If you are using plain LaTeX, you need to find a package that supports your special character. Examples:

ʣ ʥ ñ ⌐ ⌐
Ââ Êê Îî Ôô Ŵŵ Ŷŷ Ïï
Ăă Ĕĕ Ĭĭ Ŏŏ Ŭŭ
Āā Ēē Īī Ōō Ūū Ȳȳ

If you want to type special characters natively in UTF-8, try LuaLaTex. See `special_characters_lualatex.tex` for examples on how to use the LuaLaTeX typesetting engine. A good first pointer is for finding packages for your special character is this PDF file:

http://tug.ctan.org/info/symbols/comprehensive/symbols-letter.pdf