

The Vedic svāra system has seven ‘equally-spaced’ tones or svāra-s per octave. They are called the ṣaḍja, ṛṣabha, gāndhāra, madhyama, pañcama, dhaivata and niṣādha. Of these, only the second through the fifth are used in the Ṛg Veda, Yajur Veda and Atharva Veda while all seven are used only in the Sāma Veda.

In the Taittirīya Śākhā (school) of the Kṛṣṇa Yajur Veda there are the *four* basic svāra-s. The udātta, anudātta and the svarita are known by all. The fourth svāra, the pracaya, is however often completely forgotten. We will here consider *all four* of these svāra-s in brief.

THE UDĀTTA

The udātta svāra is equal in pitch to the gāndhāra svāra. It is a ‘strong’ svāra and will generally retain its existence even after sandhi with other svāra-s.

All the following examples are from TB 1/4/9/53:

एषः	तु	वाव	एतत्	सर्वम्
è:ṣṛēhṣ̄	tū	vā:vā	èṭṭṛ	ṣṛvṣ̄m
eṣaḥ	tu	vāva	etat	sarvam
this (masc.)	but	indeed	this (neut.)	all (neut.)

THE ANUDĀTTA

The anudātta is equal to the ṛṣabha. It is a ‘weak’ svāra, and is converted to a svarita when it follows an udātta and a pracaya when it follows a svarita. It is the most populous svāra *before* these two conversions happen which cause the pracaya to finally dominate.

TS 4/1/8/13/9	TS 4/4/12/20	TS 5/4/1/1	TS 7/1/10/1	TB 1/1/6/82
हिरण्यगर्भः	रथन्तरम्	देवासुराः	संवत्सरः	होतव्यम्
h̄irənj̄əgərb̄h̄ṣ̄	r̄əṭ̄h̄əṇṭ̄əṛəṃ	d̄è:v̄à:ṣ̄ur̄ā:h̄ṣ̄	ṣ̄əṭ̄v̄əṭ̄ṣ̄əṛəṃh̄ṣ̄	h̄ò:ṭ̄əṭ̄v̄j̄əṃ
hiranyagarbhaḥ	rathantarām	devāsuraḥ	saṃvatsaraḥ	hotavyam
the primordial being	a kind of melody	the gods and the demons	year	oblations must be given

THE SVARITA

The svarita is equal to the pañcama. It is of two types - the sandhija type which is the anudātta converted into a svarita and the jātya which exists independently. The jātya type generally has a greater intensity than the sandhija. The sandhija is the more common. The first three examples are of the sandhija and the other two of the jātya.

TS 1/1/1/5	TS 1/1/1/31	TS 3/3/1/1	TS 4/1/11/69	TS 5/5/3/22
वायवः	रुद्रस्य	अग्ने	कन्या	न्यङ्
và:jāvāhḥ	rùḍrāsṣjā	āgné:	kànjā:	njḥṅ
vāyavaḥ	rudrasya	agne	kanyā	nyañ
of the deity Vāyu	of Rudra	O Agni!	likeable	horizontal

THE PRACAYA

The pracaya should be equal to the madhyama svāra but in practice it is not pronounced much different from the udātta, which leads to the further error of counting only three svāra-s. The pracaya is always found only after a svarita.

TS 1/3/14/397	TS 1/8/6/78	TS 4/4/12/116	TB 2/5/2/54	TB 3/7/10/38
शुचिव्रततमः	त्र्यम्बकम्	मित्रावरुणा	त्रिसप्तसप्तः	इन्द्रज्येष्ठेभ्यः
ṣūṭeivratatamahḥ	ṭrjēmbākām	mīṭrā:vāruṇā:	ṭrīṣṣṭā:sāhḥ	īṇḍrādzejēṣṭhē:bḥjāhḥ
śucivratatamaḥ	tryambakam	mitrāvaruṇā	trisaptāsahḥ	indrajyeṣṭhebhyaḥ
purest in actions	the three-eyed one	O Mitrāvaruṇā!	O those three times seven!	to those with Indra as leader

ALL FOUR IN A COMPLETE VERSE

TB 2/4/4/47-50

समानी व आकूतिः । समाना हृदयानि वः । समानमस्तु वो मनः । यथा वस्सु सहासति ॥

ṣamā:nī vā ā:kū:ṭihī / ṣamā:nā: hṛḥḍjā:nī vāhḥ /

ṣamā:nāmāṣṭū vò: māñāhḥ / jēṭhā: vāṣṣū ṣahā:sāṭī //

samānī va ākūtiḥ / samānā hṛdayāni vaḥ / samānamastu vo manaḥ / yathā vassu sahasati

May your intentions be the same; may your faith and benevolence be the same; may your thoughts be the same; in such a way as is best for you together.
