

Davidson Distance Learning Program: Hebrew

Here are some suggested guidelines to off-campus students who are required to learn Hebrew on their own:

1. To determine your level of Hebrew, you should take the placement test given to all incoming students.
2. The first four semesters of Hebrew cover the vocabulary and grammar in the two volumes of *Ivrit Min Ha'hatahcla* (עברית מן ההתחלה). It is accompanied by CDs, so much of it can be listened to. This textbook is used in many colleges and universities in the US, and you should be able to find a Hebrew tutor familiar with the book.
3. At the beginner level there is now *The Routledge Introductory Course in Modern Hebrew* עברית בישראל by Giore Etzion. This is excellent for (disciplined) self-study of basic - first year - Hebrew since it is accompanied by a web site: everything can be read and listened to simultaneously. The grammar explanations (in English) are excellent and there are verb tables and solutions for the exercises. However, it is mostly dialog-style (brief reading selections from the newspaper are found toward the end) and does not have anything in classical Hebrew (this is not the case with *Ivrit Min Ha'hatahcla*).
4. *The Brandeis Book* עברית בהקשר is another acceptable alternative for the first year of Hebrew. It too is accompanied by a CD.
5. Hayesod היסוד is old-fashioned in its approach, but it contains a review of verb and noun morphology with English explanations and tables; the texts are all vocalized, therefore the transition to unvoweled texts may pose a challenge.
6. A commercial resource is available from Israel is learn@hebrewpodcasts.com. It is professionally done and has three levels, beginner, intermediate and advanced. Although the materials is delivered through dialogues, the vocabulary is sophisticated and the topics are not trivial, covering a wide variety of Israel and Jewish themes. It costs only \$79 per year—you can sample some of it free to get a feel for the materials (audio, video, flash cards, and more).
7. Students who are at the intermediate B1–B2 level should get in touch with the Hebrew department to find out what are the textbooks used and for a list of grammatical topics covered in these levels. Alternatively, or in addition, students can subscribe to *שער למתחיל* which appears twice a month and read it with a tutor— this would be at a level appropriate for intermediates.
8. For those wishing to develop listening skills, there are two excellent resources: *שיחות של יום* for beginners (book and CD) and *שומעים עברית* for Intermediate and Advanced (also books and CD). Both are available from the very service-oriented distributor Israel Connection <http://www.myhebrewbooks.com/>
9. Online resources for listening and viewing are also available (free) at the Stanford University and University of Texas-Austin Hebrew sites.

10. The verb system is covered in all beginner textbooks in a functional manner, that is, with emphasis on verb usage, not on vocalization rules and creation of forms from roots. A student who for some reason needs to master this skill is advised to study biblical Hebrew. There are many verb-system reference books available (the most recent one with a CD); please contact the Hebrew department Hebrew@jtsa.edu or nikrohn@jtsa.edu for recommendations.
11. An excellent grammar book (readable and user friendly) is *Glinert's Modern Hebrew: An Essential Grammar* (Routledge), now in its third edition.
12. To verify achievement in Hebrew study, students should be able to pass successfully the end-of-semester departmental test (at their level).
13. Distance learning students are advised to send The Davidson School for approval and additional suggestions a plan of study detailing how (with whom, how often, what content) they plan to study Hebrew each semester and a statement of their personal needs and goals for studying the language.

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