

KABBALAH? CABALA? QABALAH?

How do you spell it?

All these different spellings - and not just the ones in the title: Kabbalah, Kabbala, Kaballah - there is also Kabala, Kabballah, Kabalah, Kaballa, Kabballa, what shall we make of it?

And then there are the "C" spellings: Cabbalah, Cabbala, Caballah, Cabala, Cabballah, Cabalah, Caballa, Cabballa.

And let us not forget about the "Q" spellings: Qabbalah, Qabbala, Qaballah, Qabala, Qabballah, Qabalah, Qaballa, Qabballa.

There are a total of 24 possible spellings, as in the following table:

Cabala	Kabala	Qabala
Cabalah	Kabalah	Qabalah
Caballa	Kaballa	Qaballa
Caballah	Kaballah	Qaballah
Cabbala	Kabbala	Qabbala
Cabbalah	Kabbalah	Qabbalah
Cabballa	Kabballa	Qabballa
Cabballah	Kabballah	Qabballah

First things first, let's consider the first-letter choices. "C" (as in Cabbala, Cabala, etc.); or "K" (as in Kabbalah, Kabala, etc.); or "Q" (as in Qabala, Qabalah, etc.).

Some pundits posit as a general guideline, i.e., not 100% of the cases, that whereas Jews spell it with a "K" (Kabbalah, etc.), Christians tend to use a "C" (Cabala, etc.) while the occultists tend towards the "Q" (Qabalah, etc.).

Next, to consider the last not last, is the question of the final "H" (as in Cabalah, Kabbalah, Qabalah, etc., but not in Cabala, Kabala, Qabbala, etc.).

This variation is usually a reflection of pronunciation practices, so here I'll stick to Jewish orthography. The word has three syllables. The final "H" (Kabbalah, etc.) is to induce you to emphasize the final syllable, while its omission (Kabala, etc.) leads to middle syllable stress. ...how silly it would be to have *cosher cabala* or *qosher qabalah*!

Speaking of middle, doubling the "b" (Kabbalah, etc.) or not (Kabala, etc.) and/or doubling the "l" (Kaballah, Kabballah, etc.) or not (Kabbalah, Kabalah, etc.) is also a manifestation of the effort to invoke correct pronunciation, in this case the three short "a" vowels as well as correct syllable stress. I refuse to elaborate further, as the theories here are inconsistent and even contradictory.

As for Kosher Kabbalah ([Kosher](#) Kabbala, Kosher Kaballah, Kosher Kabala, Kosher Kabballah, Kosher Kabalah, Kosher Kaballa, Kosher Kabballa), in this case it is probably safe to drop the "C" and "Q" options according to the above principle, because the term 'kosher' can be applied only to authentic Jewish Kabbala (Kabbalah, Kabala, etc.). Anyway, look how silly it would be to have "cosher cabala" or "qosher qabalah"!

This does not mean that every "K" internet site or print book is authentic; far from it. Only a few are. Many if not most kosher Kabbalah websites can be found on our [links page](#) and the English version books on our [reading lists](#). But at least you know that the chances are better than on any of the "C" (Cabbalah, Cabbala, Caballah, Cabala, Cabballah, Cabalah, Caballa, Cabballa) or "Q" (as in Qabbalah, Qabbala, Qaballah, Qabala, Qabballah, Qabalah, Qaballa, Qabballa) sites.

Oh yes, about the main spelling variations based on pronunciation difference. As I mentioned above, this variation is usually a manifestation of accent distinctions, with the final "H" indicating emphasis on the final syllable, while its omission leads to middle syllable stress. I think it is safe to say that the latter (Kabbala, Kabala, Kaballa, etc.) reflects the Ashkenazic Jewish manner of pronunciation, while the former (Kabalah, Kabbalah, Kaballah, etc.) indicates the Sephardic way.

But for kosher Kabbalah (Kosher Kabbalah?, Kosher Kaballah?, Kosher Kabala?) sites and books, how they spell it and how you pronounce it are of virtually no significance. What counts is that for the product to be kosher, the Kabbalists (Cabbalists, Cabalists, Qabbalists, Qabalists) or whoever is producing it have to be impeccably kosher themselves, faithful to the unbroken chain of Jewish traditional teachings since the Mount Sinai revelation.