TRANSLITERATION SYSTEM FOR HEBREW
BGN/PCGN 1962 System

The BGN/PCGN 1962 System for the Hebrew alphabet is based on the Hebrew Academy System as used by the Survey of Israel. The tables and notes were adopted jointly by the BGN and the PCGN in 1962.

The tables provide a means of transliterating Hebrew-language names of Israel. Notes 6 and 7 provide for the treatment of non Hebrew names of two types: (1) commemorative names, mostly of European origin, and (2) Arabic-language names written in the Hebrew alphabet.

Official Israeli sources of names in the Hebrew alphabet, especially Survey of Israel maps, provide the vowel points necessary for the unambiguous transliteration of geographic names. Sources which do not supply vowel points must be supplemented by dictionaries and other tools which provide them.

TRANSLITERATION TABLE FOR HEBREW
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Hebrew letter	Name of letter	Transliteration	Remarks
א	alef	'	See note 1
ב	bet	b	See note 2
ב	vet	v	
ג and ג	gimmel	g	See note 2
ד and ד	dalet	d	See note 2
ה	he	h	Omit when final unless written with a dot (mappiq), i.e., ה
ו	waw	w	
ז	zayin	z	
ח	het	h̲	
ט	tet	t	
י	yod	y	
כ (final ך)	kaf	k	See note 2
כ (final ך or ך)	khaf	kh	
ל	lamed	l	
מ (final ם)	mem	m	
נ (final ן)	nun	n	
ס	samekh	s	
ע	ʻayin	ʻ	This is a turned comma.
פ	pe	p	See note 2
פ (final ף)	fe	f	

Hebrew letter	Name of letter	Transliteration	Remarks
צ (final ץ)	z̲ade	z̲	
ק	qof	q	
ר	reish	r	
שׁ	shin	sh	
שׂ	sin	s	
ת and ת	taw	t	See note 2
ג׳		(ǧ)	These three letters, and certain other modified letters not included in this system, are used on Hebrew maps to render Arabic and other non-Hebrew names. (Modifications involve dots and circumflexes as well as ticks.) Names in which these letters occur will not be transliterated but should be treated in accordance with notes 6 and 7.
ז׳		(ž)	
צ׳		(č)	

VOWELS

ַ	patta̲h̲	a	
ֲ	h̲atef patta̲h̲	a	
ָ	(qame̲z	a	
	(qame̲z qatan	o	
ֶ	segol	e	
ֱ	hatef segol	e	
ֵ	z̲ere	e	
ֵי	"long" z̲ere	e	
ְ	(shewa naʻ	e	)
	(		)See note 3
	(shewa na̲h̲	omit	)

Hebrew letter	Name of letter	Transliteration	Remarks
ִ	ḥireq	i	
יִ	"long" ḥireq	i	
ֳָ	ḥatef qameẓ qatan	o	
ֹ	ḥolem	o	
וֹ	"long" ḥolem	o	
ֻ	qibbuẓ	u	
וּ	shureq	u	

NOTES

1. Every meḏial alef bearing a vowel or shewa is transliterated, e.g., גַּלְאוֹן (Gal'on), בְּאֵר שֶׁבַע (Be'er Sheva'), נֶאְדָּר (Ne'dar). Alef is not transliterated when initial or used as mater lectionis, e.g., אֵלָה (Ela), סָאסָא (Sasa).

2. The dot placed within the body of the consonants בּ , גּ , דּ , כּ , פּ and תּ when they occur at the beginning of a name or after an unvowelled consonant in the middle of a name is known as the "weak" dagesh. It alters the sound of בּ , כּ and פּ to b, k and p. The phonetic distinction between גּ and גּ , דּ and דּ , and תּ and תּ has now been lost and these pairs of letters are transliterated identically.

    The same dot may also be placed within the body of any consonant (including the six above-mentioned but excluding א , ה , ח , ע and ר) to indicate the "strong" dagesh. This is rendered in transliteration by doubling the letter; the digraph sh is not doubled. The "strong" dagesh can be distinguished from the "weak" dagesh since the former is always preceded by a vowel, e.g., עַכּוֹ ('Akko) but טוּלְכַּרְם (Tulkarm). But see Note 4.

3. Shewa naḥ ("quiescent" shewa) marks the end of a closed syllable and is not pronounced. Shewa na' is a short neutral vowel.

4. The definite article ה is capitalized in transliteration and run together with the following word, whose initial letter bearing the dagesh is also capitalized but not doubled, e.g., HaYogev. If the initial letter is 'ayin the following vowel is capitalized, e.g., Ha'Ogen.

5. "Furtive" pattaḥ, which is written under final he mappiq, ḥet and ʿayin, but pronounced before and not after these three consonants, is transliterated before the letter under which it is written, e.g., רוֹקֵחַ (Roqeaḥ).

6. The non-Hebrew elements of commemorative names derived from roman-alphabet languages should be spelled as in the original, e.g., Kefar Masaryk (not Masariq), Balfouriyya (not Balfuriyya), Kefar Szold (not Sold).

7. Arabic names written in the Hebrew alphabet should be transliterated according to the following special rules:

   (a) Hebrew consonants will be transliterated according to the table above with the following amendments and additions:

א	omit
גʹ	j
דʹ	dh
דּ	ḍ (dot below d)
ח	ḥ
ה ַ , ה ֳ (final)	-a
ז	dh
חʹ	kh
ט	ṭ
עʹ	gh
צ	ṣ
תʹ	th

   (b) Hebrew vowel points will be transliterated as follows:

ְ	no vowel
ַ	a
ִ	i
ֻ	u
ָ	ā
ִי	ī

וּ	ū (see also (c) below)
יּ ֵ	ei
יּ ַ	aiy
יּ ִ	īy
וֹ	au

(c) Dagesh is rendered by doubling the letter or digraph, except in the case of בּ and כּ . וּ should be rendered u unless it is vowelled, when it will be rendered ww, e.g., חֻוָּ רַ ה (Ḥuwwāra).

(d) An unassimilated Arabic article is written אֶל or אַל and should be transliterated el (not al). An assimilated Arabic article is written אֶ‎ or אַ‎ followed by a dagesh in the initial consonant of the succeeding word. This will be given effect to by transliterating the letter or digraph affected once as part of the article and once as part of the following word, e.g., אֶ‎שַּׁ הְלָ ה (Es Sahla).

(e) A hyphen should be used in transliteration to separate h or ḥ from preceding d, ḍ, dh, gh, k, s, ṣ, sh, t, ṭ and th.

(f) The circumflex accent which is sometimes used to indicate stress should be ignored in transliteration.