

Burmese

1. Current status

No romanization systems for Burmese have been put forward at the United Nations conferences on the standardization of geographical names or at sessions of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names. No information has been received on whether there exist any official systems of romanization in Myanmar. In 1989 the government of Myanmar changed the spellings of the names of several cities in Myanmar to bring them closer to Burmese pronunciation but there appears to be no new romanization schemes behind the changes.

The only known romanization system of Burmese is that of the BGN and the PCGN (1970) which is based on the 1907 version of the *Tables for the Transliteration of Burmese into English*, published in 1908 by the Office of the Superintendent, Government Printing, Rangoon, Burma.

Burmese uses an alphasyllabic script. The romanization is not reversible to its original script form.

5. Other systems of romanization

The **BGN/PCGN 1970 System** is given below.

Consonant characters

က ka	ခ sa	င ta	တ ta	ပ pa	ယ ya	
ခ ka	ဆ sa	ဌ ta	တ ta	ဖ pa	ရ ya	ဟ ha
ဂ ga	ဇ za	ဋ da	ဒ da	ဗ ba	လ la	ဌ la
ဃ ga	ည za	ဗ da	ဓ da	ဏ ba	ဝ wa	အ a
င nga	ည ¹ nya	ဏ na	န na	မ ma	ထ ² tha	

¹ at the end of a syllable also special character ည may occur

² at the end of a syllable also special character ထ may occur

Independent vowel characters

ဣ i	ဥ u	ဦ u	ဧ e
ဩ i	ဦ u	ဧ e	ဩ aw

Abbreviated vowel characters (ဆ stands for any consonant character)

အံ an	အိ i	အု, အူ u	အဲ è	အော aw	အေါ aw	အေ e
အာ, အါ a	အီ i	အူ, အူ u	အော aw	အော် aw	အို o	

Other symbols (က stands for any consonant character)

ကြ -y	ကျ -y	ကွ -w	ကု h-	ကိ ¹ in-	ကိ ²
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Note. The hyphen in the first five character combinations stands for any consonant. With က k the resulting romanizations should read *ky, ky, kw, hk* and *ink*, respectively (the latter two do not exist in reality).

¹ adds *-in* to the end of the preceding syllable: တင်္ဂလာအော် *Bin-gala Aw*

² end-of-syllable mark (marks the absence of the inherent vowel)

The following consonant combinations have different values:

ချ, ချ	cha
ရှ, ဖိ	sha

Syllable endings (ဆ stands for any initial consonant character)

အတ် et	အိတ် eik	အိန် ein	အွမ် un
အိတ် eik	အုတ် ôk	အုန် ôn	ဝမ် wun
အုတ် ôk	အွတ် ut	အုန် un	အယ် è
အိုတ် aik	ဝတ် wut	ဝန် wun	အယ် an
အောက် auk	အေတ် it	အက် an	အိုလ် aing
အပ် et	အင်္ဂ် at	အိက် ein	အယ် at
အင် in	ဝင်္ဂ် wut	အုက် ôn	အိယ် eik
အိုင် ein	ဝင်္ဂ် wut	အိုက် aing	အင်္ဂ် in
အိုင် aing	အဒ် at	အတ် at	အံ an
အောင် aung	အိဒ် eik	အိပ် eik	အီ ein
အစ် it	အုဒ် ôk	အုပ် ôk	အုံ ôn
အုစ် ôk	အာဒ် at	အွတ် ut	အွံ un
အဖ် it	အမ် at	ဝါတ် wut	ဝံ wun
အိဖ် eik	အိမ် eik	အမ် an	အယ် at
အည် i,in,e ¹	အာမ် at	အိမ် ein	
အတ် at	အန် an	အုပ် ôn	

¹ choice depends on actual pronunciation

Notes

1. Certain consonant sounds change their value if used after any vowel letter or nasal consonant except as cited in note 5. The changes, as expressed in Roman letters, are the following:

ch	→ gy
k	→ g
p	→ b
s	→ z
t	→ d

2. In romanization, *-a* is always accompanying the Burmese consonant character unless this

has got a dependent vowel character or an end-of-syllable mark: မဒမာ *madama*.

3. *a* is romanized at the beginning of a word as *a* if followed by a consonant character that does not bear a vowel character or an end-of-syllable mark; at the beginning of a medial or final syllable it should be rendered by a hyphen: မအု *ma-u*, သီးဝင်အိုင် *Thibin-aing*.
4. The independent vowel characters should be romanized with a hyphen at the beginning of medial and final syllables: ကြေး *kye-e*.
5. In consonant clusters the first component is romanized according to the main table, not according to the table of syllable endings: မိစ္ဆာ *missa*
6. When the letter *n* at the end of a syllable is followed by *g* or *y* at the beginning of the next syllable, hyphen should be added in between them; similarly hyphen should be used between *t* and *h* if they are in different syllables: အင်းဂူတီ *in-gut* (but မွှါဝန် *shwengan*).
7. Tone marks *´* and *:* should not be romanized.