

# Guru Rinpoche (Vajra Guru) Mantra

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***Om Ah Hum Vajra Guru Padma Siddhi Hum***  
(Sanskrit)

***Om Ah Hung Benza Guru Pema Siddhi Hung***  
(Dialectic variation in Tibetan pronunciation)<sup>1</sup>

## Explanation of the Vajra Guru mantra

In response to Yeshe Tsogyal's request, the Great Master responds.



*"O daughter of good family, the Vajra Guru mantra is not just my single essence mantra, it is the very essence or life force of all the deities of the four classes of tantra, of all the nine yantras, and all of the 84,000 collections of dharma teachings. The essence of all of the buddhas of the three times, all of the gurus, yidams, dakas and dakinis, dharma protectors etc., the essence of all of these is contained and is complete within this mantra. How, you may ask, does this work? What is the reason for all these being complete with this mantra? Listen well and hold this in mind. Read it again and again. Write it out for the benefit of sentient beings, and teach it or demonstrate it to beings in the future."*

### **OM AH HUNG VAJRA GURU PEMA SIDDHI HUNG**

*OM AH HUNG* are the sublime essence of the principles of enlightened body, speech, and mind

*VAJRA* is the sublime essence of the indestructible family

*GURU* is the sublime essence of the jewel family

*PEMA* is the sublime essence of the lotus family

*SIDDHI* is the sublime essence of the activity family

*HUNG* is the sublime essence of the transcendent family

### **OM AH HUNG VAJRA GURU PEMA SIDDHI HUNG**

*OM* is the perfect splendor and richness of sambhogakaya, the manifest body of splendor

*AH* is the total unchanging perfection of dharmakaya, the manifest body of absolute reality

*HUNG* perfects the presence of Guru Padmasambhava as the nirmanakaya, the manifest body of emanation

*VAJRA* perfects all the heruka deities of the mandalas

*GURU* refers to the root and transmission gurus and the holders of intrinsic awareness *PEMA* perfects the assembly of dakas and dakinis

*SIDDHI* is the life force of all the wealth deities and the guardians of the treasure teachings

*HUNG* is the life force of the dharmapalas, the protective deities.

**OM AH HUNG VAJRA GURU PEMA SIDDHI HUNG**

*OM AH HUNG* are the life force of the three classes of tantra

*VAJRA* is the life force of monastic discipline and the sutra class of teachings

*GURU* is the life force of abhidharma and kriya (action) yoga, the first level of tantra

*PEMA* is the life force of the charya (conduct) tantra, the second class of tantra, and yoga (joining) tantra, the third class of tantra

*SIDDHI* is the life force of the mahayoga and anuyoga classes of teachings

*HUNG* is the life force of the ati yoga, the Natural Great Perfection (Dzogchen)

**OM AH HUNG VAJRA GURU PEMA SIDDHI HUNG**

*OM AH HUNG* purify obscurations arising from the three mental poisons -- desire-attachment, aversion, and ignorance

*VAJRA* purifies obscurations which stem from anger

*GURU* purifies obscurations which stem from pride

*PEMA* purifies obscurations which stem from desire and attachment

*SIDDHI* purifies obscurations which stem from envy and jealousy

*HUNG* in a general way purifies obscurations which stem from all emotional afflictions

**OM AH HUNG VAJRA GURU PEMA SIDDHI HUNG**

Through *OM AH HUNG* one attains the three kayas

Through *VAJRA* one realizes mirror-like pristine awareness

Through *GURU* one realizes the pristine awareness of equalness

Through *PEMA* one realizes the pristine awareness of discernment

Through *SIDDHI* one realizes the all-accomplishing pristine awareness

Through *HUNG* one realizes the pristine awareness of basic space

**OM AH HUNG VAJRA GURU PEMA SIDDHI HUNG**

Through *OM AH HUNG* gods, demons and humans are subdued

Through *VAJRA* one gains power over the malevolent forces of certain gods and demons

Through *GURU* one gains control over the malevolent forces of the Lord of Death and the cannibal demons

Through *PEMA* one gains control over the malevolent influences of the water and wind elements

Through *SIDDHI* one gains control over the malevolent influences of non-human forces and spirits bringing harm and exerting negative control over one's life

Through *HUNG* one gains control of the malevolent influences of planetary configurations and earth spirits

**OM AH HUNG VAJRA GURU PEMA SIDDHI HUNG**

*OM AH HUNG* accomplishes the six spiritual virtues

*VAJRA* accomplishes pacifying activity

*GURU* accomplishes enriching activity

*PEMA* accomplishes magnetizing activity

*SIDDHI* accomplishes enlightened activity in general

*HUNG* accomplishes wrathful enlightened activity

**OM AH HUNG VAJRA GURU PEMA SIDDHI HUNG**

*OM AH HUNG* avert all imprecations and curses

*VAJRA* averts the negative consequences of breaking one's samaya with the deities of pristine awareness

*GURU* averts the negative influences of the eight classes of gods and demons in samsara

*PEMA* averts the negative influences of worldly gods and demons

*SIDDHI* averts the negative influences of nagas and earth spirits

*HUNG* averts the negative influences of gods, demons, humans, samsaric gods

**OM AH HUNG VAJRA GURU PEMA SIDDHI HUNG**

*OM AH HUNG* defeat the army of the five mental poisons

*VAJRA* defeats anger

*PEMA* defeats desire-attachment

*SIDDHI* defeats envy and jealousy

*HUNG* defeats the armies of gods, demons and humans

**OM AH HUNG VAJRA GURU PEMA SIDDHI HUNG**

*OM AH HUNG* brings about spiritual accomplishments or siddhis

*VAJRA* brings about the siddhi of the peaceful and wrathful deities

*GURU* brings about the siddhi of the awareness-holders and the lineage gurus

*PEMA* brings about the siddhi of the dakas and dakinis and dharma protectors

*SIDDHI* brings about the mundane and supreme siddhis

*HUNG* brings about the siddhi of accomplishing whatever one wishes

**OM AH HUNG VAJRA GURU PEMA SIDDHI HUNG**

*OM AH HUNG* transfers consciousness to pure realms of experience

*VAJRA* transfers consciousness to the eastern pure realm of Manifest Joy

*GURU* transfers consciousness to the southern pure realm of Glory and Splendor

*PEMA* transfers consciousness to the western pure realm of Great Bliss

*SIDDHI* transfers consciousness to the northern pure realm of Excellent Activity

*HUNG* transfers consciousness to central pure realm of Unwavering

Taken from a more extensive teaching by Lama Tarchin Rinpoche. <sup>ii</sup>

## Another meaning of the Guru Rinpoche (Vajra Guru) Mantra

### Om Ah Hung Vajra Guru Pema Siddhi Hung

***(actually pronounced) Om Ah Hung Benza Guru Pema Siddi Hung***

Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche (former head of the Nyingma Lineage, deceased) explains:  
"It is said that the twelve syllables Om Ah Hum Vajra Guru Padma Siddhi Hum carry the entire blessing of the twelve types of teaching taught by Buddha, which are the essence of His Eighty-four Thousand Dharmas.

Therefore to recite the Vajra guru mantra once is the equivalent to the blessing of reciting.....or practicing the whole teaching of the Buddha.

The wisdom mind of Padmasambhava is manifested in the form of the mantra; these twelve syllables are actually the emanation of His wisdom mind, and they are endowed with His entire blessing. The vajra guru mantra is Padmasambhava in the form of sound. So when you invoke Him with the recitation of the twelve syllables, the blessing and merit you obtain is tremendous. In these difficult times, just as there is no Buddha or refuge we can call upon who is more powerful than Padmasambhava, so there is no mantra that is more fitting than the Vajra Guru Mantra."<sup>iii</sup>

## Another explanation of the Guru Rinpoche (Vajra Guru) Mantra

### Padmasambhava mantra

**Om̐ Āḥ Hūṃ Vajra Guru Padma Siddhi Hūṃ<sup>1</sup>**

**(Om Ah Hum Vajra Guru Padma Siddhi Hum)**

Padmasambhava was a historical teacher who is said to have finally converted Tibet to Buddhism. He was a renowned scholar, meditator, and magician, and his mantra suggests his rich and diverse nature.



*Om Ah Hum* have no conceptual meaning.

**Om** is often regarded as being the primeval sound, and in fact the sound-symbol of reality itself. It represents the universal principle of enlightenment. You can read about Om in more detail on the page about the [Om Shanti mantra](#) (see Annex).

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<sup>1</sup> Pronunciation notes: a is pronounced as u in cut; aa (ā) is long, as in father; m in hum is pronounced ng, as in long; j is hard, like j in judge; u is short, as in put; and ū is long, as in school. Source:

<http://www.wildmind.org/mantras/figures/padmasambhava>

**Ah**, in traditional explanations, is usually said to be connected with speech (more about that in a moment) but in Sanskrit “ah” is a verb meaning “to express , signify ; to call (by name).” So it suggests evoking, or calling forth, the manifestation of enlightenment.

**Hum** is often thought of as representing the manifestation of enlightenment in the individual human being. This may be a complete coincidence, but hum is similar to the first person singular “aham,” which means of course “I.”

Often these syllables are associated with body, speech, and mind respectively (i.e. the whole of one’s being). So there’s a suggestion that we are saluting the qualities that Padmasambhava represents with all of our hearts (and minds, and bodies).

*Vajra* means thunderbolt, and represents the energy of the enlightened mind. It can also mean diamond. The implication is that the diamond/thunderbolt can cut through anything. The diamond is the indestructible object, while the thunderbolt is the unstoppable force. The vajra also stands for compassion. While it may seem odd to have such a “masculine” object representing compassion, this makes sense in esoteric Buddhism because compassion is active, and therefore aligned with this masculine symbol. (The term “masculine” does not of course imply that compassion is limited to males!)

*Guru*, of course, means a wise teacher. It comes from a root word, *garu*, which means “weighty.” So you can think of the guru as one who is a weighty teacher. Padmasambhava is so highly regarded in Tibetan Buddhism that he is often referred to as the second Buddha.

*Padma* means lotus, calling to mind the purity of the enlightened mind, because the lotus flower, although growing in muddy water, is completely stainless. In the same way the enlightened mind is surrounded by the greed, hatred, and delusion that is found in the world, and yet remains untouched by it. The lotus therefore represents wisdom. Again, while westerners would tend to assume that the flower represents compassion, the receptive nature of the flower gives it a “feminine” status in esoteric Buddhism, and to the lotus is aligned with the “feminine” quality of wisdom. And once again, there is no implication that wisdom is in any way limited to those who are female. The words masculine and feminine here are used in a technical sense that’s completely unrelated to biology.

And *Siddhi* means accomplishment or supernatural powers, suggesting the way in which those who are enlightened can act wisely, but in ways that we can’t necessarily understand. Padmasambhava is a magical figure, and in his biography there are many miracles and tussles with supernatural beings.<sup>iv</sup>

## Annex – Explanation of mantra OM

### Om (Om̐)

Like many mantras, this one begins with "Om". Om has no meaning, and its origins are lost in the mists of time. Om is considered to be the primeval sound, the sound of the universe, the sound from which all other sounds are formed.



In the Brahminical tradition, from where Buddhism undoubtedly obtained mantra practice, Om is not just the universal sound, but the sound of the universe itself. For example in the (non-Buddhist) Mandukya Upanishad, it is said:

Om! — This syllable is this whole world.

Its further explanation is: –

The past, the present, the future — everything is just the word Om.

And whatever else that transcends threefold time — that, too, is just the word Om.

Om is therefore a sound symbolizing reality. It represents everything in the universe, past, present, and future. It even represents everything that is outside of those three times. It therefore represents both the mundane world of time in which the mind normally functions, and the world as perceived by the mind that is awakened and that experiences the world timelessly. It represents both enlightenment and non-enlightenment.

You could regard Om as being the equivalent of white light, in which all of the colors of the rainbow can be found.

One Sanskrit-English dictionary says the following:

"A word of solemn affirmation and respectful assent , sometimes translated by 'yes, verily, so be it' (and in this sense compared with Amen); it is placed at the commencement of most Hindu works, and as a sacred exclamation may be uttered at the beginning and end of a reading of the Vedas or previously to any prayer; it is also regarded as a particle of auspicious salutation [Hail!];

Om appears first in the Upanishads as a mystic monosyllable, and is there set forth as the object of profound religious meditation, the highest spiritual efficacy being attributed not only to the whole word but also to the three sounds A, U, M, of which it consists."<sup>v</sup>

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Endnotes:

<sup>i</sup> Wikipedia. Within the article on Padmasambhava, it quotes as reference Sogyal Rinpoche (1992). *The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying*, pp. 386-389 Harper, San Francisco. ISBN 0-7126-5437-2; and [Khenpo Namdrol's Padmasambhava Global Project for World Peace](#) (<http://www.padmaworldpeace.org/resources-VGMexplained.html>).

<sup>ii</sup> Source: <http://www.padmaworldpeace.org/resources-VGMexplained.html>

<sup>iii</sup> Source: <http://www.pcddallas.org/Prayers.htm>

<sup>iv</sup> Source: <http://www.wildmind.org/mantras/figures/padmasambhava>

<sup>v</sup> Source: <http://www.wildmind.org/mantras/figures/shanti>