

Tamil

The United Nations recommended system was approved in 1972 (II/11) and amended in 1977 (III/12), based on a report prepared by D. N. Sharma. The tables and their corrections were published in volume II of the conference reports¹.

There is no evidence of the use of the system either in India, Sri Lanka or in international cartographic products.

Tamil uses an alphasyllabic script whereby each character represents a syllable rather than one sound. Vowels and diphthongs are marked in two ways: as independent characters (used syllable-initially) and in an abbreviated form, to denote vowels after consonants. The romanization table is unambiguous. The system is on the whole reversible.

Romanization

I. Independent vowel characters

1 அ	a	3 இ	i	5 உ	u	7 எ	ě	9 ஐ	ai	11 ஒ	o
2 ஆ	ā	4 ஈ	ī	6 ஊ	ū	8 ஏ	e	10 ஔ	ō	12 ஔ	au

II. Abbreviated vowel characters and other symbols (• stands for any consonant character)

1 •	a	3 ி	i ^B	5 ு	u ^D	7 ெ	ě	9 ை	ai ^F	11 ொ	o	13 ூ	h ^G
2 •ா	ā ^A	4 ே	ī ^C	6 ொ	ū ^E	8 ே	e	10 ொ	ō	12 ொ	au	14 •	(H)

^A Exceptions in the older and Classical literature: ன் னā, ற் றā, ன் னā.

^B Variation: ி ti.

^C Variation: ே ī.

^D Variations: கு ku, ன் nu, ச chu, ன் nu, ற் tu, ன் nu, து tu, ன் nu, பு pu, மு mu, யு yu, ரு ru, லு lu, etc.

^E Variations: கூ kū, ன் nū, சூ chū, ன் nū, ற் tū, ன் nū, தூ tū, ன் nū, பூ pū, மு mū, etc.

^F Exceptions in the older and Classical literature: லை lai, னை ļai, னை nai, னை nai.

^G Absent in the original table.

^H Pronunciation without a vowel: க் k.

¹ *Second United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names*. London, 10-31 May 1972. Vol. II. *Technical papers*. United Nations. New York 1974, pp. 153-154; *Third United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names*. Athens, 17 August - 7 September 1977. Vol. II, *Technical papers*, pp. 393 etc.

III. Consonant characters

1 க	ka	5 ட	ṭa	9 ப	pa	11 ய	ya	15 ழ	ḷa	19 ஜ	ja ^A	23 ஹ	ha ^A
2 ங	ṅa	6 ண	ṇa	10 ம	ma	12 ர	ra	16 ள	ḷa	20 ள	śha ^{AB}	24 ஶ	kṣha
3 ச	cha	7 த	ta			13 ல	la	17 ற	ṛa	21 ஷ	ṣha	25 ற்ற	r̥ra
4 ஞ	ña	8 ந	na			14 வ	va	18 ன	ṇa	22 ஸ	sa ^A	26 ன்ற	n̥ra

^A Characters borrowed from the Grantha script.

^B Special syllable character: ஸ்ரீ shrī.

Other systems of romanization

For differences between the UN system and the **ISO transliteration standard ISO 15919: 2001** see the section on the romanization of Hindi.