Burmese

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. Currently there is no official system 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 this was done on an *ad hoc* basis[1].

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.

System of romanization

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

I. Consonant characters

1 က ka[A]	6 စ sa[A]	11 ဋ ta[A]	16 တ ta[A]	21 ပ pa[A]	26 ယ ya	31 ဟ ha
2 ခ ka[A]	7 ဆ sa[A]	12 ဌ ta[A]	17 ထ ta[A]	22 ဖ pa[A]	27 ရ ya	32 ဠ la
3 ဂ ga	8 ဇ za	13 ဍ da	18 ဒ da	23 ဗ ba	28 လ la	33 အ a[D]
4 ဃ ga	9 ဈ za	14 ဎ da	19 ဓ da	24 ဘ ba	29 ဝ wa	
5 င nga	10 ည nya[B]	15 ဏ na	20 န na	25 မ ma	30 သ tha[C]	

[A] See note 1.

[B] Syllable-final variant character: ဉ.

[C] Syllable-final variant character: ဿ.

[D] See note 3.

II. Independent vowel characters (see also note 4)

1 ဣ i	3 ဥ u	5 ဧ e[A]	7 ဩ aw[B]
2 ဤ i	4 ဦ u	6 ဦ e	

[A] This character is actually an abbreviation, a genitive/declarative marker.

[B] Also used in combination with abbreviated vowel characters: ဩ, ဪ.

III. Abbreviated vowel characters (• stands for any consonant character)

1	◌ံ an	3	◌ိ i	5	◌ု u[B]	7	◌ဲ è	9	ေ◌ာ် aw[A]	11	ေ◌ e
2	◌ာ a[A]	4	◌ီ i	6	◌ူ u[B]	8	ေ◌ာ aw[A]	10	◌ို o[B]		

[A] To avoid graphic confusion with some other characters, ာ is replaced by ါ and ◌ာ် by ◌ါ် after consonant characters ခ *ka*, ဂ *ga*, င *nga*, ဒ *da*, ပ *pa*, and ဝ *wa*, e.g. ခါ *ka*, ခေါ် *kaw*. After characters ဇ *za*, ဌ *ta*, ဓ *da*, ပ *pa* and ဘ *ba* this practice seems to be optional.

[B] If in conflict with another subscript symbol, a vowel character ◌ု or ◌ူ may be written after consonant characters, with a prolonged upper part, e.g. ကျူ *kyu*, မျို့ *myo*.

IV. Other symbols (• stands for any consonant character)

1	◌ျ -y[A]	2	◌ြ -y[B]	3	◌ွ -w	4	◌ှ h-[C]	5	◌င် in-[D]	6	◌် (E)

[A] Exceptional romanization: ဆျ *cha* (see also note 1).

[B] Exceptional romanization: ခြ *cha* (see also note 1).

[C] Adds *h* before the consonant, e.g. မှ *hma*; exceptional romanization: ရှ (ဟျ) *sha*.

[D] Adds *-in* to the end of the preceding syllable: ဘင်္ဂလားအော် *Bin-gala Aw*.

[E] End-of-syllable mark (marks the absence of the inherent vowel).

Symbols 1, 2 and 3 may also occur in combinations: ◌ျွ *-yw*, ◌ြွ *-yw*.

V. Syllable endings (• stands for any initial consonant character; syllables beginning with ဝ may have different romanization equivalents, these are also listed below)

1	◌က် et	17	◌ိက် eik	33	◌ိန် ein	49	◌ုမ် un
2	◌ိက် eik	18	◌ုက် ôk	34	◌ုန် ôn	50	ဝမ် wun
3	◌ုက် ôk	19	◌ုတ် ut	35	◌ုန် un	51	◌ယ် è
4	◌ုိက် aik	20	ဝတ် wut	36	ဝန် wun	52	◌လ် an
5	ေ◌ာက် auk	21	ေ◌တ် it	37	◌ဏ် an	53	◌ုိလ် aing
6	◌င် et	22	◌ဉ် at	38	◌ိဏ် ein	54	◌သ် at
7	◌င် in	23	ဝဉ် wut	39	◌ုဏ် ôn	55	◌ိသ် eik
8	◌ိင် ein	24	ဝဉ် wut	40	◌ုိဏ် aing	56	◌ဉ် in
9	◌ုိင် aing	25	◌ဎ at	41	◌ပ် at	57	◌ီ an
10	ေ◌ာင် aung	26	◌ိဎ eik	42	◌ိပ် eik	58	◌ီ ein
11	◌စ် it	27	◌ုဎ ôk	43	◌ုပ် ôk	59	◌ီ ôn
12	◌ုစ် ôk	28	◌ာဎ at	44	◌ုပ် ut	60	◌ီ un
13	◌ဉ် it	29	◌ဓ at	45	ဝါတ် wut	61	◌ီ wun
14	◌ိဉ် eik	30	◌ိဓ eik	46	◌မ် an	62	◌ဿ် at
15	◌ည် i,in,e[A]	31	◌ာဓ at	47	◌ိမ် ein		
16	◌တ် at	32	◌ဖ an	48	◌ုမ် ôn		

The choice of romanization depends on the 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: မဒမ *madama*.

3. At the beginning of a word, the character အ should not be romanized, unless followed by a consonant character that does not bear a vowel character or an end-of-syllable mark, in which case the character အ should be romanized *a*: အကာ *aga*, but အိုဘဲ့ *obè*, အပ် *at*. At the beginning of a medial or final syllable, အ should be rendered by a hyphen: မအု *ma-u*, သီးပင်အိုင် *Thibin-aing*.

4. The independent vowel characters should be romanized with a hyphen at the beginning of medial and final syllables: ကြဧ *kye-e*.

5. When two consonant characters are written one above the other without an end-of-syllable mark, the upper character should be romanized first, followed by the lower character, and then the vowel and consonant characters, if any: ပညာ *panyza*, အန္ဒိမဘာဝ *andimabawa*. Alternative romanizations, as indicated in note 1, do not apply to the upper character: သေတ္တာ *thetta*, မိဿ *missa*, ဥက္ကဒ *ukkada*.

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: အင်းကွတ် *in-gut* (but ရွှေဂင်္ *shwengan*).

7. Tone marks ◌ and ◌ should not be romanized.