

Lao Romanization Table

1997 version

Lao

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Consonants (See Note 1)

<i>Vernacular</i>	<i>Romanization When Initial</i>	<i>Romanization When Final</i>
ກ	k	k
ຊ	kh	(k)
ຮ	kh	(k)
ງ	ng	ng
ຮ	ch	(t)
ສ	s	(t)
ຖ	s	(t)
ຜ	ny	(See Note 2) -
ດ	d	t
ຕ	t	(t)
ຖ	th	(t)
ທ	th	(t)
ນ	n	n
ບ	b	p
ປ	p	(p)
ຜ	ph	(p)
ຝ	f	(p)
ຜ	ph	(p)
ຜ	f	(p)
ມ	m	m
ຢ	y	-
ຣ	r	(n)
ລ	l	(n)
ວ	v	(See Note 3) -
ຜ	h	(See Note 4) -
ອ	‘ (ayn)	(See Note 5) -
ຮ	h	(See Note 6) -

Obsolete Consonants

<i>Vernacular</i>	<i>Romanization</i>
ຖ	s
ຖ	t
ຖ	t
ຖ	tsa
ຖ	l

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Vowels (See Note 7)

<i>Vernacular</i>	<i>Romanization</i>	<i>Vernacular</i>	<i>Romanization</i>
ຳ, ຳ̄	a	ຳຸ, ຳອ	o
ຳຸ	ā	ຳ̄, ຳອ	ō
ຳ̄	i	ຳຸ̄, ຳ̄	œ
ຳ̄	ī	ຳ̄	œ̄
ຳ̄	u	ຳຸ̄, ຳຸ̄	ia
ຳ̄	ū	ຳຸ̄, ຳຸ̄	īa
ຳ	u	ຳ̄ອ, ຳ̄ອ	ura
ຳ, ຳ̄	ū	ຳ̄ອ	ūrā
ຳຸ, ຳ̄	e	ຳ̄ອ, ຳ̄ອ	ua
ຳ	ē	ຳ̄ອ, ຳ̄ອ	ūa
ຳຸ, ຳ̄	æ	ຳ̄, ຳ̄, ຳຸ̄	ai
ຳຸ	ǣ	ຳຸ, ຳຸ̄	āi
ຳຸ, ຳ̄	o	ຳຸ̄	ao
ຳ	ō	ຳຸ̄	am

Special Symbols

<i>Vernacular</i>	<i>Romanization</i>
ຯ	...
ຯ	(syllable repeated)
ຯ ຯ ຯ	la

Notes

1. Some consonants do not occur as finals, except in loan-words. The romanization for these consonants is enclosed in parentheses in the table.
2. In final position, ຸ follows as vowel, closing the diphthong, and is romanized as *i*. See the vowel table (*ai* and *āi*). In non-initial position, ຸ is often written in a secondary form, ຸ̄. See the vowel table (*ia* and *īa*).

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3. The combining-form of ລ is ລ̣. It is not romanized except when subscript to ຫ, thus: ຫຼີ ສຽນ (khitsatīan), ລຳ (lāi).
4. In initial position, ວ is romanized as v, thus: ວັດ (vat).

When medial ວ is followed by a vowel, it forms a cluster with the initial consonant, and is romanized as w, thus: ວາ (khwā), ວາງ (khwāng).

When medial ວ is followed by a final consonant, it is romanized ūa, thus: ບາວ (būak), ດ້ວຍ (dūai).

When ວ is in final position following a vowel, it is romanized as o, thus: ນາວ (nāo), ກ້ວ (kāo). See also the vowel table (ua and ūa). The forms ືວ and ື້ວ are romanized as iu and iū, and the forms ື່ວ and ື້່ວ are romanized as ieo.

5. ຫ is not romanized before ຮ (ny), ບ (n), ມ (m), ຮ (r), ລ (l), and ວ (v), thus: ຫຍັງ (nyā). ຫນ and ຫມ are often written as ligatures, thus: ຫນ (n) and ຫມ (m).
6. ອ is used in initial position for syllables beginning with a vowel, thus ອັກ (‘k). When not in initial position, ອ is a vowel. See the vowel table (o, ō, ua, ūa).
7. In the vowel columns, □ shows the position of the consonant relative to the vowel. In all cases the romanization of the vowel is intended to follow the romanization of the consonant even though parts of the vernacular representation of the vowel may be written before the consonant.
8. The numerals are: ໐ (0), ໑ (1), ໒ (2), ໓ (3), ໔ (4), ໕ (5), ໖ (6), ໗ (7), ໘ (8), and ໙ (9).
9. In Lao, words are not written separately. In romanization, however, the shortest written form which can stand alone as a word is treated as such. This applies also to Pali and Sanskrit loan-words. Other loan-words have the same division as the original language. Tonal marks (◌́, ◌̂, ◌̃, ◌̄) are not romanized.
10. When the pronunciation requires one consonant to serve a double function, at the end of one syllable and at the beginning of the next syllable, it is romanized twice according to the respective values, thus: ຫຼີ ສຽນ (khitsatīan).

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SPECIAL CHARACTERS AND CHARACTER MODIFIERS IN ROMANIZATION

<i>Special Characters</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>USMARC hexadecimal code</i>
Æ	digraph AE (upper case)	A5
Œ	digraph OE (upper case)	A6
U̇	U-hook (upper case)	AC
‘	ayn	B0
æ	digraph ae(lower case)	B5
œ	digraph oe (lower case)	B6
u̇	u-hook (lower case)	BD
<i>Character Modifiers</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>USMARC hexadecimal code</i>
ā	macron	E5
ç	right cedilla	F8