

ROMANIZATION SYSTEM FOR AMHARIC

BGN/PCGN 1967 System

The BGN/PCGN system for Amharic was designed for use in romanizing names written in Amharic characters. The Roman letters and letter combinations shown as equivalents to the Amharic characters reflect modern Amharic pronunciation. Different consonant characters in three groups are pronounced alike in modern Amharic and are therefore romanized identically for use in geographic names.

BASIC CHARACTERS

	1 st order	2 nd order	3 rd order	4 th order	5 th order	6 th order ¹	7 th order
1 ²	ሀ hā	ሁ hu	ሂ hī	ሃ ha	ሄ hē	ህ h / hi	ሆ ho
2	ለ le	ሉ lu	ሊ lī	ላ la	ሌ lē	ል l / li	ሎ lo
3 ²	ሐ hā	ሁ hu	ሂ hī	ሃ ha	ሄ hē	ህ h / hi	ሆ ho
4	መ me	ሙ mu	ሚ mī	ማ ma	ሜ mē	ም m / mi	ሞ mo
5 ²	ሠ se	ሡ su	ሢ sī	ሣ sa	ሤ sē	ሥ s / si	ሦ so
6	ረ re	ሩ ru	ሪ rī	ራ ra	ራ rē	ር r / ri	ሮ ro
7 ²	ሰ se	ሱ su	ሲ sī	ሳ sa	ሴ sē	ስ s / si	ሶ so
8	ሸ she	ሹ shu	ሺ shī	ሻ sha	ሼ shē	ሽ sh / shi	ሾ sho
9	ቀ k'e	ቁ k'u	ቂ kī	ቃ k'a	ቄ k'ē	ቅ k' / k'i	ቆ / ቈ k'o
10	በ be	ቡ bu	ቢ bī	ባ ba	ቤ bē	ብ b / bi	ቦ bo
11	ተ te	ቱ tu	ቲ tī	ታ ta	ቲ tē	ት t / ti	ቶ to
12	ቸ che	ቹ chu	ቺ chī	ቻ cha	ቼ chē	ች ch / chi	ቾ cho
13 ²	ኀ hā	ኁ hu	ኂ hī	ኃ ha	ኄ hē	ኅ h / hi	ኆ / ኇ ho
14	ነ ne	ኑ nu	ኒ nī	ና na ³	ኔ nē	ነ n / ni	ኖ no
15	ኘ nye	ኙ nyu	ኚ nyī	ኛ nya	ኜ nyē	ኝ ny / nyi	ኞ nyo
16 ⁴	አ ā / 'ā	ሁ u / 'u	ኢ ī / 'ī	አ a / 'a	ኤ ē / 'ē	እ i / 'i or not romanized	አ o / 'o
17	ከ ke	ከ ku	ከ kī	ካ ka	ከ kē	ክ k / ki	ኮ / ኰ ko
18 ²	ኸ he	ኹ hu	ኺ hī	ኻ ha	ኼ hē	ኽ h / hi	ኾ / ኿ ho

	1 st order	2 nd order	3 rd order	4 th order	5 th order	6 th order ¹	7 th order
19	Ⓞ we	Ⓞ wu	Ⓞ wī	Ⓞ wa	Ⓞ wē	Ⓞ w / wi	Ⓞ wo
20	Ⓞ 'ā	Ⓞ 'u	Ⓞ ī	Ⓞ 'a	Ⓞ 'ē	Ⓞ ' / 'i	Ⓞ 'o
21	Ⓞ ze	Ⓞ zu	Ⓞ zī	Ⓞ za	Ⓞ zē	Ⓞ z / zi	Ⓞ zo
22	Ⓞ zhe	Ⓞ zhu	Ⓞ zhī	Ⓞ zha	Ⓞ zhē	Ⓞ zh / zhi	Ⓞ zho
23	Ⓞ ye ⁵	Ⓞ yu	Ⓞ yī	Ⓞ ya	Ⓞ yē	Ⓞ y / yi	Ⓞ yo
24	Ⓞ de	Ⓞ du	Ⓞ dī	Ⓞ da	Ⓞ dē	Ⓞ d / di	Ⓞ do
25	Ⓞ je	Ⓞ ju	Ⓞ jī	Ⓞ ja	Ⓞ jē	Ⓞ j / ji	Ⓞ jo
26	Ⓞ ge	Ⓞ gu	Ⓞ gī	Ⓞ ga	Ⓞ gē	Ⓞ g / gi	Ⓞ g / ɣ go
27	Ⓞ t'e	Ⓞ t'u	Ⓞ tī	Ⓞ t'a	Ⓞ tē	Ⓞ t' / t'i	Ⓞ t'o
28	Ⓞ ch'e	Ⓞ ch'u	Ⓞ chī	Ⓞ ch'a	Ⓞ chē	Ⓞ ch' / ch'i	Ⓞ ch'o
29	Ⓞ p'e	Ⓞ p'u	Ⓞ pī	Ⓞ p'a	Ⓞ pē	Ⓞ p' / p'i	Ⓞ p'o
30 ²	Ⓞ ts'e	Ⓞ ts'u	Ⓞ tsī	Ⓞ ts'a	Ⓞ tsē	Ⓞ ts' / ts'i	Ⓞ ts'o
31 ²	Ⓞ ts'e	Ⓞ ts'u	Ⓞ tsī	Ⓞ ts'a	Ⓞ tsē	Ⓞ ts' / ts'i	Ⓞ ts'o
32	Ⓞ fe	Ⓞ fu	Ⓞ fī	Ⓞ fa	Ⓞ fē	Ⓞ f / fi	Ⓞ fo
33	Ⓞ pe	Ⓞ pu	Ⓞ pī	Ⓞ pa	Ⓞ pē	Ⓞ p / pi	Ⓞ po
34	Ⓞ ve	Ⓞ vu	Ⓞ vī	Ⓞ va	Ⓞ vē	Ⓞ v / vi	Ⓞ vo

COMBINATIONS WITH W			
3 rd order	4 th order	5 th order	6 th order
ᠠᠪᠠ k'wī	ᠠᠪᠠ k'wa	ᠠᠪᠠ k'wē	ᠠᠪᠠ k'wi
ᠠᠪᠠ hwī	ᠠᠪᠠ hwa	ᠠᠪᠠ hwē	ᠠᠪᠠ hwi
ᠠᠪᠠ kwī	ᠠᠪᠠ kwa	ᠠᠪᠠ kwē	ᠠᠪᠠ kwi
ᠠᠪᠠ gwī	ᠠᠪᠠ gwa	ᠠᠪᠠ gwē	ᠠᠪᠠ gwi

COMBINATIONS WITH WA			
ᠠᠪᠠ lwa	ᠠᠪᠠ bwa	ᠠᠪᠠ zwa	ᠠᠪᠠ t'wa
ᠠᠪᠠ mwa	ᠠᠪᠠ twa	ᠠᠪᠠ zhwa	ᠠᠪᠠ ch'wa
ᠠᠪᠠ rwa	ᠠᠪᠠ chwa	ᠠᠪᠠ jwa	ᠠᠪᠠ ts'wa
ᠠᠪᠠ swa	ᠠᠪᠠ nwa	ᠠᠪᠠ dwa	ᠠᠪᠠ fwa
ᠠᠪᠠ shwa	ᠠᠪᠠ nywa		

COMBINATIONS WITH YA			SPECIAL INITIAL
ᠠᠪᠠ rya	ᠠᠪᠠ mya	ᠠᠪᠠ fya	ᠠᠪᠠ e

NUMERALS																				
ᠠ	ᠡ	ᠢ	ᠣ	ᠤ	ᠬ	ᠭ	ᠸ	ᠹ	ᠰ	ᠱ	ᠲ	ᠳ	ᠴ	ᠵ	ᠶ	ᠷ	ᠸ	ᠹ	ᠰ	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	20	21	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100

NOTES

1. The 6th-order characters should be romanized either with or without the letter **i**, depending on pronunciation.
2. For documentation purposes, the characters romanized with **h** in rows 1, 3, 13, and 18 may, instead, be romanized with **h**, **ḥ**, **ḥ̣**, and **ḥ̣̣**, respectively; the characters romanized with **s** in rows 5 and 7 may, instead, be romanized with **š** and **s**, respectively; and the characters romanized with **ts'** in rows 30 and 31 may, instead, be romanized with **ts'** and **ṭs**, respectively.
3. When the character **ፍ** in row 14 is known to represent the Amharic word meaning “and” its romanization (**na**) should always be separated from the preceding and following words by spaces and should never be capitalized, e.g., **Raya na K'obo**.
4. The vowel characters in row 16 should be romanized **ā**, **u**, **ī**, **a**, **ē**, **i**, and **o** initially and **'ā**, **'u**, **'ī**, **'a**, **'ē**, **'i**, and **'o** in all other positions.
5. When the character **የ** in row 23 is known to represent the Amharic preposition, its romanization (**Ye**) should be capitalized and written together with the following word, which should also be capitalized, e.g., **YeWiha Shet'**.