**Topic Page: Hindi language**

**Definition:** Hindi from *Philip's Encyclopedia*

Most widespread language in India, spoken in the north-central area by 154 million people. Hindi and English are the official languages of India. It derives from Sanskrit and belongs to the Indo-European family.

**Summary Article: Hindi language**

From *Britannica Concise Encyclopedia*

Indo-Aryan language of India, spoken or understood by more than 30% of the country's population. Modern Standard Hindi is a lingua franca (as well as native language) of millions of people in North India and the official language of the Indian Union. It is effectively a continuation of Hindustani, which developed from Khari Boli, the speech of certain classes and districts in Delhi affiliated with the Mughal court in the 16th–18th centuries. A heavily Persianized variant of Khari Boli used by Muslim authors formed the basis for Urdu. Hindustani was codified by the British at Fort William College in Calcutta (now Kolkata). There Hindu intellectuals promoted a Sanskritized form of Hindustani (see Sanskrit language) written in the Devanagari script (see Indic writing systems) in the late 18th and early 19th centuries; it became the progenitor of modern literary Hindi as used by Hindu authors. During the Indian independence movement, Hindustani was regarded as a national unifying factor, but after the partition in 1947 this attitude changed, and the name has practically dropped from use in favour of either Hindi or Urdu. Linguists, particularly George Abraham Grierson, have also used the term Hindi to refer collectively to all the dialects and regional literary languages of the northern Indian plain. Hindi has drastically simplified the complex grammar of Old Indo-Aryan while preserving certain phonetic features.

**Event:** Hindi language

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