

Consonants

(*vyañjana-*; *vyañjanāni*)

Stops (*sparsa-*; *sparsāḥ*)

All stops are arranged in five groups or series (*varga-*; *vargāḥ*) according to their points of contact (*sparsāḥ*). The five points of contact are:

1. *kañṭhah*
2. *tālu*
3. *mūrdhā*
4. *dantah*
5. *oṣṭhah*

These points are, respectively, the velar, palatal, retroflex, dental, and labial sounds. They are also known as the

1. *ka-vargah*
2. *ca-vargah*
3. *ṭa-vargah*
4. *ta-vargah*
5. *pa-vargah*

These 25 stops or “class-consonants” (*vargīya-vyañjanāni*) are arranged in the following order:

	VI U	VI A	V U	V A	NASALS
<i>kañṭhya-</i>	k क	kh ख	g ग	gh घ	ṅ ङ
<i>tālavya-</i>	c च	ch छ	j ज	jh झ	ñ ञ
<i>mūrdhanya-</i>	ṭ ट	ṭh ठ	ḍ ड	ḍh ढ	ṇ ण
<i>dantya-</i>	t त	th थ	d द	dh ध	n न
<i>oṣṭhya-</i>	p प	ph फ	b ब	bh भ	m म

Consonants (J. Santucci)

V = voiced (*ghoṣavant-*)
Vl = voiceless (*aghoṣa-*)
A = aspirated (*mahā-prāṇa-*)
U = unaspirated (*alpa-prāṇa-*) (actually: “little aspiration”)

Semivowels (*antaḥstha-* ; *antaḥsthāḥ*)

<i>tālavya-</i>	y य
<i>mūrdhanya-</i>	r र
<i>dantya-</i>	l ल
<i>oṣṭhya-</i> (or <i>dantyaṣṭhya-</i>)	v व

All semivowels are voiced and are the non-syllabic equivalents to the vowels इ, ई (य); ऋ, ॠ (र); लृ (ल) and उ, ऊ (व).

Fricatives, Spirants, or Sibilants (*ūṣman-* ; *ūṣmāṇaḥ*)

<i>tālavya-</i>	ś श
<i>mūrdhanya-</i>	ṣ ष
<i>dantya-</i>	s स
<i>kaṇṭhya-</i>	h ह

anusvārah

Written as *m̐* (in devanāgarī the [˙] above the horizontal line, as in ठ), is usually pronounced as a nasalized vowel (*i.e.*, the vowel preceding the *anusvārah*). In this regard, I follow the *Atharva-Prātiśākhya*. If it is a nasalized vowel, it is known as an *anunāsika-* (“accompanied by a nasal”). Strictly speaking, the *anunāsika-* is written as a [˙]. The original placement of the *anusvārah* was before a sibilant and pronounced as an open nasal, perhaps as a nasalization of the preceding vowel or as an independent nasal sound. If placed before the *vargīya-vyañjanāni*, then it may take on the nasal quality of the specific class.

visargaḥ

The visargaḥ, written as **ḥ** (or in devanāgarī as ḥ : below the horizontal line) is pronounced as an unvoiced sound but considered a voiced sound. It takes on the quality of the preceding vowel (ex. *devaḥ^a* except for the *ai* and *au* as in *devaiḥⁱ*; an example of *au* would be extremely rare: *dyauḥ^u*). As mentioned elsewhere, the *visarga-* may be pronounced as *jihvāmūlīya-* or *upadhmānīya-*. In the texts these were written as ḥ above the horizontal line.