

Vidyasthanam: School of Indian Music, Culture and Languages



**VIDYASTHANAM
SCHOOL OF INDIAN MUSIC, CULTURE, AND LANGAUGES
CHENNAI, INDIA AND MONTRÉAL, CANADA**

TRANSLITERATION GUIDE FOR SANSKRIT AND TAMIL

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TRANSLITERATION

SANSKRIT

VOWELS

अ	आ	इ	ई	उ	ऊ	ऋ	ॠ	ऌ	ॡ	ए	ऐ	ओ	औ	अं	अः
a	ā	i	ī	u	ū	r̥	r̄	l̥	l̄	e	ai	o	au	aṁ or aḥ	aḥ

CONSONANTS

क	ख	ग	घ	ङ	च	छ	ज	झ	ञ	ट	ठ	ड	ढ	ण
ka	kha	ga	gha	ṅa	ca	cha	ja	jha	ña	ṭa	ṭha	ḍa	ḍha	ṇa
त	थ	द	ध	न	प	फ	ब	भ	म	य	र	ल	व	श
ta	tha	da	dha	na	pa	pha	ba	bha	ma	ya	ra	la	va	śa
स	ह	क्ष	ऽ	ळ										
sa	ha	kṣa	‘	ḷ										

Vowel	Transliteration	Pronounced like	Place of articulation(<i>sthāna</i>)	Description
अ	a	“a” in woman	throat (<i>kaṇṭha</i>)	guttural
आ	ā	“a” in car	throat (<i>kaṇṭha</i>)	guttural
इ	i	“i” in tin	soft palate (<i>tālu</i>)	palatal
ई	ī	“ee” in feel	soft palate (<i>tālu</i>)	palatal
उ	u	“u” in full	lips (<i>oṣṭha</i>)	labial

ऊ	ū	“oo” in cool	lips (<i>oṣṭha</i>)	labial
ऋ	ṛ	“r” in French Au revoir	hard palate(<i>mūrdhā</i>)	retroflex
ॠ	ṝ	long-form of ṛ	hard palate(<i>mūrdhā</i>)	retroflex
ऌ ¹	ḷ	“le” in cradle (combining l and ṛ)	teeth(<i>danta</i>)	dental
ॡ	ḹ	long-form of ḷ	teeth(<i>danta</i>)	dental
ए	e	“a” in ape	throat and soft palate(<i>kaṇṭha tālu</i>)	guttural-palatal
ऐ	ai	“i” in bite	throat and soft palate(<i>kaṇṭha tālu</i>)	guttural-palatal
ओ	o	“o” in goat	throat and lips (<i>kaṇṭhoṣṭha</i>)	guttural-labial
औ	au	“ow” in cow	throat and lips (<i>kaṇṭhoṣṭha</i>)	guttural-labial

Consonant	Transliteration	Pronounced like	Place of articulation(<i>sthāna</i>)	Description
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¹ Traditional listings include a long form of ऌ, but it hardly ever appears in literature. It is written as ॡ and transliterated as ḹ.

क	k	“k” in kettle	throat	guttural
ख	kh	“c” in cat	throat	guttural
ग	g	“g” in god	throat	guttural
घ	gh	“gh” in log-hut	throat	guttural
ङ	ṅ	“n” as in French anglais	throat and nose	nasal
च	c	“second c” in church	soft palate	palatal
छ	ch	“ch” in bitch	soft palate	palatal
ज	j	“j” in jar	soft palate	palatal
झ	jh	“j” in jug-head or “j” in French jarry	soft palate	palatal
ञ	ñ	“n” in finch	soft palate and nose	nasal
ट	ṭ	“t” in top	hard palate	retroflex
ठ	ṭh	“th” in anthill	hard palate	retroflex
ड	ḍ	“d” in door	hard palate	retroflex
ढ	ḍh	“dh” in godhead)	hard palate	retroflex
ण	ṇ	“n” in hint	hard palate and nose	nasal
त	t	“th” in thumb	teeth	dental
थ	th	“t” in French fête (requires strong exhalation)	teeth	dental
द	d	“th” in there	teeth	dental

घ	dh	“d” (requires srtong exhalation)	teeth	dental
न्	n	“n” in now	teeth and nose	nasal
प्	p	“p” in prayer	lips	labial
फ़	ph	“ph” in loophole	lips	labial
ब्	b	“b” in bed	lips	labial
भ्	bh	“bh” in abhor	lips	labial
म्	m	“m” in milk	lips and nose	nasal
य्	y	“y” in young	soft palate	palatal
र्	r	“r” in run	hard palate	retroflex
ल्	l	“l” in loan	teeth	dental
व्	v	“v” in wave	teeth and lips	dental-labial
श्	ś	“second s” in slash	soft palate	palatal
ष्	ṣ	To pronounce this sound touch the roof of the mouth with the tip of the tongue and pronounce ś	hard palate	retroflex
स्	s	“s” in sam	teeth	dental
ह्	h	“h” in half	throat	guttural
ळ	ḷ	Stressed l		

वक्रतुण्ड महाकाय सूर्यकोटिसमप्रभ ।
निर्विघ्नं कुरु मे देव सर्वकार्येषु सर्वदा ॥

vakratuṇḍa mahākāya sūryakoṭisamaprabha ।
nirvighnam kuru me deva sarvakāryeṣu sarvadā ॥

अज्ञानतिमिरान्धस्य ज्ञानाञ्जनशलाकया ।
चक्षुरुन्मीलितं येन तस्मै श्रीगुरवे नमः ॥

ajñānatimirāndhasya jñānāñjanaśalākayā ।
cakṣurunmīlitaṁ yena tasmai śrīgurave namaḥ ॥

TRANSLITERATION

TAMIḶ VOWELS

அ	ஆ	இ	ஈ	உ	ஊ	எ	ஏ	ஐ	ஓ	ஔ	ஔள	ஃ
a	ā	i	ī	u	ū	e	ē	ai	o	ō	au	k

CONSONANTS

க	ங	ச	ஞ	ட	ண	த	ந	ப	ம	ய	ர	ல
ka	ṅa	ca	ñā	ṭa	ṇa	ta	na	pa	ma	ya	ra	la
வ	ழ	ள	ற	ன								
va	ḷa	ḷa	ra	ṇa								

Tamiḷ accommodates some alphabets from Sanskrit and these are as follows: ஜ ja ஷ ṣa ஸ sa ஹ ha ஸ் śrī and ன̄ ṅa . Traditionally ca stands for sa as well and śa and ṣa are absent in Tamiḷ. Likewise, as the Tamiḷ grammatical text *Nannūl* mentions, the fourth letter of the *vargas* corresponding to Sanskrit is not present in Tamiḷ. Pure consonants are represented as a dot above in Tamiḷ and as a stroke below in Sanskrit. Thus k is க or क. When a student learns the language these consonants are taught invariably by adding “a” after them to

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facilitate easy pronunciation. Thus க்(k)+அ(a) becomes க(ka). The same is in the case of Sanskrit. ka in Tamil is sometimes pronounced as ha and hence both *makāṇ* and *mahāṇ* are valid.

ஐந்து கரத்தனை யானை முகத்தனை
இந்தின் இளம்பிறை போலும் எயிற்றனை

நந்தி மகன்தனை ஞானக் கொழுந்தினைப்
புந்தியில் வைத்தடி போற்றுகின் றேனே

aintu karattṇai yāṇai mukattṇai
intin iḷampirai pōlum eyirṇai
nanti makattṇai ṇāṇak koḷuntṇaip
puntiyil vaittaṭi pōrṇukin rēṇē

பாலும் தெளிதேனும் பாகும் பருப்புமும்
இவை நாலும் கலந்துனக்கு நான் தருவேன்
கோலஞ் செய் துங்கக் கரிமுகத்து தூமணியே
நீ எனக்கு சங்கத் தமிழ் மூன்றும் தா

pālum teḷitēnum pākum paruppum
ivai nālum kalantṇakku nāṇ taruvēṇ
kōlaṇ cey tuṅkak karimukattu tūmaṇiyē
nī eṇakku caṅkat tamīḷ mūṇṇrum tā