Tibetan

The United Nations resolution III/8 in 1977 recognized the Scheme for a Chinese Phonetic Alphabet (Pinyin) as China's official Roman alphabet scheme and recommended the alphabet as the international system for the romanization of Chinese geographical names. In China Tibetan geographical names are transcribed directly from the Tibetan script. The scheme was published in *Toponymic Guidelines for Map and Other Editors: China*, 1982[1].

The system is used in China and in international cartographic products.

Tibetan uses an alphasyllabic script. The romanization scheme is based on the pronunciation of Tibetan names in the Tibetan broadcasts by the Central People's Broadcasting Station (the Lhasa pronunciation). Due to the historic nature of the script the rules of correspondence between the script and the pronunciation are complicated and the romanization is not reversible to its original written Tibetan form.

Romanization

Consonant characters

1 ཀ ga	5 ཚ ja	9 ད da	13 བ ba	17 ཛ za	21 ཝ xa	26 ལ la
2 ཁ ka	6 ཆ qa	10 ཐ ta	14 པ pa	18 ཙ ca	22 ཟ sa	27 ཤ xa
3 ག ka,ga^A	7 ཇ qa,ja^A	11 ད ta,da^A	15 བ pa,ba^A	19 ཛ ca,za^A	23 འ a	28 ས sa
4 ང nga	8 ཉ nya	12 ན na	16 མ ma	20 ཞ wa	24 ཡ ya	29 ཧ ha
					25 ར ra	30 ཨ a

^{A} If the character is not accompanied by a prefixed character or a superscripted consonant, it is read as aspirated and the first romanization equivalent is used; otherwise it is read as nonaspirated and the second equivalent is used.

Consonant combinations at the beginning of syllables (the list is not complete)

1 གྱ gya	3 ཀྱ kya, gya^A	5 ཕ cha	7 ཧྲ sha
2 ཁྱ kya	4 ཀྲ zha	6 གྲ cha, zha^A	8 ལྷ lha

^{A} If the combination is not accompanied by a prefixed character or a superscripted consonant, it is read as aspirated and the first romanization equivalent is used; otherwise it is read as nonaspirated and the second equivalent is used.

---

[1] *Fourth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names*. Geneva, 24 August - 14 September 1982. Vol. II. *Technical papers*, pp. 121-125.

Vowel characters (ཀ stands for any consonant character)

₁ཀ a   ₂ཀི i   ₃ཀུ u   ₄ཀེ e   ₅ཀོ o

Other symbols

་ syllable separation character, e.g. ནག་ཆུ Nag Qu.

Syllable endings

1	ཨ	a	21	ཨེ�	iu	41	ཨུམ	um	61	ཨེམས	êm
2	ཨའུ	au	22	ཨིག	ig	42	ཨུམས	um	62	ཨེར	êr
3	ཨག	ag	23	ཨིགས	ig	43	ཨུར	ur	63	ཨེན	ên
4	ཨགས	ag	24	ཨིད	i	44	ཨུལ	ü	64	ཨོ	o
5	ཨང	ang	25	ཨིས	i	45	ཨུའི	ü	65	ཨོག	og
6	ཨངས	ang	26	ཨིང	ing	46	ཨུད	ü	66	ཨོགས	og
7	ཨབ	ab	27	ཨིངས	ing	47	ཨུས	ü	67	ཨོང	ong
8	ཨབས	ab	28	ཨིབ	ib	48	ཨུན	ün	68	ཨོངས	ong
9	ཨམ	am	29	ཨིབས	ib	49	ཨེ	ê	69	ཨོབ	ob
10	ཨམས	am	30	ཨིམ	im	50	ཨེལ	ê	70	ཨོབས	ob
11	ཨར	ar	31	ཨིམས	im	51	ཨེའི	ê	71	ཨོམ	om
12	ཨལ	ai [ä]	32	ཨིར	ir	52	ཨེག	êg	72	ཨོམས	om
13	ཨའི	ai [ä]	33	ཨིན	in	53	ཨེགས	êg	73	ཨོར	or
14	ཨད	ai [ä]	34	ཨུ	u	54	ཨེད	ê	74	ཨོལ	oi [ö]
15	ཨས	ai [ä]	35	ཨུག	ug	55	ཨེས	ê	75	ཨོའི	oi [ö]
16	ཨན	ain [än]	36	ཨུགས	ug	56	ཨེང	êng	76	ཨོད	oi [ö]
17	ཨི	i	37	ཨུང	ung	57	ཨེངས	êng	77	ཨོས	oi [ö]
18	ཨིལ	i	38	ཨུངས	ung	58	ཨེབ	êb	78	ཨོན	oin [ön]
19	ཨིའི	i	39	ཨུབ	ub	59	ཨེབས	êb			
20	ཨིའུ	iu	40	ཨུབས	ub	60	ཨེམ	êm			

Notes

1. Prefixed consonant characters ག (k), ད (t), བ (p), མ (m), འ (a), and superscripted consonant characters ར (r), ལ (l), ས (s) remain mostly unpronounced and are not reflected in the romanization.
2. Subscript characters ྭ (w), ྱ (y), ྲ (r), ླ (l) are pronounced only in certain combinations (see also the consonant combinations at the beginning of syllables).
3. A number of homonyms exist in the Tibetan language and they are not all listed here.
4. The characters འ and ཨ are treated as without initials when transcribed with Pinyin.
5. When the prefixed characters མ and འ or the superscripted consonant ས give the preceding

syllable an additional nasal or make the vowel in it nasalized, it is spelt according to the actual pronunciation. The nasalized vowels (a), (o), (u) are represented by the finals *an, on, un* in the Pinyin system.

6. Where two Roman equivalents are given, the second (in brackets) is used for recording the pronunciation of place-names while the first form is for general use.