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JORDAN

Country name	Jordan
State title	Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan
Name of citizen	Jordanian
Official language	Arabic (ara)[1]
Country name in official language	الأردن (Al Urdun)[2]
State title in official language	المملكة الأردنية الهاشمية (Al Mamlakah al Urdunīyah al Hāshimīyah)
Script	Arabic is written in Perso-Arabic script
Romanization System	[BGN/PCGN Romanization System for Arabic 1956](#)
ISO-3166 code (alpha-2/alpha-3)	JO/JOR
Capital	Amman
Capital in official language	عمان ('Ammān[3])
Population	11,935,542[4]
Area	88,794 km^2

Introduction

Jordan claimed its independence in 1946, when the United Nations (UN) approved the end of the British Mandate and recognised the Hashemite Kingdom of Transjordan as an independent country. In 1948 the name of the state was changed to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Jordan lies on the East Bank of the Jordan River and is bordered by Israel and Palestine (West Bank) to the west, Syria to the north, Iraq to the northeast, and Saudi Arabia to the east and south. Jordan also has a small coastline on the Red Sea (27 km).

Geographical names policy

Official geographical names in Jordan are found written in Arabic, the country's official language. The Arabic-script names found on official sources should be romanized using the [BGN/PCGN Romanization System for Arabic](#)[5] and all diacritical marks should be included where possible[6].

The primary source of geographical names for Jordan is mapping produced by the [Royal Jordanian Geographic Centre](#) (RJGC). Supplementary information produced by the [Jordanian Department of Statistics](#) may also be used. RJGC produces mapping in both Arabic and Roman script. The RJGC Roman-script names

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[1] The three-letter codes for languages provided in brackets in this document are the ISO 639-3 language codes.
[2] Although Al Urdunn is found in the Hans Wehr *Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic* and Nigel Groom's *A Dictionary of Arabic Topography and Placenames*, official Jordanian sources show a single –n-, i.e. with no *shaddah* (doubling) on the final *nūn* (n).
[3] The capital is also referred to as Al 'Āşimah 'Ammān, which translates to "The capital 'Ammān".
[4] As of 27/11/25 Jordan Department of Statistics (http://www.dos.gov.jo).
[5] See note 2.
[6] See page 2.

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may differ from the forms resulting from application of the BGN/PCGN Romanization System. Roman-script mapping and other products produced by the Jordanian government and RJGC use a Jordanian Romanization system, which, although similar, differs from the BGN/PCGN Romanization System for Arabic in some respects. Consequently, some modifications would be required to official Jordanian Roman-script names to render them suitable for use on UK products.

Languages

Arabic (ara) is the official language of Jordan[7]. Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) is used for written purposes (i.e. government, media and education). Jordanian Arabic, a variety of South Levantine Arabic (ajp), which contains influences from English, French and Turkish, is the principal dialect spoken in the country.

Other Arabic dialects spoken include include Egyptian Spoken Arabic (arz), Mesopotamian Spoken Arabic (acm), North Mesopotamian Spoken Arabic (ayp), Najdi Spoken Arabic (ars) and Levantine Bedawi Spoken Arabic (avl). Adyghe (ady) and Kabardian (kbd) are also spoken by diaspora communities from the Caucasus[8]. English is widely spoken throughout the country.

Although geographical names are written in Arabic script and the generic terms used will usually be Arabic, Jordanian toponyms may have their origins in, or be influenced by, other languages.

Inventory of characters (and their Unicode encodings[9]):

The BGN/PCGN Romanization System for Arabic contains the following letter-diacritic combinations in addition to the unmodified letters of the basic Roman script[10]:

Romanization	Unicode encoding	Romanization	Unicode encoding
'	2018 or 02BB	Ī	012A
'	2019 or 02BC	ī	012B
Á	00C1	Ş	015E
á	00E1	ş	015F
Ā	0100	Ţ	0162
ā	0101	ţ	0163
Ḍ	1E10	Ū	016A
ḍ	1E11	ū	016B
Ḥ	1E28	Z̧	005A+0327*
ḥ	1E29	z̧	007A+0327*

*Note, the z + cedilla is not available as a single encoding.

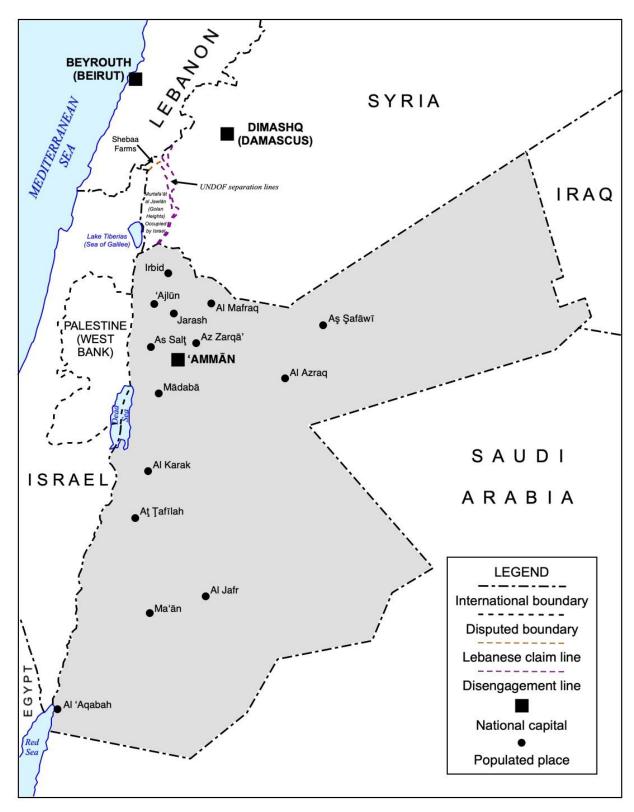[7] http://cco.gov.jo/Portals/0/constitution_en.pdf

[8] www.ethnologue.com

[9] See www.unicode.org

[10] Characters can be manually input into Microsoft word documents by typing in these character codes and then holding down the ALT key and pressing /x/. The code will change to the required character. The letter can be copied and pasted into other programmes if required. Alternatively the 'Insert – Symbol' command can be used; the code can be entered into the 'Character code' box which will show the corresponding letter.

A GeoNames Soft-Copy Keyboard can be downloaded from the NGA website and used to enter the required letter-diacritic combinations for a particular region: http://geonames.nga.mil/gns/html/gns_services.html .

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Map of Jordan

Map produced by PCGN for illustrative purposes only, and is not to be taken necessarily as representing the views of the UK government on boundaries or political status

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Administrative structure

At first-order administrative level (ADM1) Jordan is divided into 12 governorates (Arabic: Muḥāfaẓah[11]), each of which is administered by a governor appointed by the king[12]. The governorates are sub-divided into 51 districts (ADM2) (Arabic: Liwā'), which are further divided into sub-districts (Arabic: Qaḍā'). Sources differ as to the number of sub-districts.[13]

1. 'Ajlūn (32° 20' 00" N 035° 45' 00" E)

Name in Arabic Script	عجلون
Long form name	Muḥāfaẓat 'Ajlūn
Long form name in Arabic Script	محافظة عجلون
Name of administrative centre	'Ajlūn
Name of administrative centre in Arabic Script	عجلون
Variant names	Ajloun
ISO 3166-2 code[14]	JO-AJ
ADM2s	2 districts

2. Al 'Aqabah (29° 45' 00" N 035° 20' 00" E)

Name in Arabic Script	العقبة
Long form name	Muḥāfaẓat al 'Aqabah
Long form name in Arabic Script	محافظة العقبة
Name of administrative centre	Al 'Aqabah
Name of administrative centre in Arabic Script	العقبة
Variant names	Aqaba; Akaba
ISO 3166-2 code	JO-AQ
ADM2s	2 districts

3. Al 'Āşimah (31° 35' 00" N 036° 20' 00" E)

Name in Arabic Script	العاصمة
Long form name	Muḥāfaẓat al 'Āşimah
Long form name in Arabic Script	محافظة العاصمة
Name of administrative centre	'Ammān
Name of administrative centre in Arabic Script	عمان
Variant names of ADM1	Al Asimah; Amman; Amman City; Capital Governorate; 'Ammān; عمان
ISO 3166-2 code	JO-AM
ADM2s	9 districts

4. Al Balqā' (32° 10' 00" N 035° 45' 00" E)

Name in Arabic Script	البلقاء
Long form name	Muḥāfaẓat al Balqā'

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[11] The Roman-script spelling of generics ending in 'ah' changes to 'at' when followed by a place name, e.g. Muḥāfaẓ**ah** but Muḥāfaẓ**at** al 'Aqabah. This reflects the pronunciation of the words in this grammatical construction.

[12] Administrative maps can be found on the [Ministry of Municipality Affairs website](#) and on the [Royal Jordanian Geographic Centre website](#).

[13] Department of Statistics, Statistical Yearbook 2024: [Jordan Statistical Yearbook 2024 – Department of Statistics](#); Ministry of Interior: http://www.moi.gov.jo/Pages/viewpage.aspx?pageID=284

[14] ISO (International Organization for Standardization) 3166-2 codes are subdivision codes that represent the names of the principal subdivisions of countries coded in ISO 3166-1. The 3166-2 codes are based on the two-letter country code from ISO 3166-1 followed by a hyphen and up to three alphanumeric characters (https://www.iso.org/obp/ui/#search).

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Long form name in Arabic Script	محافظة البلقاء
Name of administrative centre	As Salţ
Name of administrative centre in Arabic Script	السلط
ISO 3166-2 code	JO-BA
ADM2s	5 districts

5. Al Karak (31° 10' 00" N 035° 45' 00" E)

Name in Arabic Script	الكرك
Long form name	Muḩāfaẓat al Karak
Long form name in Arabic Script	محافظة الكرك
Name of administrative centre	Al Karak
Name of administrative centre in Arabic Script	الكرك
ISO 3166-2 code	JO-KA
ADM2s	7 districts

6. Al Mafraq (32° 20' 00" N 037° 55' 00" E)

Name in Arabic Script	المفرق
Long form name	Muḩāfaẓat al Mafraq
Long form name in Arabic Script	محافظة المفرق
Name of administrative centre	Al Mafraq
Name of administrative centre in Arabic Script	المفرق
ISO 3166-2 code	JO-MA
ADM2s	4 districts

7. Aţ Ţafīlah (30° 45' 00" N 035° 35' 00" E)

Name in Arabic Script	الطفيلة
Long form name	Muḩāfaẓat aţ Ţafīlah
Long form name in Arabic Script	محافظة الطفيلة
Name of administrative centre	Aţ Ţafīlah
Name of administrative centre in Arabic Script	الطفيلة
Variant names	Tafilah; Tafila; Tafiela
ISO 3166-2 code	JO-AT
ADM2s	3 districts

8. Az Zarqā' (31° 50' 00" N 036° 50' 00" E)

Name in Arabic Script	الزرقاء
Long form name	Muḩāfaẓat az Zarqā'
Long form name in Arabic Script	محافظة الزرقاء
Name of administrative centre	Az Zarqā'
Name of administrative centre in Arabic Script	الزرقاء
Variant names	Zarqa
ISO 3166-2 code	JO-AZ
ADM2s	3 districts

9. Irbid (32° 30' 00" N 035° 50' 00" E)

Name in Arabic Script	إربد
Long form name	Muḩāfaẓat Irbid
Long form name in Arabic Script	محافظة إربد
Name of administrative centre	Irbid

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Name of administrative centre in Arabic Script	إربد
ISO 3166-2 code	JO-IR
ADM2s	9 districts

10. Jarash (32° 15' 00" N 035° 55' 00" E)

Name in Arabic Script	جرش
Long form name	Muḩāfaz̧at Jarash
Long form name in Arabic Script	محافظة جرش
Name of administrative centre	Jarash
Name of administrative centre in Arabic Script	جرش
Variant names	Jerash
ISO 3166-2 code	JO-JA
ADM2s	1 district

11. Ma'ān (30° 20' 00" N 036° 35' 00" E)

Name in Arabic Script	معان
Long form name	Muḩāfaz̧at Ma'ān
Long form name in Arabic Script	محافظة معان
Name of administrative centre	Ma'ān
Name of administrative centre in Arabic Script	معان
ISO 3166-2 code	JO-MN
ADM2s	4 districts

12. Mādabā (31° 35' 00" N 035° 40' 00" E)

Name in Arabic Script	مادبا
Long form name	Muḩāfaz̧at Mādabā
Long form name in Arabic Script	محافظة مادبا
Name of administrative centre	Mādabā
Name of administrative centre in Arabic Script	مادبا
Variant names	Ma'dabā; مأدبا
ISO 3166-2 code	JO-MD
ADM2s	2 districts

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Other Significant Locations

PCGN Recommended Name	Name in Native Script (Romanization in brackets where differs from recommended name)	Conventional Name (if applicable)[15]	Variant Names/Spellings	Location	Feature Type
Jordan *or* Jordan River	نهر الأردن Nahr al Urdun (ara) [Jordan, Palestine & Syria] נהר הירדן Nahar HaYarden (heb[16]) [Israel]	Jordan or Jordan River	Jourdain; Nahr al Urdunn	31° 45' 48" N, 035° 33' 27" E	river
Red Sea	البحر الأحمر (Al Baḥr al Aḥmar) (ara) Badda Cas (som[17]) ቀይሕ ባሕሪ (Qeyyiḥ bāḥrī) (tir[18]) ים סוף (Yam Suf) (heb)	Red Sea	Khalīj al Qulzum; Baḥr al Qulzum; Sea of Clysma; Bahr Hijāz	19° 00' 00" N, 039° 30' 00" E	sea
Gulf of Aqaba	خليج العقبة Khalīj al ʻAqabah (ara) מפרץ אילת (Mifraẕ Elat) (heb)	Gulf of Aqaba	Gulf of Akaba; Bahr el ʼAqaba; Gulf of Elat; Gulf of Eilat	28° 47' 02" N, 034° 42' 56" E	gulf
Al Batrā' (Petra)	البتراء (ara)	Petra	Batrā'; Bitrā'; Betra; Batra	30° 20' 00" N, 035° 26' 00" E	ancient site
Dead Sea	البحر الميت (Al Baḥr al Mayyit)(ara) [Jordan, Palestine] ים המלח (Yam HaMelaẖ) (heb) [Israel]	Dead Sea		31° 30' 00" N, 035° 30' 00" E	sea

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[15] For international features (i.e. features, such as rivers, which fall within more than one country), PCGN recommends using the conventional name.

[16] Hebrew – official language of Israel (co-official with Arabic)

[17] Somali – co-official language (with Arabic) in Somalia

[18] Tigrinya – official language in Eritrea

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PCGN Recommended Name	Name in Native Script (Romanization in brackets where differs from recommended name)	Conventional Name (if applicable)[19]	Variant Names/Spellings	Location	Feature Type
Qaṣr al Azraq	قصر الأزرق (ara)	-	Kasr el Azrak; Qasr Azraq; Qasr el Azraq; Azraq	31° 53' 00" N, 036° 49' 00" E	ancient site
Al Azraq ash Shamālī	الأزرق الشمالي (ara)	-	Azraq Druze; Azraq ed Drūz; Azraq ed Duruz	31° 52' 56" N, 036° 49' 49" E	populated place (PPL)
Al Azraq al Janūbī	الأزرق الجنوبي (ara)	-		31° 48' 18" N, 036° 47' 44" E	populated place (PPL)
Ar Ruwayshid	الرويشد (ara)	-	Ruwaished; Ruwayshid	32° 30' 05" N, 038° 12' 15" E	populated place (PPL)
Jabal Nabā (Mount Nebo)	جبل نبا (ara)	Mount Nebo	En Neba; Jabal an Nabā; Har Nebo	31° 45' 44" N, 035° 44' 46" E	mountain
Maḥmīyat Ḍānā aţ Ţabī‘īyah (Dana Biosphere Reserve)	محمية ضانا الطبيعية (ara)	Dana Biosphere Reserve	Dana Nature Reserve; Maḥmīyah Ḍānā	30° 41' 0" N, 35° 37' 0" E	nature reserve
Wādī Ramm (Wadi Rum)	وادي رم (ara)	Wadi Rum		29° 40' 41" N, 035° 27' 17" E	wadi
Maḥmīyat ash Shawmarī (Shaumari Wildlife Reserve)	محمية الشومري (ara)	Shaumari Wildlife Reserve	Shawmari Wildlife Reserve; محمية الشومري للأحياء البرية (Maḥmīyah ash Shawmarī lil Aḥyā' al Barrīyah)	31° 44' 31.2" N 36° 46' 58.8" E	nature reserve
Wādī al Mūjib	وادي الموجب (ara)		Wadi Mujib; Wādī al Mawjib; Wādi el Mojeb; Wādi el Mojib; Wadi el Mujeb; Wādī el Mūjib; Arnon; Arnon River	31° 28' 01" N, 035° 33' 49" E	valley/gorge
Umm Qays (Gadara)	أم قيس (ara)	Gadara	Gādēr; Mukes; Umm Qeis; Um Qeis; Qays	32° 39' 12" N, 035° 41' 03" E	ancient site & populated place (PPL)

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[19] For international features (i.e. features, such as rivers, which fall within more than one country), PCGN recommends using the conventional name.

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PCGN Recommended Name	Name in Native Script (Romanization in brackets where differs from recommended name)	Conventional Name (if applicable)[20]	Variant Names/Spellings	Location	Feature Type
Araba Valley[21]	وادي عربة (Wādī ʻArabah) (ara) [Jordan, Palestine] הערבה (HaʻArava)(heb) [Israel]	Araba Valley	Wadi Araba; Wadi Arabah; Arava Valley; Arabah Valley;	30° 27' 54" N, 035° 10' 38" E	valley
Al Mudawwarah	المدورة (ara)		Al-Mudawwara; El Mudawwara; Mudawwara;	29° 19' 24" N, 036° 01' 37" E	PPL & border crossing (to Tabūk-Saudi Arabia)
Yarmouk or Yarmouk River	نهر اليرموك (Nahr al Yarmūk) (ara) [Jordan, Syria] נהר הירמוך (Nahar HaYarmuk) (heb) [Israel]	Yarmouk River	El Yarmūk; Yarmuk; Hieromax; Shariat el Menādhirah; Sherīʼat al Menādire; Yarmuk River	32° 38' 51" N, 035° 33' 56" E	river
Mukhayyam az Zaʻtarī (Zaatari Refugee Camp)	مخيم الزعتري (ara)	Zaatari Refugee Camp	Al Zaatari Refugee Camp; Zatari	32° 17' 35" N, 036° 19' 41" E	refugee camp (CMPRF)
Qaşr al Ḩallābāt	قصر الحلابات (ara)		Qasr el Hallābāt; Qasr al Halabat; Kasr el Hallabat	32° 06' 00" N, 036° 20' 00" E	ruins/ancient site
Qaşr al Ḩallābāt	قصر الحلابات (ara)		Qasr el Hallābāt; Qasr al Halabat; Kasr el Hallabat	32° 03' 55" N, 036° 22' 04" E	populated place (PPL)
Wādī Mūsá	وادي موسى (ara)		Petra, Aljī, Elji	30° 19' 15" N, 035° 29' 02" E	populated place (PPL)
Wādī Mūsá	وادي موسى (ara)			30° 27' 00" N, 035° 10' 10" E	wadi

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[20] For international features (i.e. features, such as rivers, which fall within more than one country), PCGN recommends using the conventional name.

[21] Up until the early 20th century, this name was applied to what is today called the Jordan Rift Valley, running in a north-south orientation between the southern end of the Sea of Galilee (Lake Tiberias) and the northern tip of the Gulf of Aqaba, including the Jordan River Valley between the Sea of Galilee and Dead Sea, the Dead Sea itself, and what is commonly called today the Araba Valley. The modern use of the term is restricted to this southern section alone.

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Useful references

- Amman GIS: http://www.ammancitygis.gov.jo/ammancitygis/pages/
- BBC Country Profile (no longer updated): http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-14631981
- International Organization for Standards (ISO): www.iso.org
- ISO Online Browsing Platform: https://www.iso.org/obp/ui/ (country and subdivision codes)
- Jordan Department of Statistics: www.dos.gov.jo
- Jordan GIS: https://story.mapog.com/app/gisdata/jordan/Jordan%20Country%20Boundary
- Languages: www.ethnologue.com, www.omniglot.com
- Ministry of Municipality Affairs: https://www.mola.gov.jo/Default/AR
- Royal Jordanian Geographic Centre: http://www.rjgc.gov.jo/default.aspx?lang=en
- Unicode: www.unicode.org
- US Board on Geographic Names GEOnet Names Server: https://geonames.nga.mil/geonames/GNSHome/welcome.html

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