ROMANIZATION OF LAO
BGN/PCGN 1966 Agreement

This system is based on the Lao Commission Nationale de Toponymie (CNT) system, to which a complete vowel table and supplementary notes have been added.

**CONSONANT CHARACTERS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lao</th>
<th>Romanization</th>
<th>Syllable-initial</th>
<th>Syllable-final</th>
<th>Full syllable within a word</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.  ຘ</td>
<td>k</td>
<td>k</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.  ຝ</td>
<td>kh</td>
<td></td>
<td>kkha</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.  ຝ</td>
<td>kh</td>
<td></td>
<td>kkha</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.  ພ</td>
<td>ng</td>
<td>ng</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.  ຟ</td>
<td>ch</td>
<td></td>
<td>tcha</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.  ຟ</td>
<td>s</td>
<td></td>
<td>tsa</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.  ຟ</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>tsa</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.  ຟ, ຟ</td>
<td>gn, y</td>
<td>y</td>
<td></td>
<td><em>(See row 10 of vowel table and note 7)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.  ຟ</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>t</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. ຟ</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>tta</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. ຟ</td>
<td>th</td>
<td>th</td>
<td>ttha</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. ຟ</td>
<td>th</td>
<td>th</td>
<td>ttha</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. ຟ</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. ຟ</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>p</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. ຟ</td>
<td>p</td>
<td></td>
<td>ppa</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Lao</td>
<td>Romanization</td>
<td>When accompanied by a vowel character</td>
<td>When not accompanied by a vowel character</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Syllable-initial</td>
<td>Syllable-final</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>ສ</td>
<td>ph</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>ຟ</td>
<td>f</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>ລ</td>
<td>ph</td>
<td></td>
<td>ppha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>ຩ</td>
<td>f</td>
<td></td>
<td>pfa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>ຢ</td>
<td>m</td>
<td></td>
<td>m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>ສ</td>
<td>y</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>ຍ</td>
<td>r</td>
<td></td>
<td>r</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>ຍ</td>
<td>l</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24.</td>
<td>ລ</td>
<td>v, o^{6}</td>
<td></td>
<td>o, iou, oua</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.</td>
<td>ສ</td>
<td>h</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26.</td>
<td>ມ</td>
<td>Not romanized</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27.</td>
<td>ມ</td>
<td>h</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**VOWEL CHARACTERS**

(See notes 1, 4 and 6)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lao</th>
<th>Short final</th>
<th>Short medial (followed by any syllable-final consonant character)</th>
<th>Long final</th>
<th>Long medial (followed by any syllable-final consonant character)</th>
<th>Romanization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>ມ</td>
<td>ລ</td>
<td>ມ</td>
<td>ມ</td>
<td>ă^{6}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>ມ</td>
<td>ຖ</td>
<td>ມ</td>
<td>ມ</td>
<td>i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>ມ</td>
<td>ຖ</td>
<td>ມ</td>
<td>ຢ</td>
<td>u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lao</td>
<td>Short medial (followed by any syllable-final consonant character)</td>
<td>Long final</td>
<td>Long medial (followed by any syllable-final consonant character)</td>
<td>Romanization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>ຖ່</td>
<td>ຖ່</td>
<td>ຖ່</td>
<td>ຖ່</td>
<td>ou</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>ຖ້</td>
<td>ຖ້</td>
<td>ເ</td>
<td>ເ</td>
<td>é</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>ຖ໊</td>
<td>ຖ໊</td>
<td>ເ</td>
<td>ເ</td>
<td>è</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>ຖ໋</td>
<td>ຖ໋</td>
<td>ເ</td>
<td>ເ</td>
<td>ô</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>ຖ໌</td>
<td>ຖ໌</td>
<td>ຝ</td>
<td>ຝ</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>ຖໍ</td>
<td>ຖໍ</td>
<td>ຝ</td>
<td>ຝ</td>
<td>oua²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>ຖ໎</td>
<td>ຖ໎</td>
<td>ຝ</td>
<td>ຝ</td>
<td>ia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>ຖ໏</td>
<td>ຖ໏</td>
<td>ຝ</td>
<td>ຝ</td>
<td>ua</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>ຖ໐</td>
<td>ຖ໐</td>
<td>ຝ</td>
<td>ຝ</td>
<td>eu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>ຖ໑</td>
<td>ຖ໑</td>
<td>ຝ</td>
<td>ຝ</td>
<td>ai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>ຖ໒</td>
<td>ຖ໒</td>
<td>ຝ</td>
<td>ຝ</td>
<td>ao</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>ຖ໓</td>
<td>ຖ໓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>am</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TONE MARKS**

| ̀ | ́ | ̄ | ̂ | (See note 3) |

**REDUPLICATING MARK**

| ອໝ | (See note 10) |

**NUMERALS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>໐</th>
<th>໑</th>
<th>໒</th>
<th>໓</th>
<th>໔</th>
<th>໕</th>
<th>໖</th>
<th>໗</th>
<th>໘</th>
<th>໙</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
NOTES

1. The symbol ◯ represents any Lao consonant character.

2. Several rare or obsolete characters, such as those romanized s, t, tsa and l, have been omitted from the tables. Also omitted are a few character combinations, such as those romanized th-n and th-m.

3. Tone marks should not be romanized. For example ᄁ, ᄂ, ᄃ, ᄄ, ᄅ should all be romanized na.

4. At the beginning of a word, ᄄ should not be romanized: ສຸ → ik. At the beginning of a syllable within a word, should be romanized by a hyphen: → Xa-Ém, → Ban Kèng-l. Note that in geographic names, the letter immediately following the hyphen should be capitalized. (See also the vowel table, rows 8 and 11.)

5. At the beginning of a syllable, the character unaccompanied by a vowel or tone mark and occurring immediately before gn, n, m, r, l, or v should generally not be romanized: ລອງພະບາງ → Louangphabang, ແຍ້າ → gna, ໃນ → nè (but compare ທໍາ → hên). Note that the character combinations and are often written in abbreviated form: n, m, and l, respectively. In case of uncertainty as to pronunciation or syllable division, a reference source should be consulted.

6. The character ໄ at the beginning of a syllable should be romanized v: ສີ → vat, ັແມ່ → thanva. As the second character of a combination, ໄ should be romanized o. A consonant combination at the beginning of a syllable in which the second character is ໄ r, ໄ l, or ໄ o should be romanized character by character, even where the second character or o may represent no pronounced sound: ສີ່ນະແຂວງ → Ban Vatphraxai, ສຸນະໝາຍ → Khlitsatian, ສຸນ → Soay, ຳແຂວງ → Khoèng. In case of uncertainty, a reference source should be consulted. A vowel which is not represented in Lao writing occasionally occurs in the pronunciation of certain words. The presence of that vowel should be indicated in romanization by insertion of the letter a: ສອນໄມ້ → Savannakhét (also written ສະວານໄມ້ → Savannakhét, but compare ມະ → Xoa), ມາ → Khavao (but compare ລາ → Khoan), ສະຄູ → Taling, ວັນ → Thanôn. The two words ສວນນະເຂດ and ສະວານ are both romanized savan. A reference source should be consulted in case of uncertainty.
The character ສ at the end of a syllable should be romanized in the following manner. The syllables ຖ ສ and ຖ ສ should be romanized iou: ສ ສ → Khiou , ສ ສ → Tiou. The syllable ຖ ສ (Vowel table, row 9) should be romanized oua: ິ ສ → Choua. Otherwise, at the end of a syllable, ສ should be romanized o: ສ ສ → nao , ໄ ສ → kœo , ສ ສ → diao.

7. The character ຜ (see consonant character 8 and vowel character 10) is not used in syllable-initial position.

8. The character combination ລ ສ occurs at the end of a syllable in only a few words of foreign origin and should be romanized r: ສ ວ → Beur

9. The specific element in a geographic name should be written in Roman script as a single word, no matter how many meaningful elements it may contain. The generic term and a few other distinguishing words that modify the specific element should be separated by a space: ທະບຽນລາວ → Houay Pralong, ກຸງຈາກ → Ban Kèngmavo, ລາວລາວ → Muang Ou Nua, ສາສະໜາມ → Muang Ou Tai, ບາຈຽງຈະເລິນສຸກ → Bachiangchaleunsouk.

10. The reduplicating mark  indicates the repetition of a syllable: ສ ສ → xèoxèo

11. This character is rarely encountered in current sources.

12. An inventory of letter-diacritic combinations, with their Unicode encoding, in addition to the unmodified letters of the basic Roman script is:

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>É (U+00C9)</td>
<td>é (U+00E9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>È (U+00C8)</td>
<td>è (U+00E8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ô (U+00D4)</td>
<td>ô (U+00F4)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13. The Romanization columns show only lowercase forms but, when romanizing, uppercase and lowercase Roman letters as appropriate should be used.