

**Doc Type:** Working Group Document  
**Title:** Proposal to Deprecate DEVANAGARI LETTER SHORT A  
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**Status:** Individual Contribution  
**Action:** For consideration by UTC  
**Date:** 2009-09-22

## 1 Introduction

This is a proposal to deprecate the character अ U+0904 DEVANAGARI LETTER SHORT A. The character does not appear in the repertoires of Devanagari used for any language. There is no information regarding the character's semantic value, phonetic value, or the language whose sound it is intended to represent. There is no proof for the existence of the character or any documentation illustrating its use.

## 2 Background

The character was first published in Unicode 4.0. According to L2/01-405R, it was accepted for encoding during the UTC 89 / L2 186 joint meeting in November 2001, as per documentation provided in L2/01-431R. There are no details for the character in L2/09-431R or in the accompanying WG2 proposal summary form (L2/02-117). Apart from its presence in the code chart and names lists for Devanagari, there is no additional information about the character in *The Unicode Standard*.

The DEVANAGARI LETTER SHORT A was first brought to the attention of the Unicode Technical Committee in 2001, through a letter submitted by the Government of India (L2/01-303). The letter asks the UTC to encode several characters for Indic scripts as shown in a document titled *Vishwabharat@tdil* (L2/01-304). The character is one of several Devanagari additions enumerated in L2/01-304 (p. 17). The document does not provide any information about the character. The UTC's formal response (L2/01-430R) to the Government of India states that several of the proposed Devanagari characters are candidates for encoding, however, the "UTC needs detailed explanations of their usage, form, etc." The document L2/01-304 "does not provide sufficient detail for some of the character additions to be formally proposed." With specific reference to DEVANAGARI SHORT LETTER A, the UTC remarked that "This character may be added. UTC would like to know if matra form should be added as well" (p. 5). It does not appear that the Government of India furnished the requested details to the UTC.

## 3 Recommendation

Unless evidence proving the existence and use of DEVANAGARI LETTER SHORT A is presented, the character should be deprecated. If a need for the character arises in the future, it may be represented as अ U+0905 DEVANAGARI LETTER A + ए U+0946 DEVANAGARI VOWEL SIGN SHORT E.

The character may also be defined as a named sequence, expressed in the format used in the named sequences database (`NamedSequences.txt`):

```
DEVANAGARI SHORT LETTER A; 0905 0946
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