

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

	1st order	2nd order	3rd order	4th order	5th order	6th order <sup>1</sup>	7th order
1 <sup>2</sup>	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	ሎ l, li	ሎ lo
3 <sup>2</sup>	ሐ hā	ሑ hu	ሒ hī	ሓ ha	ሔ hē	ሕ h, hi	ሐ ho
4	መ me	ሙ mu	ሚ mī	ማ ma	ሜ mē	ም m, mi	ሞ mo
5 <sup>2</sup>	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 <sup>2</sup>	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 <sup>3</sup>	ቀ k'e	ቁ k'u	ቂ k'ī	ቃ k'a	ቄ k'ē	ቅ k', k'ī	ቆ ቂ k'o
10	በ be	ቡ bu	ቢ bī	ባ ba	ቤ bē	ብ b, bi	ቦ bo
11	ተ te	ቲ 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 <sup>2</sup>	ኀ hā	ኁ hu	ኂ hī	ኃ ha	ኄ hē	ኅ h, hi	ኆ ኀ ho
14	ነ ne	ኑ nu	ኒ nī	ና na <sup>4</sup>	ኔ nē	ኑ n, ni	ኖ no
15	ኘ nye	ኙ nyu	ኚ nyī	ኛ nya	ኜ nyē	ኝ ny, nyi	ኞ nyo
16 <sup>5</sup>	አ ā, 'ā	ሁ u, 'u	ኢ ī, 'ī	አ a, 'a	ኤ ē, 'ē	አ i, 'i, or not romanized	አ o, 'o
17	ከ ke	ከ ku	ከ kī	ካ ka	ኬ kē	ከ k, ki	ከ ከ ko
18 <sup>2</sup>	ኸ he	ኹ hu	ኺ hī	ኻ ha	ኼ hē	ኽ h, hi	ኾ ho

	1st order	2nd order	3rd order	4th order	5th order	6th order <sup>1</sup>	7th 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 <sup>6</sup>	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	go
27	t'e	t'u	tī	t'a	t'ē	t', t'i	t'o
28	ch'e	ch'u	chī	ch'a	ch'ē	ch', ch'i	ch'o
29	p'e	p'u	pī	p'a	p'ē	p', p'i	p'o
30 <sup>2</sup>	ts'e	ts'u	tsī	ts'a	ts'ē	ts', ts'i	ts'o
31 <sup>2</sup>	θ ts'e	θ ts'u	θ tsī	θ ts'a	θ ts'ē	θ ts', ts'i	θ ts'o
32	fe	fu	fī	fa	fē	f, fi	fo
33	pe	pu	pī	pa	pē	p, pi	po
34	vē	vu	vī	va	vē	v, vi	vo

#### COMBINATIONS WITH W

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

ᳵ	lwa	ᳵ	bwa	ᳵ	zwa	ᳵ	t'wa
ᳵ ᳵ ᳵ	mwa	ᳵ	twa	ᳵ	zhwa	ᳵ	ch'wa
ᳵ	rwa	ᳵ	chwa	ᳵ	ywa	ᳵ	ts'wa
ᳵ	swa	ᳵ ᳵ	nwa	ᳵ	dwa	ᳵ ᳵ ᳵ	fwa
ᳵ	shwa	ᳵ	nywa	ᳵ	jwa		

𑌕 𑌕 rya      𑌕 𑌕 mya      𑌕 fya

 $\chi^2_e$ 

Ḫ	Ḃ	Ḉ	Ḑ	Ḕ	Ḗ	Ḓ	Ḕ	Ḕ	Ḕ	Ḕ	Ḕ	Ḕ	Ḕ	Ḕ	Ḕ	Ḕ	Ḕ	Ḕ	Ḕ	Ḕ
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	20	21	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100

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. The character **ቐ** which occurs only in the writing systems of the Tigre and Tigrinya languages, should be romanized with **k'** in geographic names but may be romanized with **ḵ** in documentation.
4. When the character **ና** 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**.
5. 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.
6. When the character **የ** in row 23 is known to represent the Amharic preposition, its romanization (**Ye**) should always be capitalized and written together with the following word, which should also be capitalized, e.g., **YeWiha Shet'**.