Free Tajweed Cheat Sheet

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Tajweed is reciting the Quran the way it was revealed: every letter given its correct sound, its correct characteristics, and its correct length. Start with correct letters (Makharij, the articulation points), then learn one rule at a time and apply it to verses you are already reading. This sheet names the rules only; exact prolongation lengths are learned from your tutor, not from a cheat sheet.

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1. Noon Saakinah and Tanween - look at the next letter

A Noon with a sukoon (Noon Saakinah) and Tanween (the double vowel marks that sound like a hidden Noon) follow the same four rules. Which rule applies depends entirely on the letter that comes next.

Rule	What to do
Izhar - clear	Before the throat letters: pronounce the Noon plainly, exactly as written. No merging, no nasal hiding.
Idgham - merge	Before the merging letters: the Noon melts into the next letter and the two are pronounced as one doubled sound. Some merges carry a Ghunnah (nasal hum); others are clean, with no nasal sound.
Iqlab - turn	Before Baa only: the Noon sound turns into a Meem sound, pronounced with a light Ghunnah and the lips barely touching.
Ikhfa - hide	Before all the other letters: the Noon is neither clear nor fully merged. It is hidden, pronounced as a nasal hum leaning toward the next letter.

2. Ghunnah and Qalqalah - the two sounds behind everything

Rule	What to do
Ghunnah	A gentle nasal hum, held briefly and evenly. It appears in Idgham, Iqlab, and Ikhfa: one idea, three rules.
Qalqalah	An echoing bounce on Qaaf, Taa, Baa, Jeem, and Daal when they carry a sukoon. The sound bounces slightly instead of stopping dead.

3. Meem Saakinah - only three rules

A Meem carrying no vowel (a sukoon) follows the letter that comes next, just like Noon Saakinah, but there are only three rules.

Rule	What to do
Ikhfa Shafawi	Before Baa: the Meem is half-hidden, with a soft nasal hum, lips lightly together in preparation for Baa.
Idgham Shafawi	Before another Meem: the two Meems merge into one sound, with Ghunnah.
Izhar Shafawi	Before every other letter: pronounce the Meem clearly.

4. Madd - prolongation

Madd means stretching a vowel sound for a measured length when the rules require it. Learn the families below by name first; your tutor teaches the exact length of each one by ear.

Rule	What it is
Madd Tabee'i	The natural prolongation: a Madd letter with no hamzah or sukoon after it, stretched naturally.
Madd Muttasil	Connected: a Madd letter followed by a hamzah in the same word.
Madd Munfasil	Separated: a Madd letter followed by a hamzah across two words.
Madd Lazim	Compulsory: a Madd letter followed by a permanent sukoon.
Madd Aarid li-Sukoon	Stopping Madd: appears only when you stop, when the letter after a Madd letter takes a temporary sukoon.

5. Waqf - stopping signs in the Mushaf

A pause in the wrong place can change the meaning of a verse, so the Mushaf prints signs telling you where to pause. When you stop on a word, a letter carrying a short vowel takes a sukoon: the vowel is dropped and the letter is pronounced still.

Sign	What it means
Meem (Waqf Lazim)	Stopping here is compulsory. Continuing past it risks joining ideas the text marks as separate.
Qali (al-waqfu awla)	Stopping is preferred. You may continue, but stopping is better, because the meaning here is complete enough to stand alone.
Jeem	Stopping and continuing are equally permissible: the meaning works either way, so choose by breath and flow.

How to use this sheet: pick ONE rule, practise it in the verses you are reading this week, and ask your tutor to listen. Tajweed is a sound science: a sheet can name the rules, but only a listening tutor can correct them.

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