

DER YIDDISH LERER – THE YIDDISH TEACHER

Produced by the Chicago YIVO Society
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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to *Der Yiddish Lerer – The Yiddish Teacher*. This ten-lesson course will enable you to teach yourself the rudiments of introductory Yiddish, by learning vocabulary in the context of conversation. *Der Yiddish Lerer* takes you into the story of Rokhl and Dovid, an American brother and sister who decide to learn Yiddish. You will meet them and both sets of grandparents, immigrants from Warsaw and Vilna.

DESCRIPTION

Each lesson consists of two files:

- a pdf file with the dialogue in Yiddish, in transliteration, and in English translation,
 - a pdf file with the vocabulary in Yiddish, in transliteration, and in English translation. All text highlighted in blue is a link. In the table of contents, clicking on the chapter titles in blue (in English or Yiddish) will open up the corresponding lesson. Once in a lesson, you will be able to click on the title again. This time, it will open an audio file which accompanies the lesson. **NOTE: If asked to play the document, click Play.**
 - Next to the title inside the lesson page, there will also be a link labeled 'vocab'. Clicking on the 'vocab' link will lead you to the vocabulary portion of each lesson.
 - Once again, clicking on the title in the vocabulary PDF will open the relevant audio.
 - You may navigate back at any time by holding down the [Alt] key and pressing back arrow [←].
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- The first file on the CD is the Yiddish alphabet, with pronunciation, as produced by the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research (Yiddisher Visnshaftlekher Institut), the parent organization of the Chicago YIVO Society. The transliteration of Yiddish words in English follows the YIVO orthography standard: *kh* represents the guttural, as in “yekh!”
 - *ay* represents the vowel sound as in “Aye, aye, Sir!”
 - *ey* represents the vowel sound as in “hey!”
 - *o* represents the vowel sound as in “love.”
 - *i* represents the vowel sound as in “it” or “elite,” but not “ivory.”
 - *e* at the end of a word is pronounced as “eh.”

In addition, when Yiddish has consonants clustered together with no vowel sound *e* between them, no vowel is written. (The technical term is *shewa*.) For example, *shatkhn* is a matchmaker. (We have the *shewa* in English, too. We don't pronounce the *e* in *oven*: we could spell it *ovn*.)

In the vocabulary lists after each chapter, the plural form of nouns is in parentheses. (-) means the plural is the same as the singular.

SOFTWARE

To read the pdf files, you will need Adobe Acrobat. If your computer does not have this, you can download it free at <http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html>

NOTE: If you would like to use this as an audio CD, start with Track 2.

CREDITS

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Der Yiddish Lerer has been made possible by the generosity of Mr. Leo Melamed in memory of his parents, Isaac and Faygl Melamdovich. For fifty years, they were pillars of the Jewish cultural community in Chicago. They taught Yiddish language, Yiddish literature and Jewish history to literally thousands of children. Their home was a haven for all the prominent Jewish literary figures and dignitaries who visited Chicago. They were founders and active Executive Board members of the Chicago YIVO Society. *Der Yiddish Lerer* continues their legacy into future generations.

[Yiddish Alphabet and Pronunciation](#)