

## Names in Dothraki

Note: The audio files in this section can be found in the "Names" folder inside the "Audio Files" folder.

### 1. Introduction

There are a number of names already present in Martin's *Fire & Ice* books, but in the event the directors and writers will need more, this is how to create new ones.

### 2. Analysis

Here are a sample of some of the Dothraki names that occur in the *Fire & Ice* series:

<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>
<u>Haggo</u>	<u>Jhiqui</u>
<u>Rhogoro</u>	<u>Irri</u>
<u>Qotho</u>	
<u>Mago</u>	
<u>Jhogo</u>	
<u>Ogo</u>	

There are a number of other male names, but even with a small sample, a couple of generalizations can be drawn. Of female names, all we can say is that they end in -i, and that disyllabic names are preferred. With male names, disyllabic names are preferred, though there are several trisyllabic names. All male names, without exception, end in -o, and there's a preference for a -go ending. There also seems to be a regular number of names with a doubled middle consonant.

Based on these constraints, it's not too difficult to generate a kind of name template that will produce names that readers of the *Fire & Ice* books will hear (or read) and recognize as authentic Dothraki names.

### 3. Respelling

Briefly, there are a few names that exist in various of Martin's *Fire & Ice* books that, as a result of the orthography I've devised for Dothraki, will need to be respelled. Below is a list of those names, with their *Fire & Ice* forms on the left, and their respelled variants on the right.

<u>Cohollo</u>	—>	<i>Kohollo</i>
<u>Jhaqo</u>	—>	<i>Zhaqo</i>
<u>Jhiqui</u>	—>	<i>Zhikwi</i>
<u>Jhogo</u>	—>	<i>Zhogo</i>
<u>Quaro</u>	—>	<i>Qwaro</i>

#### 4. *Name Construction*

It should be fairly simple to satisfy the constraints discussed in the *Analysis* section. For female names, pretty much anything that's disyllabic and ends in *-i* should be acceptable. For male names, anything that's disyllabic and ends in *-o* should be acceptable, with the additional caveat that endings in *-go* are common, as are *g*'s in general. For either sex, a syllable can be added to the front of any disyllabic name to lengthen it to three syllables.

A quick note on trisyllabic words. The stress of the name will change depending on the number of consonants that occur before the final vowel. Since all names, male and female, end in a vowel, disyllabic names will always be stressed on the first syllable. With trisyllabic names, the stress will be on the *first* syllable if there is one consonant before the final vowel. To shift stress to the second syllable, a second consonant must be added before the final vowel. Here's an example using two names from the *Fire & Ice* series (the consonants immediately preceding the vowel will be highlighted in blue, and stress will be marked with an acute accent):

Original Spelling	Respelling	Syllabification	Resultant Stress
<u>Cohollo</u>	<i>Kohollo</i>	<i>Ko.hol.lo</i>	<i>Kohóllo</i>
<u>Rhogoro</u>	<i>Rhogoro</i>	<i>Rho.go.ro</i>	<i>Rhógoro</i>

By following these rules, a writer can produce an authentic-sounding Dothraki name with little trouble. For simplicity's sake, I've generated dozens of names like this (both male and female) in the *Dothraki Reference Grammar and Lexicon*. These names can be found near the end of the *Dothraki Language Description Section* in the "Names" section.

#### 5. *Meaningful Names*

There are no etymologies provided for the Dothraki names in the *Fire & Ice* series, but having control of the language has allowed me to backform some possible etymologies for some of the extant Dothraki names. There is no set naming strategy (e.g. no "name suffix", or anything like that), so what's happened is that I've analyzed several names as being the result of adding an *-o* to a primarily verbal or adjectival root. This only works when there is no associated inanimate noun that ends in *-o*. Here are some examples:

Name	Associated Root	Sample Words
<i>Ogo</i>	<i>og</i>	<i>ogat</i> "to slaughter", <i>ogak</i> "butcher"
<i>Qotho</i>	<i>goth</i>	<i>goth</i> "loyal", <i>athgothar</i> "faithfulness"
<i>Rhogoro</i>	<i>rhogor</i>	<i>rhogor</i> "scarred", "scar"

To create names that aren't simply random, then, all one needs to do is go through the *Dothraki to English* section of the dictionary, find an adjective or verb (or even a noun) that looks good, and add an *-o* for a male name or an *-i* for a female name. Make sure that there isn't an associated adjective or inanimate noun that ends in *-o* or *-i* so that there's no duplication (though notice what I did with *Gimmi* and *Ivezzho* below), but other than that, first name creation should be pretty straightforward.

## 6. *Sample Names*

Below are twenty-five sample meaningful names (first female, then male), one for each initial phoneme of the Dothraki phonology<sup>1</sup>:

Female Names <a href="#">fem.mp3</a>			
Name	IPA	Associated Root	Sample Words
<i>Azhi</i>	[ˈa.ʒi]	<i>azh</i>	<i>azho</i> "gift", <i>azhat</i> "to give"
<i>Chomi</i>	[ˈtʃo.mi]	<i>chom</i>	<i>chom</i> "respectful", <i>sanaccho</i> "thanks"
<i>Devesshi</i>	[de.ˈveʃ.ʃi]	<i>devesh</i>	<i>devesh</i> "fog"
<i>Emi</i>	[ˈe.mi]	<i>em</i>	<i>eme</i> "smile", <i>emat</i> "to approve"
<i>Feshitthi</i>	[fe.ˈʃiθ.θi]	<i>feshith</i>	<i>feshith</i> "tree"
<i>Gimmi</i>	[ˈgim.mi]	<i>gim</i>	<i>gimi</i> "mouse"
<i>Halahhi</i>	[ha.ˈlah.hi]	<i>halah</i>	<i>halah</i> "flower", <i>halahat</i> "to blossom"
<i>Ithki</i>	[ˈiθ.ki]	<i>ithk</i>	<i>ithka</i> "straw", <i>nhare ithka</i> "blonde"
<i>Jalani</i>	[ˈdʒa.la.ni]	<i>jalan</i>	<i>jalan</i> "moon"
<i>Kazgi</i>	[ˈkaz.gi]	<i>kazga</i>	<i>kazga</i> "black (color of Dothraki hair)"
<i>Khaori</i>	[ˈxa.o.ri]	<i>khaor</i>	<i>khaor</i> "waist"
<i>Lammi</i>	[ˈlam.mi]	<i>lame</i>	<i>lame</i> "mare", <i>lamekh</i> "milk"
<i>Messi</i>	[ˈmes.si]	<i>mes</i>	<i>mes</i> "swollen", <i>mesi</i> "pregnant"
<i>Nayatti</i>	[na.ˈjat.ti]	<i>nayat</i>	<i>nayat</i> "girl"
<i>Ochi</i>	[ˈo.tʃi]	<i>och</i>	<i>ocha</i> "type of horse", <i>ochaven</i> "dun"

<sup>1</sup> Both *p* and *b* are no longer used as modern-day phonemes for new words.

Name	IPA	Associated Root	Sample Words
<i>Qoni</i>	[ˈqo.na]	<i>qon</i>	<i>qona</i> , <i>qonnaya</i> "ivy"
<i>Rhaegi</i>	[ˈrha.e.gi]	<i>rhae</i>	<i>rhae</i> "leg", <i>Rhaego</i> "male name"
<i>Senni</i>	[ˈsen.ni]	<i>sen</i>	<i>sen</i> "three", <i>senak</i> "third one"
<i>Shimi</i>	[ˈʃi.mi]	<i>shim</i>	<i>shim</i> "tame", <i>shimosh</i> "pet"
<i>Taharri</i>	[ta.ˈha.ri]	<i>tahar</i>	<i>tahar</i> "crafty, clever, cunning"
<i>Thodori</i>	[ˈθo.do.ri]	<i>thodor</i>	<i>thodor</i> "cedar (type of tree)"
<i>Vaddi</i>	[ˈvad.di]	<i>vad</i>	<i>vado</i> "turnip", "filly"
<i>Yazli</i>	[ˈjaz.li]	<i>yazla</i>	<i>yazla</i> "diamond"
<i>Zalli</i>	[ˈzal.li]	<i>zal</i>	<i>zalat</i> "to hope", <i>athzalar</i> "desire"
<i>Zhali</i>	[ˈʒa.li]	<i>zhali</i>	<i>zhalia</i> "butterfly"

Now for the male names:

Male Names [mal.mp3](#)

Name	IPA	Associated Root	Sample Words
<i>Awazo</i>	[ˈa.wa.zo]	<i>awaz</i>	<i>awaz</i> "scream", <i>awazak</i> "screamer"
<i>Chaf</i>	[ˈtʃa.fo]	<i>chaf</i>	<i>chaf</i> "wind", <i>chafka</i> "autumn"
<i>Davro</i>	[ˈdav.ro]	<i>davra</i>	<i>davra</i> "useful", <i>davraso</i> "worthy"
<i>Elikko</i>	[e.ˈlik.ko]	<i>elik</i>	<i>elik</i> "tall"
<i>Faso</i>	[ˈfa.so]	<i>fas</i>	<i>fas</i> "cloud", <i>fasi</i> "mist"
<i>Gorro</i>	[ˈgo.ro]	<i>gor</i>	<i>gorat</i> "to charge"
<i>Hadoro</i>	[ˈha.do.ro]	<i>hador</i>	<i>hador</i> "wild, powerful gust of wind"
<i>Ivezho</i>	[i.ˈveʒ.ʒo]	<i>ivezh</i>	<i>ivezh</i> "wild, feral", <i>ivezho</i> "beast"
<i>Jahakko</i>	[dʒa.ˈhak.ko]	<i>jahak</i>	<i>jahak</i> "braid", <i>athjahakar</i> "pride"
<i>Kovarro</i>	[ko.ˈva.ro]	<i>kovar</i>	<i>kovarat</i> "to be standing up"

Name	IPA	Associated Root	Sample Words
<i>Kherro</i>	[ <sup>h</sup> xe.ro]	<i>kher</i>	<i>kher</i> "hide", <i>kherikh</i> "leather"
<i>Lajjo</i>	[ <sup>h</sup> lad.dʒo]	<i>laj</i>	<i>lajat</i> "to fight", <i>athvilajerar</i> "war"
<i>Meccho</i>	[ <sup>h</sup> met.tʃo]	<i>mech</i>	<i>mechi</i> "quail"
<i>Najaho</i>	[ <sup>h</sup> na.dʒa.ho]	<i>najah</i>	<i>najahat</i> "to win", <i>najah</i> "victorious"
<i>Ohazho</i>	[ <sup>h</sup> o.ha.ʒo]	<i>ohazh</i>	<i>ohazh</i> "heavy", <i>ohazho</i> "fermented"
<i>Qerso</i>	[ <sup>h</sup> qer.so]	<i>qers</i>	<i>qers</i> "sweaty", <i>qersat</i> "to sweat"
<i>Risso</i>	[ <sup>h</sup> ris.so]	<i>riss</i>	<i>rissat</i> "to cut", <i>arrisse</i> "repaired"
<i>Sanno</i>	[ <sup>h</sup> san.no]	<i>san</i>	<i>san</i> "pile", <i>athsanar</i> "amount"
<i>Sharo</i>	[ <sup>h</sup> ʃa.ro]	<i>shar</i>	<i>shar</i> "healthy", <i>athsharar</i> "well being"
<i>Taoko</i>	[ <sup>h</sup> ta.o.ko]	<i>taoka</i>	<i>taoka</i> "metallic"
<i>Thavo</i>	[ <sup>h</sup> θa.vo]	<i>thave</i>	<i>thave</i> "marmot"
<i>Verro</i>	[ <sup>h</sup> ve.ro]	<i>ver</i>	<i>ver</i> "wolf"
<i>Yatho</i>	[ <sup>h</sup> ja.θo]	<i>yath</i>	<i>yath</i> "high", <i>ayyathat</i> "to raise"
<i>Zasqo</i>	[ <sup>h</sup> zas.qo]	<i>zasqa</i>	<i>zasqa</i> "white"
<i>Zhano</i>	[ <sup>h</sup> ʒa.no]	<i>zhan</i>	<i>zhani</i> "spear"

## 7. Surnames

Dothraki surnames never really come up (it's not "Drogo Windrunner" or "Cohollo Shieldsplitter", or anything like that), which leads me to believe that, perhaps, the Dothraki lack them. This is not at all uncommon; many real world cultures acquired surnames quite late in their history. But, for example, there are phrases like this (from *A Game of Thrones*):

*"I will rape their women, take their children as slaves, and bring their broken gods back to Vaes Dothrak to bow down beneath the Mother of Mountains. This I vow, Drogo son of Bharbo."*

Even before there were surnames, one's heritage and one's lineage was important, so it seems like there ought to be a common way to form a surname-like epithet that's the equivalent of "son of *x*". These exist in many, many languages, as shown below (the part that means "son of" is italicized):

Muhammad *ibn* Ishaq (*Arabic*)  
 John *Mc*Whorter (*Gaelic*)  
 David Peterson (*Germanic*)  
 Gilbert Poochigian (*Armenian*)

Now here's an overlay of the above with the dominant word order of each language<sup>2</sup> shown to the left (the subject and verb are underlined):

VSO Muhammad *ibn* Ishaq (*Arabic*)  
VSO John *Mc*Whorter (*Gaelic*)  
SVO David Peterson (*Germanic*)  
SOV Gilbert Poochigian (*Armenian*)

Specifically, whether the element that means "son of" occurs *before* or *after* the rest of the name is entirely dependent upon the *headedness* of the language in question (in the example above, whether the subject or verb comes first). A language that's predominantly head-initial will put the "son of" element *before* the name; a language that's predominantly head-final will put the "son of" element *after* the name.

Modern Dothraki word order is SVO, but its earliest word order (still reflected in relative clauses) was VSO, and the language, otherwise, is robustly head-initial. It makes sense, then, for the "son of" element to come *before* the name.

To accommodate this new construction, I've borrowed in the preposition *ki*. *Ki* is used primarily to reintroduce the demoted agent of a passive sentence, but it also carries with it a sense of authorship. It seemed like the logical choice for the "son of" element. Bearing in mind that the preposition *ki* governs the genitive case, if one wanted to say "Drogo, Son of Bharbo", one would say the following:

***Drogo Ki Bharbosi***

And that pattern is fairly robust. You can take any two names and say that *x* is the son of *y* by writing *x Ki y-GEN*. The form doesn't change for names that begin with a vowel (it's completely regular), so the above construction will work for all names.

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<sup>2</sup> Modern Arabic is largely SVO, but traditional, Quranic Arabic reflects the earlier word order, which was VSO. Additionally, the Germanic languages used long ago to be SOV, but they've shifted over time to their characteristic V2 structure.

8. *Conclusion*

If you've read this far, you know everything there is to know about creating names in Dothraki. The method is relatively simple, and should result in names that a fan of George R. R. Martin's *A Song of Fire & Ice* series will immediately recognize as being authentically Dothraki—that is, *dothraki jil*.