

# HEBREW

**COUNTRY:** Israel

**POST:** Tel Aviv

There are four periods in the history of the Hebrew language: Biblical Hebrew, Mishnaic Hebrew, neo-Hebrew and modern Hebrew.

Like all the Semitic languages, Hebrew is written from right to left. Its alphabet consists of 22 consonants with vowel points, or small secondary signs placed below, above and beside the consonants, or combined with the letters.

As a Semitic language, Hebrew forms its vocabulary around three radical consonants that give the basic meaning of the root. The nouns are derived from the root using consonants added to its beginning or to its end. Hebrew is not receptive to the formation of compound terms. Declensions have almost disappeared, but the pronunciation or form of many substantives varies according to the quality of their vowels or consonants, their number, their function, etc. There are two genders and three numbers: objects that exist in pairs are dual.

In principle, the verb has seven forms used with the root. Hebrew does not view action chronologically in terms of past, present and future, but in terms of whether it is completed ("perfect" being rendered by a present, a past definite, indefinite or anterior, or by a present pluperfect), or whether it is incomplete ("imperfect" being rendered by our imperfect, present or future).