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## The English letters and their (approximate) pronunciation

Some details (especially concerning rare pronunciations) have been **omitted**.

## Consonants and consonant combinations systematically grouped

Double consonants (like e.g. **tt**) are **not** pronounced longer than single consonants in English.

b	always like	b	in	bola
p	always like	p	in	parte
ph	always like	f	in	ferro
f	always like	f	in	ferro
gh	mostly not pronounced			
	rarely like	f	in	ferro
v	always like	v	in	vento
w	see remarks below			
wh	always like	w		
y	see remarks below			
h	see remarks below			
si	in words of Latin origin like	j	in	joelho
	or like	x	in	caixa
	else like	s + i		
j	always like	d + j	in	joelho
d	always like	d	in	dar
t	always like	t	in	tosta
th	see remarks below			
ti	in words of Latin origin like	x	in	caixa
	else like	t + i		
sh	always like	x	in	caixa
sch	always like	x	in	caixa
ch	always like	t + x	in	caixa
z	always like	s	in	raso
s	always like	s	in	sapo
c	in front of e, i, y like	s	in	sapo
	else like	c	in	casa
g	in front of e, i, y like	d + j	in	joelho
	else like	g	in	gato
k	always like	c	in	casa
ck	always like	c	in	casa
qu	always like	k + w		
x	always like	x	in	tóxico

l	always like	l	in	logo
r	always like	r	in	parte
rh	always like	r	in	parte
m	always like	m	in	mapa
n	always like	n	in	número
ng	always like	ng	in	linguagem
nk	always like	ng + k		
nc	always like	ng + k		

👉 Sound of w (e.g. in "wa awa").

👉 Sound of y (e.g. in "ya aya").

👉 Sound of h (e.g. in "ha aha").

The sound of **th** is not very predictable. It can always either be 👉 voiceless (e.g. in "tha atha") or 👉 voiced (e.g. in "tha atha"). However, I would estimate that the sound of **th** is in **most cases** 👉 voiceless (e.g. in "tha atha").

Before any vowel that sounds like **ou** in **you**, a **y**-sound needs to be inserted, so:

pure	sounds as if it was written	pyoure
beautiful	sounds as if it was written	byoutiful
tube	sounds as if it was written	tyoube
during	sounds as if it was written	dyouring
cute	sounds as if it was written	cyoute
argue	sounds as if it was written	argyou
music	sounds as if it was written	myousic
spew	sounds as if it was written	spyou
student	sounds as if it was written	styoudent
skewer	sounds as if it was written	skyouer

👉 Listen to these words in their correct spelling, as well as in their "sound spelling" with help of Google Translate.

## Vowels and vowel combinations

The vowel **e** is **not** pronounced at the end of a word, so:

wore	sounds as if it was written	wor
face	sounds as if it was written	feis
fleece	sounds as if it was written	flees
goose	sounds as if it was written	goos
prize	sounds as if it was written	praiz
choice	sounds as if it was written	chois
nurse	sounds as if it was written	nurs

cure	sounds as if it was written	cyour
pure	sounds as if it was written	pyour
tube	sounds as if it was written	tyoub
argue	sounds as if it was written	argyou
sphere	sounds as if it was written	sfeer
square	sounds as if it was written	skwear
large	sounds as if it was written	larj
morgue	sounds as if it was written	morg
solve	sounds as if it was written	solv
else	sounds as if it was written	els
carve	sounds as if it was written	carv
force	sounds as if it was written	fors
prince	sounds as if it was written	prins
bronze	sounds as if it was written	bronz
lapse	sounds as if it was written	laps
adze	sounds as if it was written	adz
corpse	sounds as if it was written	corps
glimpse	sounds as if it was written	glimps

👂 Listen to these words in their correct spelling, as well as in their "sound spelling" with help of Google Translate.

In unstressed syllables, the vowel **e** is **mostly not** pronounced, as well, **unless it is followed by an r**:

letter	sounds as if it was written	leter
student	sounds as if it was written	styoudnt
skewer	sounds as if it was written	skyouer
smashed	sounds as if it was written	smashd
smithed	sounds as if it was written	smithd
blazed	sounds as if it was written	blayzd
writhed	sounds as if it was written	wreethd
filmed	sounds as if it was written	filmd
farmed	sounds as if it was written	farmd
mourned	sounds as if it was written	mournd
hemmed	sounds as if it was written	hemd

👂 Listen to these words in their correct spelling, as well as in their "sound spelling" with help of Google Translate.

In general, all English vowels are pronounced **shorter**:

- in front of double consonants
- in unstressed syllables

**Otherwise**, English vowels are **approximately (!)** pronounced like this:

a	like	e	in	resto
	or like	a	in	estudar

	or like	ei	in	lei
ae	like	ei	in	lei
ai	like	ei	in	lei
ay	like	ei	in	lei
aw	like	o	in	moda
ar	like	e	in	resto + r
e	like	e	in	medo
ee	like	i	in	isso
ea	like	i	in	isso
	or like	ei	in	lei
ei	like	ai	in	reais
	or like	ei	in	lei
ey	like	ai	in	reais
	or like	ei	in	lei
ew	like	ou	in	ouvir
i	like	i	in	isso
	or like	ai	in	reais
ia	like	ai	in	reais + a in estudar
ie	like	ai	in	reais
o	like	o	in	moda
oo	like	u	in	uvas
oa	like	ou	in	ouvir
oe	like	ou	in	ouvir
oi	like	o	in	moda + i in isso
oy	like	o	in	moda + i in isso
ou	like	o	in	moda
	or like	au	in	aumentar
ow	like	ou	in	ouvir
	or like	au	in	aumentar
u	like	a	in	estudar
uy	like	ai	in	reais
ur	see remarks below, but also			
	like	u	in	uvas + r
y	in stressed syllables like	ai	in	reais
	else like	i	in	isso
ye	like	ai	in	reais

👉 Sound of ur.

English vowels that sound similar:

a	all sound like	e	in	resto
a, u	all sound like	a	in	estudar
a, ae, ai, ay, ea, ei, ey	all sound like	ei	in	lei
aw, o, ou	all sound like	o	in	moda
ar	all sound like	e	in	resto + r
e	all sound like	e	in	medo
ee, ea, i, y	all sound like	i	in	isso
ei, ey, i, ie, uy, y, ye	all sound like	ai	in	reais

ew, oa, oe, ow	all sound like	ou in ouvir
ia	all sound like	ai in reais + a in estudar
oo	all sound like	u in uvas
oi, oy	all sound like	o in moda + i in isso
ou, ow	all sound like	au in aumentar
ur	all sound like	see remark above
		or: u in uvas + r

## Stressed syllables

As a **rule of thumb**, mostly the **first** syllable is stressed. Mistakes are **not** problematic. People should still be able to understand you.

## Reading exercise: Example text from the Bible (the beginning of the book of Exodus) with "irregularly" stressed syllables being marked

These are the names of the sons of Israel who went to Egypt with Jacob, each with his family: Reuben, Simeon, Levi and Judah; Issachar, Zebulun and Benjamin; Dan and Naphtali; Gad and Asher. The de**scendants** of Jacob numbered seventy in all; Joseph was al**ready** in Egypt.

Now Joseph and all his brothers and all that gene**ration** died, but the Israelites were ex**ceeding**ly fruitful; they multiplied greatly, in**creased** in numbers and be**came** so numerous that the land was filled with them.

Then a new king, to whom Joseph meant nothing, came to power in Egypt. "Look," he said to his people, "the Israelites have become far too numerous for us. Come, we must deal shrewdly with them or they will be**come** even more numerous and, if war breaks out, will join our enemies, fight a**gainst** us and leave the country."

So they put slave masters over them to op**press** them with forced labor, and they built Pithom and Rameses as store cities for Pharaoh. But the more they were op**pressed**, the more they multiplied and spread; so the E**gyptians** came to dread the Israelites and worked them ruthlessly. They made their lives bitter with harsh labor in brick and mortar and with all kinds of work in the fields; in all their harsh labor the E**gyptians** worked them ruthlessly.

The king of Egypt said to the Hebrew midwives, whose names were Shiphrah and Puah, "When you are helping the Hebrew women during childbirth on the de**livery** stool, if you see that the baby is a boy, kill him; but if it is a girl, let her live." The midwives, ho**wever**, feared God and did not do what the king of Egypt had told them to do; they let the boys live. Then the king of Egypt summoned the midwives and asked them, "Why have you done this? Why have you let the boys live?"

The midwives answered Pharaoh, "Hebrew women are not like E**gyptian** women; they are vigorous and give birth before the midwives ar**rive**."

So God was kind to the midwives and the people in**creased** and became even more numerous. And be**cause** the midwives feared God, he gave them families of their own.

Then Pharaoh gave this order to all his people: "Every Hebrew boy that is born you must throw into the Nile, but let every girl live."

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