The Ghudaz Writing System

Ghudaz uses the Dwarven script, similar to many other languages spoken by dwarves, such as Dwarven and Dhekhazh, and also some other languages indigenous to the northern regions that were dominated by dwarven kingdoms in Zelev times, such as Overhill and Neanderthal. It can also be written using the Orisian alphabet, which was introduced to the Ghudaz dwarves by Orisian-speaking monks. However, writing in Orisian script is quite unusual outside of regions of the Lucent Mountains where Orisian culture is a major influence and the Orisian language is widely spoken, such as near major monasteries. For that reason, this document only covers the Dwarven-script version of Ghudaz, which is definitely the one Klõmfdã would be more familiar with; however, she would probably have no trouble picking up the Orisian version, since she speaks Azalian, a language that uses almost exactly the same alphabet that Orisian does.

Though associated with the Dwarven tongue, the Dwarven script was actually devised by the ancient Oghrizhan dwarves, whose vast and highly sophisticated nations in the northern reaches of the Azalian continent have been reduced to rubble thanks to vast earthquakes and cavern collapses instigated by Lord Skybright in his crusade to destroy the magical and alchemical accomplishments of ancient mortals and keep the Azalian continent in medieval stasis. The ethnic Oghrizhans are now known as the Azhal dwarves, a minority culture with their own language, Azhal, that is the only known living relative of the Oghrizhan tongue, and far less commonly spoken today. They live primarily in the mountainous regions of the Kingdom of Azalia (south of the Patchwork), where the survivors managed to migrate to escape Skybright's calamity in the north. Ironically, though, Azhal uses the Azalian alphabet, not the Dwarven script.

The Ghudaz script is an abjad, an alphabet that does not directly mark vowels in most cases, although we will be using the optional vowel marking system used by Ghudaz dwarves for education, children's literature, and obscure or novel words. The script contains 20 different letters (and 5 vowel marks), most of which represent a consonant or vowel sound and correspond directly to a letter in the romanized version of Ghudaz you've been learning so far. The Ghudaz system is a bit different from this system, sometimes using two letters where there is one in the romanization, and sometimes using one where the romanization has two or even none at all. However, in some ways, it is easier to use than the romanization because it contains more information about how cases are formed and how sounds change in the process.

Below, the Ghudaz alphabet is given in its traditional order, the one used in the oldest known Oghrizhan texts and still taught to this day. The Dwarven language uses a nearly identical alphabet with the same ordering scheme. The letter, its pronunciation and use, and its traditional name (usually derived from an Oghrizhan word) are given in each case, as well as some vocabulary words spelled with that letter. Note that in some cases, multiple letters represent the same sound, but only one spelling is correct - just as in English, both F and PH represent the same sound, but "physics" is always spelled with the latter and not the former.

冃 冃⟠̌ (Shav) is the first letter of the Ghudaz alphabet. It is pronounced like the SH in SHoe and corresponds to SH in the romanization.

冃⟠̌ is not a very common letter and appears only in words of Dwarven origin. However, it turns up in some very common words, including some you should already know: 冃山̌ (shaf) "she", 冃※̌ (shak) "he", and 冃◇̌ (sha) "they".

To produce 冃⟠̌ in the Ghudaz font, press the H key (either uppercase or lowercase, Ghudaz doesn't have this distinction).

丅 ⊤〒 (Nem) is the second letter of the Ghudaz alphabet. It is most commonly pronounced as the N in No or goNe. However, it can also be used to indicate the nasal vowels ã and õ in some cases; when it follows an A or O (that is, has the vowel marking ⊤̌ or ⊤̂), ⊤〒 nasalizes those sounds to Ã and Õ respectively unless it is followed by another vowel or the letter ⌧. This is quite useful if you want to put a noun ending in ⊤〒 into the accusative case, because when you add the accusative ending -⌧, the N sound comes back, and writing the nasal vowel with ⊤〒 makes it easy to remember how this works. ⊤〒 also changes to the NG sound in siNG in front of K or G, but this should pose no problem as the same thing happens in English with the letter N.

Some examples of words that ⊤〒 appears in: (those where it is pronounced like N) ⊤⌧⊣ (nil) "think", ⊤∧̂山 (nõf) "four (feminine)"; (those where it nasalizes an A or O vowel) ※∧⊤̌ (gã) "stone", ※∧̄⊣ᗰ⊤̂ (gylsõ) "intelligent".

To produce ⊤〒 in the Ghudaz font, press the N key.

⊣凵 ⊣凵⊣̌ (Val) is the third letter of the Ghudaz alphabet. It is one of two letters that correspond to V in the romanization. As such, it is pronounced like the V in Vale except in consonant clusters, where it often shifts to be more like W in Way. In Dwarven, ⊣凵⊣̌ is pronounced like W all the time, but in Ghudaz there is no difference in pronunciation between it and ⟠ヨ̌, the other letter corresponding to V.

Some examples of words that ⊣凵⊣̌ appears in: (those where it is pronounced like V) 冂⌧∧̌⊣凵〒 (bjuvm) "cat", ⊔∧̌⊣凵ᗰ (ghuvs) "north"; (those where it is pronounced like W) 冂⊣凵⌧̂山̂ (zvorof) "person", 冃∧̌⊣凵※∧ (shuvg) "bad".

To produce ⊣凵⊣̌ in the Ghudaz font, press the W key.

〒 〒ᛝ̂ (Mok) is the fourth letter of the Ghudaz alphabet, not to be confused with the similar-looking letter for ⊤〒̄. It is pronounced like the M in Mother, except when it follows A or O and precedes a consonant other than Ѫ, in which case it produces a nasal vowel Ã or Õ in exactly the way that ⊤〒̄ does.

Some examples of words that 〒ᛝ̂ appears in: (those where it is pronounced like M) 〒◇ (ma) "yes", 冋ѪΛ̌⊣凵〒 (bjuvm) "cat"; (those where it nasalizes an A or O vowel) ㅅ〒̌ (dã) "home", ᛝ〒̂ㅅ冂̌ (kõdaz) "adventurer".

To produce 〒ᛝ̂ in the Ghudaz font, press the M key.

Ѫ Ѫㅅ̌ (Jad) is the fifth letter of the Ghudaz alphabet. It has several different uses depending on the circumstances. It is most commonly pronounced as the Y in You, in which case it corresponds to J in the romanization, but it can also be treated as a vowel, in which case it instead represents I in the romanization and sounds like the EE in fEED (and is the only vowel that is always written explicitly, without vowel marks). Ѫㅅ̌ is sometimes also pronounced like the É in clichÉ, but this is less common and generally only happens in words in the accusative case or in question words and negative particles, when Ѫㅅ̌ is added to the end of the word and follows a consonant. When pronounced in this variant way, it usually corresponds to E in romanization. Occasionally Ѫㅅ̌ is pronounced in yet other ways in accusative case endings.

Some examples of words that Ѫㅅ̌ appears in: (those where it is pronounced like Y) 冋ѪΛ̌⊣凵〒 (bjuvm) "cat", ⫫Ѫ̿ (suj) "no"; (those where it is pronounced like EE) ⊤Ѫ⊣ (nil) "think", Ѫ⫫ (is) "on, over"; (those where it is pronounced like É) Ѫ̌ㅅѪ (ajde) "where?", 冋ѪΛ̌⊣凵〒Ѫ (bjuvme) "cat (object of sentence)".

To produce Ѫㅅ̌ in the Ghudaz font, press either the I or the J key.

凵 凵ᗰ̂ (Khos) is the sixth letter of the Ghudaz alphabet. It is usually pronounced as the CH in loCH or baCH (the German CH sound), which is romanized as KH. However, when it is followed by ᛝΛ̂ᛝ, it instead produces the voiced version of this sound, romanized as GH.

Some examples of words that 凵ᗰ̂ appears in: (those where it is pronounced like KH) 凵̌ (akh) "I", 凵Ӣ (khep) "arrow"; (those where it is pronounced like GH) ㅅ◈凵̿Λ (dvugh) "dwarf", 凵Λ̂ㅅ (ghõd) "that (masculine)".

To produce 凵ᗰ̂ in the Ghudaz font, press the X key.

⫫ ⫫⊓̿ (Suz) is the seventh letter of the Ghudaz alphabet. It is one of two letters pronounced as the S in Sad or the SS in maSS. It is never pronounced as in seeS or boneS (that would be spelled with ⊓). In Dwarven, this letter is pronounced as the TH in THing, but this sound has been lost from Ghudaz. It is found almost exclusively in Dwarven-origin words that used to be pronounced with the TH sound, and as a result it is less commonly found than ᛗш̂, the other letter pronounced this way. However, some very common words are spelled with ⫫⊓̿, so it balances out.

Some examples of words that ⫫⊓̿ appears in: ⫫Ӿ̿ "no", Ӿ⫫ (is) "on, over".

To produce ⫫⊓̿ in the Ghudaz font, press the Y key.

∧ ⵣ∧̂ⵣ (Gõk) is the eighth letter of the Ghudaz alphabet and one of the more unusual and distinctive letters in most versions of the Dwarven script; it is also one of only two letters that does not begin its own name (the other being ヨ〒̌ⵣ). ⵣ∧̂ⵣ does not have any sound of its own, but affects the sound of everything around it. It is never found in plural nouns, as one of the rules for forming the plural is to delete letter ⵣ∧̂ⵣ from everyone in the word.

The main effect of ⵣ∧̂ⵣ is to shift vowel sounds; while it does not represent any specific vowel without a vowel mark above it, the vowels Ã (∧̍), Õ (∧̂), U (∧̌), and Y (∧̄) can all be written with ⵣ∧̂ⵣ, and Y can *only* be written using letter ⵣ∧̂ⵣ (except in some irregular accusative endings).

In addition to this, though, it alters the pronunciation of some letters when it follows them (and this happens whether it has a vowel mark over it or not). The sounds G (as in Go) and GH (the voiced version of KH) may only be written as combinations of two letters: ⵣ∧ represents the G sound, while ⊔∧ represents the GH sound. Note that this means it is not possible to follow a G or GH with any vowel other than Ã, I, Õ, U, or Y, since only Ã, Õ, U, and Y may be written with ⵣ∧̂ⵣ and I is the only vowel that can be represented by one letter without a vowel mark. When it follows ᛗ or ⊓, it doesn't directly affect their sound, but it is pronounced like Ӿ. A fifth two-letter combination is an alternate way of writing Õ: ∧Ӿ.

Some examples of words that ⵣ∧̂ⵣ appears in: (spelling Ã) 〒∧̍ヨ∧̄ "boat", ヨ∧̍⊣ш̂ "one hundred (feminine)"; (spelling Õ) ᛗ⊣⟠̌Ӿ∧̂ (slavjõ) "human", ⊔∧̂ㅅ (ghõd) "that (masculine)"; (spelling U) 円Ӿ∧̌╢〒 (bjuvm) "cat", ⊔∧̌╢ᛗ (ghuvs) "north"; (spelling Y) ᛗ⊔ヨ̌∧̄ (skhaty) "friend", ⵣ∧̄⊣ᛗ⊤̂ (gylsõ) "intelligent"; (spelling G) ⵣ∧⊤̌ (gã) "stone", 冃∧̌╢ⵣ∧ (shuvg) "bad"; (spelling GH) ㅅ⟠⊔̿∧ (dvugh) "dwarf", ⊔∧̂ᛗ (ghõs) "undead creature"; (alternate spelling of J after S) ヨ∧̍ᛗ∧̂ (tãsjõ) "wise", ᛗ̌∧̂ (asjõ) "moon"; (alternate spelling of J after Z) ⊓∧̂ (zjõ) "shoulder", ⊤Ӿ⊣⊓∧̂ (nilzjõ) "we (including you) know ourselves"; (alternate spelling of Õ) ⊣∧Ӿㅅ〒̌ "bathroom".

To produce ※Λ̂※ in the Ghudaz font, press the G key. Note that in many cases, to produce a G or GH letter sequence, you need to input ※Λ̂※ not only after a ※ or ⊔, but also after the vowel following it; to type ⊔Λ̂ (ghõ) "I see", for instance, you need to input X-O-G, not X-G-O.

ヨ ヨㅜ̌ (Tã) is the ninth letter of the Ghudaz alphabet. It is pronounced like the T in Top (aspirated) unless it is in a consonant cluster, where it corresponds to the T in sTop instead (not aspirated). ヨㅜ̌ corresponds directly to T in the romanization.

Some examples of words that ヨㅜ̌ appears in: (where it is aspirated) ヨΛ̂ (tõ) "also", ㅂ⊔ヨ̆Λ̄ (skhaty) "friend"; (where it is not aspirated) ヨ冂ㅓ̄◇ (tshele) "monastery", ⟐ㅈㅈ̌⊔ヨ (vjurkht) "dog".

To produce ヨㅜ̌ in the Ghudaz font, press the T key.

⟐ ⟐ヨ̆ (Vat) is the tenth letter of the Ghudaz alphabet, and it is pronounced exactly as ㅔㅓ is (as V in Vale except at the end of clusters, where it often sounds as W in Way), corresponding to V in the romanization. It is the more common way to write V and the method of choice both for most loanwords and for many Dwarven-origin words as well.

Some examples of words that vat appears in: (those where it is pronounced like V) ⟐ㅜㅛ (vnas) "language", ⟐̄ (ev) "you"; (those where it is pronounced like W) ㅅ⟐⊔̄Λ (dvugh) "dwarf", 冂⟐ㅓ̂ (zvol) "arcane magic".

To produce ⟐ヨ̆ in the Ghudaz font, press the V key.

冂 冂ㅜ̂ (Bõ) is the eleventh letter of the Ghudaz alphabet. It is pronounced as the B in Bed always, and directly corresponds to B in the romanization.

Some examples of words that 冂ㅜ̂ appears in: 冂ㅈΛ̌ㅔㅜ (bjuvm) "cat", 冂̄冂̂ (ubob) "walk".

To produce 冂ㅜ̂ in the Ghudaz font, press the B key.

ㅅ ㅅㅜ̌ (Dã) is the twelfth letter of the Ghudaz alphabet. It is always pronounced as the D in beD, and it directly corresponds to D in the romanization. Not to be confused with the word ㅅㅜ̌ "home, house", which is spelled in an identical way, but is totally unrelated (the letter's name comes from the Oghrizhan word for "hammer", which it resembles).

Some examples of words that ㅅㅜ̌ appears in: ㅅㅜ̌ (dã) "home", ⊔Λ̂ㅅ (ghõd) "that (masculine)".

⨳ ⨳⊓̄ (Kuz) is the thirteenth letter of the Ghudaz alphabet. It is pronounced like the K in Kin (aspirated), except in consonant clusters where it is pronounced more like K in sKin (not aspirated). When followed by ⨳Λ̂⨳, the combination is instead pronounced like the G in Go, similar to the situation with ⊔Ш̂. Since masculine adjective and verb forms tend to end with ⨳⊓̄, it is sometimes also used as a symbol to indicate the masculine gender.

Some examples of words that ⨳⊓̄ appears in: (those where it is aspirated) Ħ⨳̌ (shak) "he", ⨳⊤̄ㅅ⊓̌ (kõdaz) "adventurer"; (those where it is not aspirated) ㅅӿΛ̄ㅅ⨳ (drydk) "spider", ⊔Λ⊣⨳̌Шヨ Λ̄⟠ (ghlukstyv) "dragon"; (those where it is pronounced like GH) ㅅ⟠⊔̄Λ (dvugh) "dwarf", ⊔Λ̂ㅅ (ghõd) "that (masculine)".

To produce ⨳⊓̄ in the Ghudaz font, press the K key.

⊓ ⊓⊤̂ (Zõ) is the fourteenth letter of the Ghudaz alphabet. It is always pronounced like the Z in Zoo, and corresponds directly to Z in the romanization. If ⨳Λ̂⨳ follows ⊓⊤̂, the combination is pronounced like ⊓Ӝ in addition to its normal effects.

Some examples of words that ⊓⊤̂ appears in: ⊓̂ (oz) "we (including you)", ⊓⊣Ш̂ӿш̂ (zvorof) "person".

To produce ⊓⊤̂ in the Ghudaz font, press the Z key.

⊣ ⊣Λ̌ӿ (Lur) is the fifteenth letter of the Ghudaz alphabet. It is pronounced almost exactly like L is in English, and corresponds directly to L in the romanization.

Some examples of words that ⊣Λ̌ӿ appears in: ⊤Ӝ⊣ (nil) "think", Ш⊣⟠̌ӜΛ̂ (slavjõ) "human".

To produce ⊣Λ̌ӿ in the Ghudaz font, press the L key.

ӿ ӿ⊤̂ (Rõ) is the sixteenth letter of the Ghudaz alphabet. It is a rolled or tapped R similar to either R in Spanish señoRita or RR in Spanish peRRo (either is acceptable, the exact usage varies by dialect). It corresponds directly to R in the romanization.

Some examples of words that ӿ⊤̂ appears in: ⊓⊣Ш̂ӿш̂ (zvorof) "person", ӿ⊤̌ш (rãf) "healthy (feminine)".

To produce ӿ⊤̂ in the Ghudaz font, press the R key.

ᙢ ᙢ山̂ (Sof) is the seventeenth letter of the Ghudaz alphabet. It is pronounced identically to ㅛ冂̿ (as S in Sad or maSS) and is more commonly used, corresponding to S in the romanization. Unlike with ㅛ冂̿, if ᚸΛ̂ᚸ follows ᙢ山̂, the ᚸΛ̂ᚸ is pronounced like Ѫ入̌ in addition to its normal effects.

Some examples of words that ᙢ山̂ appears in: 凵Λ̂ᙢ (ghõs) "undead creature", ᙢ凵ヨ̌Λ̄ (skhaty) "friend".

To produce ᙢ山̂ in the Ghudaz font, press the S key.

山 山ᚸ̌ (Fak) is the eighteenth letter of the Ghudaz alphabet. It is always pronounced as the F in Fall and corresponds directly to F in the romanization. Since feminine adjective and verb endings tend to end with 山ᚸ̌, it can also serve as a symbol for the feminine gender.

Some examples of words that 山ᚸ̌ appears in: 冃山̌ (shaf) "she", 山ѪΛ̄凵ᙢ (fjykhs) "snow".

To produce 山ᚸ̌ in the Ghudaz font, press the F key.

◇ ヨ丅̌ᚸ̄ (Tamek) is the nineteenth letter of the Ghudaz alphabet, and the only one that does not appear in the spelling of its own name. (It comes from the word for "noun" in the Oghrizhan language, where it was originally used to mark a noun form derived in a regular way from a root word; the association came about because such forms usually ended in a vowel.) ヨ丅̌ᚸ̄ has no pronunciation of its own; rather, it indicates that there is a word-final A, E, O, or U, and provides a place to put the appropriate vowel mark if vowel marks are being used. If there is already some other letter that fills the role of marking a final vowel, such as ᚸΛ̂ᚸ for U or Ѫ入̌ for E, do not add ヨ丅̌ᚸ̄; it appears only when there is no other option. ヨ丅̌ᚸ̄ can only appear at the end of a word (although if a word in written form is cut off directly after a vowel, ヨ丅̌ᚸ̄ may be added to make it clearer where the cut-off point was).

Some examples of words that ヨ丅̌ᚸ̄ appears in: 丅◇̌ (ma) "yes", 冃◇̌ (sha) "they".

To produce ヨ丅̌ᚸ̄ in the Ghudaz font, press the C key.

И ИΛ̌ㅔ (Puv) is the twentieth and final letter of the Ghudaz alphabet. This letter does not exist in Dwarven and was borrowed from the Zelev alphabet, since it was the Ancient Zelev language that introduced the sound to Ghudaz. ИΛ̌ㅔ is pronounced like either the P in Pin (aspirated) or the P in sPin (not aspirated), outside or inside consonant clusters, respectively. It corresponds directly to P in the romanization.

Some examples of words that ᴎΛ̌ㅓ⊔ appears in: (where it is aspirated) ⊔ᴎ̄ (khep) "arrow", ㅅ⟠ᴎ̿⊔̄ (dvupekh) "mountaintop"; (where it is not aspirated) ӿᴎ̂ㅓᗰ̿ (joplus) "table", ※Λӿᗰ̂ᴎㅜ̄ (gjospen) "ice".

To produce ᴎΛ̌ㅓ⊔ in the Ghudaz font, press the P key.

Vowel Marks: There are five vowel marks, presented here above ㅌㅜ̌※̄ (even though one of them can never appear above ㅌㅜ̌※): ◇̌, ◇̄, ◇̂, ◇̍, and ◇̿. Between the five of these and ӿㅅ̌, all Ghudaz vowels can be represented. In the Ghudaz font, each vowel mark should be typed BEFORE the letter you want it written over. (So for instance, the key presses needed to type ⊔̌ in the font are A-X.)

◇̌: This mark is called ⊔̌Λ山ӿж̌ (aghfjar), or "down-rune" (since the V-shape points down). When it appears above any letter but ※Λ̂※, ㅜㅜ̄, or ㅜ※̂, it sounds like the A in fAther and is romanized as A. When it appears above ※Λ̂※, it instead sounds like the OO in fOOd and is romanized as U; when it appears above ㅜㅜ̄ or ㅜ※̂, it sounds like the AN in French enfANt and is romanized as Ã. In the Ghudaz font, it can be produced by pressing the A key.

◇̄: This mark is called ㅅ⟠⊔̂山ӿж̌ (dvokhfjar), or "floor-rune" (since it's drawn flat like a floor). When it appears above any letter but ※Λ̂※, it sounds like the É in clichÉ and is romanized as E. When it appears above ※Λ̂※, it instead sounds like the Ü in German Über and is romanized as Y. In the Ghudaz font, it can be produced by pressing the E key.

◇̂: This mark is called ӿㅌ̌山ӿж̌ (jatfjar), or "up-rune" (since the V-shape points up). When it appears above any letter but ※Λ̂※, ㅜㅜ̄, or ㅜ※̂, it sounds like the O in nO and is romanized as O. When it appears above ※Λ̂※, ㅜㅜ̄, or ㅜ※̂, it instead sounds like the ON in French bON and is romanized as Õ. In the Ghudaz font, it can be produced by pressing the O key.

◇̍: This mark is called ӿ⊔̿ㅜ山ӿж̌ (jukhnfjar), or "wall-rune" (since it rises vertically like a wall). In Ghudaz, this mark may only appear above ※Λ̂※; when it does, the resulting vowel is produced like the AN in French enfANt and is romanized as Ã. In the Ghudaz font, it can be produced by pressing the Q key.

◇̿: This mark is called ⟠ㅜ̄山ӿж̌ (vunfjar), or "tunnel-rune" (since the two parallel lines look like opposite walls of a tunnel). It may never appear above ※Λ̂※; when it appears above any other letter, it sounds like the OO in fOOd and is romanized as U. In the Ghudaz font, it can be produced by pressing the U key.