindko](#) and [Brahui](#). There are also numerous minor languages.

Most of the languages of Pakistan belong to the [Indo-Iranian](#) group of the [Indo-European language family](#).

Contents

- [1 History](#)
- [2 Statistics](#)
- [3 National language: Urdu](#)
- [4 Provincial languages](#)
 - [4.1 Punjabi](#)
 - [4.1.1 Major Punjabi dialects](#)
 - [4.2 Pashto](#)
 - [4.3 Sindhi](#)
 - [4.3.1 Major Sindhi dialects](#)
 - [4.4 Balochi](#)
- [5 Regional languages](#)
 - [5.1 Saraiki](#)
 - [5.2 Hindko](#)
 - [5.3 Kashmiri](#)
 - [5.4 Brahui](#)
 - [5.5 Shina](#)
- [6 Other languages](#)
 - [6.1 English \(official language\)](#)
 - [6.2 Arabic \(religious language\)](#)
 - [6.3 Persian](#)
 - [6.4 Turkic languages \(cultural language\)](#)
 - [6.5 Minor languages](#)

- [7 Classification](#)
 - [7.1 Indo-European](#)
 - [7.2 Non-Indo-European](#)
- [8 Writing systems](#)
- [9 See also](#)
- [10 References](#)
- [11 External links](#)

History

Main article: [Linguistic history of the Indian subcontinent](#)

Statistics

Rank	Language	1998 census ^[1]	1982 census	1961 census	1951 census
1	Punjabi	44.15%	48.17%	66.39%	67.08%
2	Pashto	15.42%	13.15%	8.47%	8.16%
3	Sindhi	14.1%	11.7%	12.59%	12.85%
4	Saraiki *	10.53%	9.54%	--	--
5	Urdu	7.57%	7.60%	7.57%	7.05%
6	Balochi	3.57%	3.02%	2.49%	3.04%

- [Saraiki](#) was included with [Punjabi](#) in 1951 and 1961 census

Following are the major languages spoken in Pakistan. The percentage of Pakistanis who are native speakers of that language is also given.

Numbers of speakers of larger languages

Language	2008 estimate	1998 census	1951 census	Areas of Predominance
1 Punjabi	76,367,360	44.17%	58,433,431	44.15% Punjab
2 Pashto	26,692,890	15.44%	20,408,621	15.42% Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa
3 Sindhi	24,410,910	14.12%	18,661,571	14.10% Sindh
4 Saraiki	18,019,610	10.42%	13,936,594	10.53% Southern Punjab
5 Urdu	13,120,540	7.59%	10,019,576	7.57% Karachi
6 Balochi	6,204,540	3.59%	4,724,871	3.57% Balochistan

National language: Urdu

کیا تنگت ہم ستم زدگاں کا جان ہے
جس میں کہ ایک بیضہ مور آسمان ہے



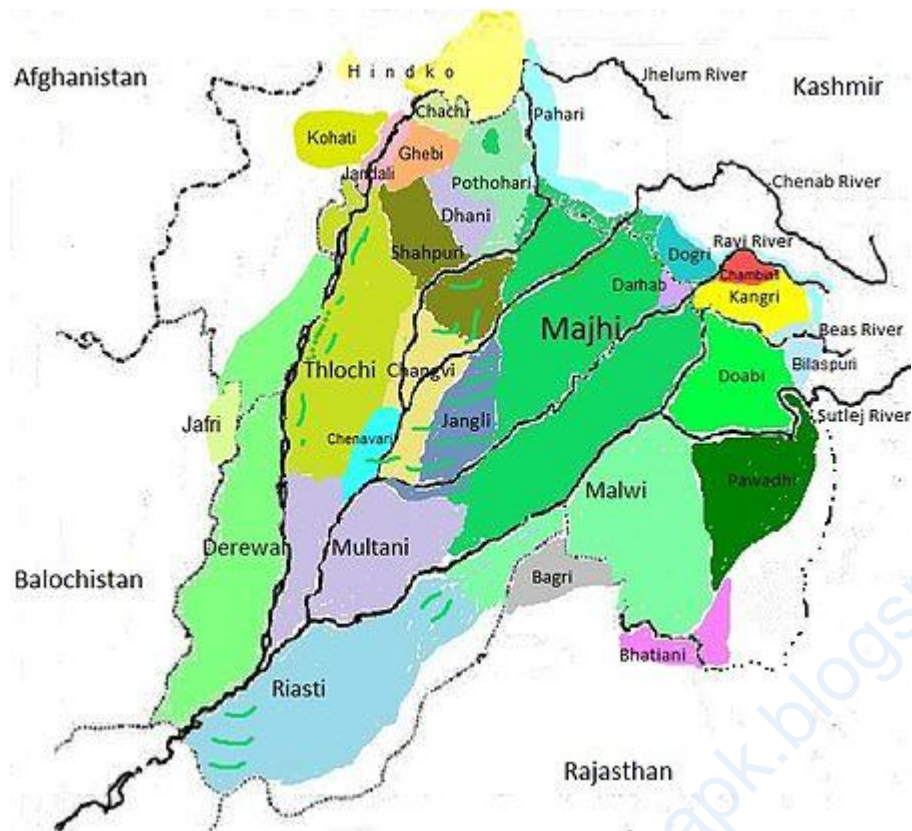
An example of the [Nasta'liq](#) script used for writing [Urdu](#)

[Urdu](#) (اردو) is the [national language](#) (قومی زبان), *lingua franca* and one of two official languages of Pakistan (the other being English). Although only about 8% of Pakistanis speak it as their first language, it is spoken and understood as a second language by almost all Pakistanis. Its introduction as the [lingua franca](#) was encouraged by the [British](#) upon the capitulation and annexation of [Sindh](#) (1843) and [Punjab](#) (1849) with the subsequent ban on the use of [Persian](#). The decision to make the language change was to institute a universal language throughout the then [British Raj](#) in [South Asia](#) as well as minimize the influence of [Persia](#), [Ottoman Empire](#), [Afghanistan](#) and [Central Asia](#) had on this transitional region. [Urdu](#) is a relatively new language in the contemporary sense but has undergone considerable modifications and development borrowing heavily on the traditions of older languages like [Persian](#), [Arabic](#), [Turkish](#) and local [South Asian languages](#) all of which can be found in its vocabulary. It began as a standardized register of [Hindi](#) and in its spoken form. It is widely used, both formally and informally, for personal letters as well as public literature, in the literary sphere and in the popular media. It is a required subject of study in all primary and secondary schools. It is the first language of most [Muhajirs](#) ([Muslim](#) refugees that fled from [genocide](#) and [pogroms](#) from different parts of [India](#) after independence of Pakistan in 1947) that form nearly 8% of Pakistan's population and is an acquired language. As Pakistan's national language, Urdu has been promoted to promote national unity. It is written with a modified form of the [Perso-Arabic alphabet](#), usually in [Nastaliq script](#), and its basic [Hindustani](#) vocabulary has been enriched by words from [Persian](#), [Arabic](#), [Turkic languages](#) and [English](#). Urdu has drawn inspiration from [Persian literature](#) and has now an enormous stock of words from that language. In recent years, the Urdu spoken in Pakistan has gradually been influenced by many of the native languages including [Pashto](#), [Punjabi](#) and [Sindhi](#) in terms of intonation, as well as incorporating terminology from those languages. As such the language is constantly developing and has acquired a particularly "Pakistani" flavour to it distinguishing itself from that spoken in ancient times and in India. The first poetry in Urdu was by the Persian poet [Amir Khusro](#) (1253–1325) and the first Urdu book "Woh Majlis" was written in 1728; the first time the word "Urdu" was used was by [Sirajuddin Ali Khan Arzoo](#) in 1741.^[2] The [Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb Alamgir](#) (1658–1707) spoke [Urdu](#) (or [Hindustani](#)) fluently as did his descendants while his ancestors mostly spoke [Persian](#) and [Turkish](#).^[3]

Provincial languages

Main article: [Provincial languages of Pakistan](#)

Punjabi



Dialects of Punjabi

[Punjabi](#) (پنجابی) is spoken as a first language by more than 44% of Pakistanis, mostly in [Punjab](#). The exact numbers of Punjabi speakers in Pakistan is difficult to ascertain since there are many dialects, such as [Saraiki](#), which some regard as part of Punjabi and others regard as a separate language. When taking into account Hindko, Potwari, Pahari, Saraiki, Punjabi dialects are thus spoken by almost 60% of the population in Pakistan. The standard Punjabi dialect is from [Lahore](#), [Sialkot](#), [Gujranwala](#) and [Sheikhupura](#) districts of the Pakistani Punjab which was used by [Waris Shah](#) (1722–1798) in his famous book [Heer Ranjha](#) and is also nowadays the language of Punjabi literature and music.

Punjabi is descended from [Prakrit](#) in the Vedic period (1700 B.C.), [Pali](#), Old Persian and [Apabhramsha](#) in the [Ashoka](#) period (273 B.C. - 232 B.C.) and Hindvi, Lahori and Multani in the Muslim period (711 A.D. - 1857 A.D.). Punjabi literature was principally spiritual in nature and has had a very rich oral tradition.

Major Punjabi dialects

[Majhi](#) or Standard Punjabi

Spoken mainly in central [Punjab](#), the [Majhi dialect](#) is the dialect of the historical region of [Majha](#),^[4] which spans the [Lahore](#), [Sheikhupura](#), [Kasur](#), [Okara](#), [Gujranwala](#), [Wazirabad](#), [Sialkot](#), [Narowal](#), [Gujrat](#) and to some extent in [Jhelum](#) District of [Pakistani](#)

[Punjab](#) and [Amritsar](#), [Tarn Taran Sahib](#), and [Gurdaspur](#) Districts of the [Indian](#) State of [Punjab](#).

[Pothowari](#)

Spoken mainly in northern [Punjab](#) in the Potohar Plateau. Alternative names include: Potwari, Pothohari, Potohari, Chibhali, [Dhundi-Kairali](#). Dialects: Pahari (Dhundi-Kairali), Pothwari (Potwari), Chibhali, PUNCHHI (Poonchi), Jhelumi, Mirpuri. Pahari means 'hill language' referring to a string of divergent dialects, some of which may be separate languages. A dialect chain with Panjabi and Hindko. Closeness to western Pahari is unknown. Lexical similarity 76% to 83% among varieties called 'Pahari', 'Potwari', and some called 'Hindko' in [Mansehra](#), [Muzaffarabad](#), and Jammun. Classification: Indo-European, Indo-Iranian, Indo-Aryan, Northern zone, Western Pahari.

[Hindko](#)

Spoken mainly in northwestern [Punjab](#) and southeastern [North-West Frontier Province](#) in the districts of [Attock](#), [Nowshera](#), [Mansehra](#), [Balakot](#), [Abbottabad](#) as well as in [Murree](#) and the lower half of [Neelum District](#) and Muzaffarabad. Classified under [Lahnda languages](#) by many linguists; perhaps differs from Punjabi.

[Dhani](#)

The people of Pothohar speak Pothohari dialect. However, the people of Chakwal or the Dhanni area in particular do not speak Pothohari and are ethnologically not regarded as Potoharis. They speak a distinctive Chakwali or Dhanni dialect of Punjabi, which is closer to Shahpuri, a dialect spoken in the Shahpur-Salt Range area and also has a slight element of [Saraiki](#) and Pothohari.

Pashto

[Pashto](#) (پښتو) [Pashto](#) is spoken as a first language by 15.5% (28-30 millions) of Pakistanis, mostly in the [Khyber Pakhtunkhwa](#) and in [Balochistan](#) as well as by immigrants to the eastern provinces who are often not counted due to census irregularities. The [Pashto](#) has rich written literary traditions as well as an oral tradition. There are two major dialect patterns within which the various individual dialects may be classified; these are Pakhto, which is the Northern ([Peshawar](#)) variety, and the softer [Pashto](#) spoken in the southern areas. [Khushal Khan Khattak](#) (1613–1689) and [Rahman Baba](#) (1633–1708) were the most famous poets in the Pashto language. In the last part of 20th century, [Pakhto](#) or [Pashto](#) has produced some great poets like [Ghani Khan](#), [Khatir Afridi](#) and [Amir Hamza Shinwari](#). There are also many Pakistanis from the adjacent regions of [Punjab](#), [Sindh](#) and [Balochistan](#) who are conversant in Pashto and count it as their second language. They are not included in the overall percentage. [Karachi](#) is the biggest [Pashto](#) speaking city in the world although the Pashto speakers constitute only about 20% of Karachi's population.

Sindhi



Dialects of Sindhi

Sindhi (سڀڻس) is spoken as a first language by 15.5% of Pakistanis, mostly in [Sindh](#). It has a rich literature and is used in schools. It is an [Indo-Aryan \(Indo-European\)](#) language, derived from [Sanskrit](#), and [Arabic languages](#). The [Arabs](#) ruled [Sindh](#) for more than 150 years after [Muhammad bin Qasim](#) conquered it in 712 AD, remaining there for three years to set up Arab rule.

Consequently, the social fabric of Sindh contains elements of Arabic society. Sindhi is spoken by over 36 million people in Pakistan, and is the official language of Sindh province. It is widely spoken in the [Lasbela District](#) of [Balochistan](#) (where the [Lasi](#) tribe speaks a dialect of Sindhi), many areas of the [Naseerabad](#) and [Jafarabad](#) districts of [Balochistan](#), and by the Sindhi diaspora abroad. Sindhi language has six major [dialects](#): Sireli, Vicholi, Lari, Thari, Lasi and Kachhi. It is written in the [Arabic script](#) with several additional letters to accommodate special sounds. The largest Sindhi-speaking cities are [Karachi](#), [Hyderabad](#), [Sukkur](#), [Shikarpur](#), [Dadu](#), [Jacobabad](#), [Larkana](#) and [Nawabshah](#). [Sindhi literature](#) is also spiritual in nature. [Shah Abdul Latif Bhita'i](#) (1689–1752) is one of its greatest poets, and wrote [Sassi Punnun](#) and [Umar Marvi](#), folk stories, in his famous book "[Shah Jo Risalo](#)".

Major Sindhi dialects

- **Sindhi Saraiki** - a version of Saraiki regarded as a dialect of [Sindhi](#); spoken mainly in northern Sindh
- **Vicholi** - considered the general dialect of Sindhi and spoken mostly in central Sindh
- **Lari** - spoken mostly in southern Sindh
- **Lasi** - spoken mostly in western Sindh
- **Thari** or **Thareli** - spoken mostly in eastern Sindh
- **Kachhi** - spoken mostly in the [Kutch](#) region in southeastern Sindh

Balochi

Balochi (بچولب) is spoken as a first language by about 4% of Pakistanis, mostly in [Balochistan](#) province. It is believed that the language was brought to its present location in a series of migrations from the [Kurdistan](#) region of northeastern [Iraq](#) and northwestern [Iran](#). Rakshani is the major dialect group in terms of numbers. Sarhaddi is a sub-dialect of Rakshani. Other sub-dialects are Kalati (Qalati), Chagai-Kharani and Panjguri. Eastern Hill Balochi or Northern

Balochi is very different from the rest. Balochi language is very close to the [Persian](#) itself. The name *Balochi* or *Baluchi* is not found before the 10th Century. [Rakshani](#) is the major dialect group in terms of numbers. [Sarhaddi](#), is a sub dialect of Rakshani. Other sub - dialects are [Qalati](#), [Chagai Kharani](#), and [Makrani](#). The Eastern Hill Balochi or Northern Balochi are distinct dialects. The Kethran language in North East Balochistan is also a variant of Balochi. It is one of the 9 distinguished languages of Pakistan. Since [Balochi](#) is a very poetic and rich language and have a certain degree of affinity to [Persian](#) and [Urdu](#), Balochi poets tend to be very good poets in Urdu as well and Ata Shaad, [Gul Khan Nasir](#) and [Noon Meem Danish](#) are excellent examples of this.

Regional languages



Saraiki Speaking Areas in Pakistan



[Life in Pakistan](#)

- [Cinema](#)
- [Citizenship](#)
- [Climate](#)
- [Communication](#)
- [Cuisine](#)
- [Culture](#)
- [Demographics](#)
- [Economy](#)
- [Education](#)
- [Geography](#)
- [History](#)
- [Holidays](#)
- [Human rights](#)
- Languages**
- [Law](#)

Literature
Media
Military
Music
Nationalism
Politics
Religion
Sport
Tourism
Transport
v
t
e

Saraiki

[Saraiki](#) (سیکی یا سرائی) is spoken in Pakistani Punjab. It is mostly spoken in southern and western districts of Punjab, which comprises Multan, Lodhran, Bahawalpur, Mianwali, Bhakkar, Layyah, Dera Ghazi Khan, Muzaffargarh, Rahim Yar Khan, Khanewal, Bahawalnagar and Khushab districts. It is also spoken by majority of population of Dera Ismail Khan district in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (اوخنوت پشپ ربیخ) province, kachi plain of Balochistan, northern parts of Sindh, and cities of Hyderabad and Karachi.

Saraiki, belongs to the Indo-Aryan branch of Indo-European. According to global recordings languages these are also Saraiki.

[Jhangvi](#) or Jhangochi, spoken in the central Pakistani Punjab, stretches from districts Khanewal to Jhang and includes Faisalabad, Sahiwal and Chiniot. Shahpuri, spoken in Mianwali, [Sargodha](#), [Khushab](#) and [Mandi Bahauddin](#) districts. [Hindko](#), spoken in districts of Peshawar, Attock, Nowshera, Mansehra, Balakot, Abbottabad and Murree and the lower half of Neelum District and Muzafarabad.

Hindko

[Hindko language](#) (وکندن) is known as the "language of the mountains." It is spoken in many dialects in the districts of [Peshawar](#), Kohat, Nowshera, Swabi, Haripur, Abbottabad, Mansehra, [Attock](#), [Murree](#), the lower half of [Neelum District](#) and Muzafarabad District of Kashmir. [Hindko](#) is an ancient [Indo-Aryan language](#) spoken by [Hindkowan](#)s in Pakistan. It is very similar to northern dialects of Punjabi. The language is spoken in the areas of the [Khyber Pakhtunkhwa](#) (including [Hazara](#)), local people of Peshawar [Punjab](#) and [Azad Kashmir](#) by an estimated 2.2 to 4 million people. ^{[[citation needed](#)]} During the pre-Buddhist era in present day Pakistan, the language of the masses was refined by the ancient grammarian [Pānini](#), who set the rules of a structurally rigorous language called [Sanskrit](#) which was used principally for scriptures (analogous to [Latin](#)

in the Western world). Meanwhile, the vernacular language of the masses, [Prakrit](#) developed into many tongues and dialects which spread over the northern parts of [South Asia](#). Hindko is believed to be closely related to Prakrit. Due to the geographic isolation of the regions, it has undergone very little grammatical corruption, but has borrowed considerable vocabulary from its neighbours, in particular [Pashto](#). It shows close affinity to Punjabi and the Lahnda sub-group of Indo-Aryan tongues and can be sub-divided into a northern and southern dialects.

Kashmiri

[Kashmiri](#) (کٲٲشُر) is an ancient [Dardic language](#) spoken in [Azad Kashmir](#), [Gilgit–Baltistan](#) and [Punjab](#) provinces of [Pakistan](#). There are over 2 million Kashmiri speakers in Pakistan. Most of the [Kashmiris](#) in [Punjab](#) province and [Karachi](#) are refugees and their descendents who fled Indian invasion and occupation of [Kashmir](#) in 1948.

In 1919 [George Abraham Grierson](#) wrote that “Kashmiri is the only one of the [Dardic languages](#) that has a literature”. Kashmiri literature dates back to over 750 years, this is, more-or-less, the age of many a modern literature including modern [English](#). Kashmiri retains several features of [Old Indo-Aryan](#) that have been lost in other Modern Indo-Aryan languages such as [Urdu](#), [Punjabi](#) and [Sindhi](#).^[5]

Brahui

[Brahui](#) (یوہارب) is a [Dravidian language](#) of central and east-central [Balochistan](#). The language has been influenced by neighboring [Balochi](#) and to a lesser extent by [Sindhi](#) and [Pashto](#). 1–1.5% of the Pakistani population has Brahui as their first language. It is one of the nine distinguished^[clarification needed] languages of [Pakistan](#). The [Mengals](#) are a famous Brahui tribe.

The [Brahui people](#) have traditionally been taken as a relict population, suggesting that [Dravidian languages](#) were formerly more widespread but were supplanted by the incoming [Indo-Aryan languages](#).^[6] However, this idea has fallen out of favor; Brahui appears to have migrated to Balochistan from [central India](#) after 1000 CE, as evidenced by the absence of [Avestan](#) loanwords. The main Iranian contributor to Brahui vocabulary, Balochi, is a western Iranian language like [Kurdish](#) that moved to the area from the west only around 1000 CE.^[7]

Shina

[Shina](#) (انیش) (also known as Tshina) is a [Dardic language](#) spoken by a plurality of people in [Gilgit–Baltistan](#) of [Pakistan](#). The valleys in which it is spoken include [Astore](#), [Chilas](#), [Dareil](#), [Tangeer](#), [Gilgit](#), [Ghizer](#), and a few parts of [Kohistan](#). It is also spoken in [Gurez](#), [Drass](#), [Kargil](#), [Karkit Badgam](#) and [Ladakh](#) valleys of Kashmir. There were 321,000 speakers of Gilgiti Shina in 1981.

Other languages

English (official language)

[English](#) is one of the [official languages](#) of Pakistan (the other being Urdu) and is widely used in the executive, legislative and judicial branches as well as to some extent in the officer ranks of Pakistan's armed forces. Pakistan's [Constitution](#) and laws are written in English. It is also widely used in [schools](#), [colleges](#) and [universities](#) as a [medium of instruction](#). Amongst the more educated social circles of Pakistan, English is seen as the language of upward mobility and its use is becoming more prevalent in upper social circles often spoken alongside native Pakistani languages.

Arabic (religious language)

[Arabic](#) (عربي) is the religious language of Muslims. The [Quran](#), [Sunnah](#), [Hadith](#) and [Muslim](#) theology is taught in Arabic with [Urdu](#) translation. The Pakistani diaspora living in the [Middle East](#) has further increased the number of people who can speak Arabic in Pakistan. Arabic is taught as a religious language in [mosques](#), [schools](#), [colleges](#), [universities](#) and [madrasahs](#). A majority of Pakistan's [Muslim](#) population has had some form of formal or informal education in the reading, writing and pronunciation of the [Arabic language](#) as part of their religious education.

Persian

Main article: [Persian language in South Asia](#)

See also: [Persian and Urdu](#)

[Persian](#) (پارسی) was the language of [Muslims](#) in South Asia before the advent of the British and was the official and cultural language of the [Mughal Empire](#). Persian was officially abolished from the region with the arrival of the British: in [Sindh](#) in 1843 and in [Punjab](#) in 1849 to minimize the influence of the [Mughal Empire](#). It is still spoken and understood by a few in Pakistan as a literary language. Many [Persian](#) speaking refugees from [Afghanistan](#) have settled in [Pakistan](#) permanently.

Turkic languages (cultural language)

[Turkic](#) (تورک) languages were used by the ruling [Turco-Mongols](#) (or [Mughals](#)) and earlier [Sultans](#) of [India](#) many of whom have settled in Pakistan. There are pockets of Turkic speakers found throughout the country, notably in the valleys in the countries northern regions which lie adjacent to [Central Asia](#), western Pakistani region of [Waziristan](#) principally around [Kanigoram](#) where the [Burki tribe](#) dwells and in Pakistan's urban centres of [Karachi](#), [Lahore](#) and [Islamabad](#). The autobiography of [Mughal](#) emperor [Babur](#), [Tuzk Babari](#) was also written in [Turkish](#). After returning from exile in [Safavid Persia](#) in 1555, [Mughal](#) emperor [Humayun](#) introduced [Persian language](#) and culture in court and government. The [Chaghatai language](#), in which Babur had written his memoirs, disappeared almost entirely from the culture of the courtly elite, and [Mughal](#) emperor [Akbar](#) could not speak it. Later in life, Humayun himself is said to have spoken in Persian verse more often than not.

Many [Turkic](#) speaking refugees, mostly [Uzbeks](#) and [Turkmens](#), from [Afghanistan](#) have settled in [Pakistan](#) permanently.

The word [Urdu](#) is of [Turkic](#) origin, as Urdu was originally called *Zaban-e-Ordu* or *language of the Army*, *ordu* meaning *army*' in [Turkish](#).

Minor languages

Other languages spoken by linguistic minorities include the languages listed below, with speakers ranging from a few hundred to tens of thousands. A few are highly [endangered languages](#) that may soon have no speakers at all.^[8]

- [Aer](#)
- [Badeshi](#)
- [Bagri](#)
- [Balti](#)
- [Bateri](#)
- [Bhadra wahi](#)
- [Bhaya](#)
- [Brokska t](#)
- [Burig/Purik](#)
- [Burushaski](#)
- [Chambe ali](#)
- [Changthang](#)
- [Chilisso](#)
- [Chitrali](#)
- [Dari](#)
- [Dameli](#)
- [Dogri](#)
- [Dehawri](#)
- [Dhatki/T hari](#)
- [Domaaki](#)
- [Gawar-Bati](#)
- [Ghera](#)
- [Goaria](#)
- [Gowro](#)
- [Gujarati](#)
- [Gojri \(Gujari\)](#)
- [Gurgula](#)
- [Hazaragi](#)
- [Jadgali](#)
- [Jandavra](#)
- [Kabutra](#)
- [Kachchi/Kutchi](#)
- [Kalami](#)
- [Kalashamun](#)
- [Kalkoti](#)
- [Kamviri](#)
- [Kati](#)
- [Khetrani](#)
- [Khojki](#)
- [Khowar](#)
- [Kohistani Indus](#)
- [Koli-Kachi](#)
- [Koli-Parka ri](#)
- [Koli-Wadiyara](#)
- [Lasi](#)
- [Loarki](#)
- [Marwari](#)
- [Memoni](#)
- [Od/Odki](#)
- [Ormuri](#)
- [Palula](#)
- [Sansi](#)
- [Savi](#)
- [Swati](#)
- [Shina](#)
- [Kohistan](#)
- [Sindh-i-Bhili](#)
- [Torwali](#)
- [Uyghur](#)
- [Ushoj/Ushoji](#)
- [Bagri/Vagri](#)
- [Wakhi](#)
- [Waneci](#)
- [Yidgha](#)
- [Zangskari](#)

Classification

Indo-European

Most of the languages of Pakistan belong to the [Indo-Iranian branch](#) of the [Indo-European language family](#). They are divided between two major groups of that branch: [Indo-Aryan](#) (the majority, including Urdu, Punjabi, Sindhi, Hindko, and Saraiki, among others), and [Iranian](#) (including Pashto, Persian, Balochi, and Khowar, among others).

Indo-Aryan and Iranian languages are further divided into groups of languages, although the reasons for the divisions are not always well-documented. Indo-Aryan languages all belong to the same language genus Indo-Aryan, and Iranian languages all belong to a different language genus (Iranian).^[9]

Some of the important languages in the Indo-Aryan group are [dialect continuums](#). One of these is [Lahnda](#),^[10] and includes Western Panjabi (but not the [Panjabi](#) of India and Pakistan), Northern Hindko, Southern Hindko, Khetrani, Saraiki, and Pahari-Potwari, plus two more languages outside of Pakistan. The other is Marwari, and includes Marwari of Pakistan and several languages of India (Dhundari, Marwari, Merwari, Mewari, and Shekhawati).^[11] A third is [Rajasthani](#), and consists of [Bagri](#), [Gujari](#) in Pakistan and several others in India: Gade Lohar,^[12] [Harauti](#) (Hadothi), [Malvi](#), and Wagdi.

There are several dialects continuums in the Iranian group as well: [Balochi](#), which includes Eastern, Western and Southern Balochi;^[13] Pashtun, and includes Northern, Central, and Southern [Pashto](#);^[14] and Persian, which includes Western Farsi in Iran and Eastern Farsi in Pakistan and Afghanistan.

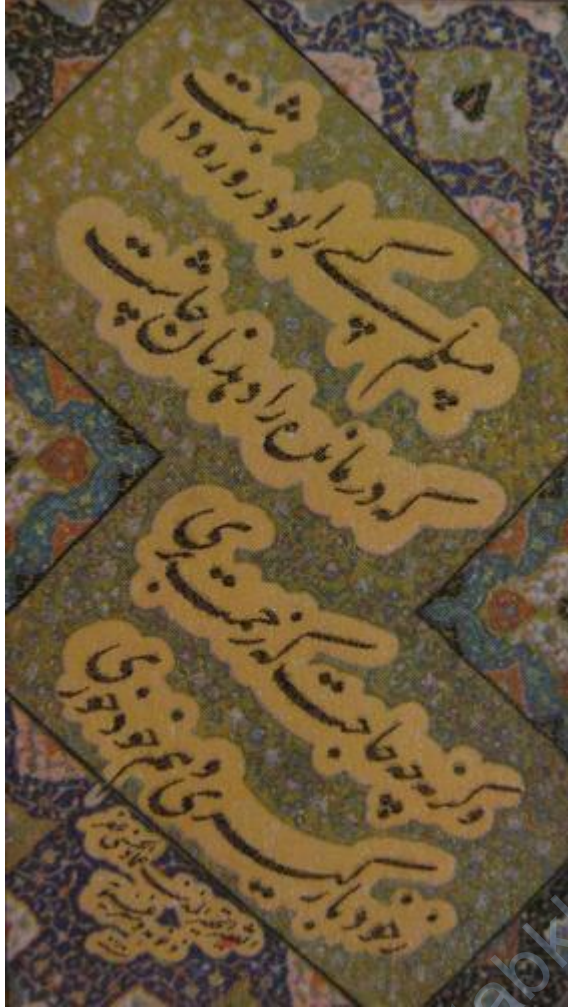
Non-Indo-European

The following four languages of Pakistan are not part of the [Indo-European language family](#):

- [Brahui](#) (spoken in central Balochistan province) is a [Dravidian language](#). Its vocabulary has been significantly influenced by Balochi. It has been suggested, with evidence, to be linked to the ancient [Indus valley civilization](#), but oral history and linguistic evidence indicates that it is a fairly recent immigrant to the area from southeastern India
- The [Balti dialect](#) of [Ladakhi](#) (spoken in an area of southern [Gilgit–Baltistan](#)) is a [Tibetan language](#) of the [Tibeto-Burman](#) language family^[15]
- [Burushaski](#) (spoken in Hunza, Nagar, Yasin, and Ishkoman valleys in Gilgit–Baltistan) is a [language isolate](#) with no written script

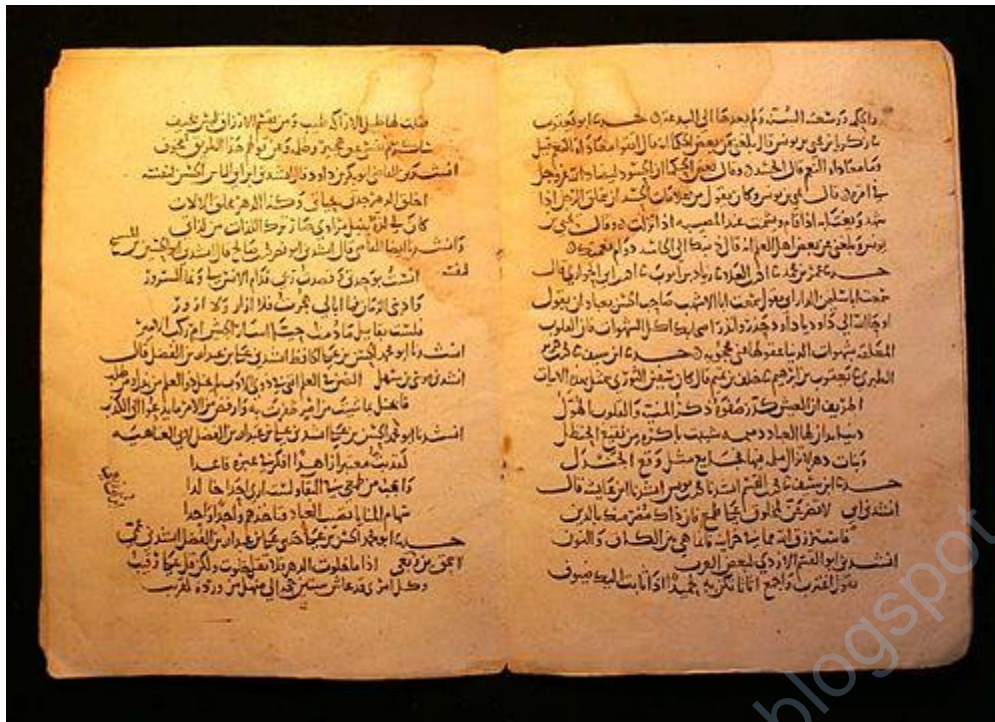
Writing systems

Main articles: [Nasta'liq script](#) and [Urdu alphabet](#)



Chalipa panel, [Mir Emad](#)

All languages of Pakistan are written in [Nasta'liq](#), a modified [Perso-Arabic script](#). The [Mughal Empire](#) used [Persian](#) as the court [language](#) during their rule over [South Asia](#). During this time, Nasta'liq came into widespread use in [South Asia](#). The influence remains to this day. In Pakistan, almost everything in Urdu is written in the script, concentrating the greater part of Nasta'liq usage in the world.



The earliest [Sindhi](#) manuscripts written during the [Abbasid Era](#)

After the [Islamic conquest of Persia](#), Iranians adopted the [Perso-Arabic script](#) and the art of [Persian calligraphy](#) flourished in Iran alongside other Islamic countries. Apparently, [Mir Ali Tabrizi](#) (14th century) developed Nasta'liq by combining two existing scripts of [Nash](#) and [Ta'liq](#). Hence, it was originally called [Nash-Ta'liq](#). Another theory holds that the name means "that which abrogated (naskh) Ta'liq".

Ta'liq script, in [Arabic calligraphy](#), cursive style of lettering developed in [Iran](#) in the 10th century. It is thought to have been the creation of Hasan ibn Husayn 'Alī of Fars, but, because Khwājah 'Abd al-Malik Buk made such vast improvements, the invention is often attributed to him. The rounded forms and exaggerated horizontal strokes that characterize the ta'liq letters were derived primarily from the [Riqā' script](#). The ornateness and sloping quality of the written line had roots in the [Tawqī' script](#) of [Ibn Muqlah](#) (died 940).

[Sindhi](#) adopted a variant of the [Persian alphabet](#) as well, in the 19th century. The script is used in Pakistan today. It has a total of 52 letters, augmenting the [Persian](#) with [digraphs](#) and eighteen new letters (چ ج ق ٹ پ ب ژ د د ڈ ڈ چ ج ق ٹ گ گ ک) for sounds particular to Sindhi and other Indo-Aryan languages. Some letters that are distinguished in [Arabic](#) or Persian are [homophones](#) in Sindhi.

The [Urdu alphabet](#) is the [right-to-left alphabet](#) used for the [Urdu language](#). It is a modification of the [Persian alphabet](#), which is itself a derivative of the [Arabic alphabet](#). With 38 letters, the Urdu alphabet is typically written in the [calligraphic Nasta'liq script](#), whereas [Arabic](#) is more commonly in the [Naskh](#) style.

Usually, bare transliterations of Urdū into Roman letters, [Roman Urdu](#), omit many [phonemic](#) elements that have no equivalent in English or other languages commonly written in the [Latin script](#).^[*citation needed*] The [National Language Authority](#) of [Pakistan](#) has developed a number of systems with specific notations to signify non-English sounds, but these can only be properly read by someone already familiar with Urdū, [Persian](#) or [Arabic](#) for letters such as ق or ژ or خ غ ط ص or ق and [Hindi](#) for letters such as [ٹ](#).^[*citation needed*]

[Balochi](#) and [Pashto](#) are written in [Perso-Arabic script](#).

The [Shahmukhī script](#) is a local variant of the [Urdu alphabet](#), a modified [Perso-Arabic script](#), which has been used by the [Punjabi Muslims](#) of [Punjab](#) to write [Punjabi language](#).

See also

- [Statistics Division of the Government of Pakistan](#)
- [National Language Authority](#)
- [Pakistani](#)
- [Demographics of Pakistan](#)

References