A Guide to Pronunciation of Diacritical Marks

In order to ensure uniformity, the diacritical marks used in this book follow the Dravidian convention even for Sanskrit, Persian, Arabic, and other non-Dravidian languages. Thus, Hāveri and kevalajñāna will be written as Hāvēri and kēvalajñāna, Gurshāsp and Shāh as Gurśāsp and Śāh.

Vowels
a as o in mother
ā as a in park
i as i in bill
ī as ee in week
u as oo in book
ū as oo in root
ṛ as r in crystal
e as e in men
ē as a in sage
ai as y in cry
ō as o in robust
ō as o in smoke
au as ou in ground

Semi-labial
m as m in empire

Semi-aspirate
ḥ as ah in the exclamation, yeah, but with mild aspiration

Guttural or Velar Consonants
k as c in country
kh as kh in ask her
g as g in wagon
gh as gh in big hunch
ṅ as n in monk

Palatal Consonants
c as ch in charity
ch as chh in witch hunt
j as j in jungle
jh as geh in challenge him
ṅ as n in bench
Retroflex or Cerebral or Lingual Consonants

\( \text{ṭ} \) as \( t \) in \textit{talk}, but uttered with tongue bent upwards to touch the hard palate

\( \text{ṭh} \) as \( \text{th} \) in \textit{boat house}, but uttered with tongue bent upwards to touch the hard palate

\( \text{ḍ} \) as \( d \) in \textit{rod}, but uttered with tongue bent upwards to touch the hard palate

\( \text{ḍh} \) as \( dh \) in \textit{god head}, but uttered with tongue bent upwards to touch the hard palate

\( \text{n} \) as \( n \) in the American pronunciation of \textit{horn}, but uttered with tongue bent upwards to touch the hard palate

Dental Consonants

\( \text{t} \) as \( \	ext{th} \) in \textit{three}, but without aspiration

\( \text{th} \) as \( \text{th} \) in \textit{think}

\( \text{d} \) as \( \	ext{th} \) in \textit{other}

\( \text{dh} \) as \( \	ext{teh} \) in \textit{bathe her}

\( \text{n} \) as \( n \) in \textit{native}

Labial Consonants

\( \text{p} \) as \( p \) in \textit{province}

\( \text{ph} \) as \( \text{ph} \) in \textit{stop him}

\( \text{b} \) as \( b \) in \textit{beach}

\( \text{bh} \) as \( \	ext{bh} \) in \textit{abhor}

\( \text{m} \) as \( m \) in \textit{master}

Liquids

\( \text{y} \) as \( y \) in \textit{young}

\( \text{r} \) as \( r \) in \textit{aroma}

\( \text{l} \) as \( l \) in \textit{love}

\( \text{v} \) as \( w \) in \textit{wheat}

Sibilants

\( \text{s} \) as \( sh \) in \textit{ash}

\( \text{š} \) as \( sh \) in \textit{wash}, but with tongue bent slightly upwards

\( \text{s} \) as \( s \) in \textit{secret}

Aspirate

\( \text{h} \) as \( h \) in \textit{host}

Dravidian liquids

\( \text{ṛ} \) as \( r \) in \textit{ring}, but uttered with tongue slightly bent upwards to touch the hard palate

Dravidian retroflex liquids

\( \text{l} \) as \( l \) in \textit{blow}, but uttered with tongue bent upwards to touch the hard palate

\( \text{l} \) as \( r \) in the American pronunciation of \textit{practice}