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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.

The pronunciation of the following consonants and consonant combinations is (approximately) **identical** in English and Portuguese.

b	always like	b	in	bola
p	always like	p	in	parte
f	always like	f	in	ferro
v	always like	v	in	vento
d	always like	d	in	dar
t	always like	t	in	tosta
z	always like	z	in	razão
s	always like	s	in	sapo
c	in front of e, i, y like else like	c	in	cem, cinza
		c	in	casa, coalhar
k	always like	k	in	Kauã
qu	always like	qu	in	quarto
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
nc	always like	nc	in	branco
nk	always like	nc	in	branco

The pronunciation of the following consonants and consonant combinations is **different** in English and Portuguese. **However, the Portuguese pronunciation should still be somewhat understandable in English.**

j	always like	d + j in joelho
ch	always like	t + ch in chão
g	in front of e, i, y often (!) like else always like	d + g in geral, girafa g in gato

The pronunciation of the following consonants and consonant combinations **needs to be learned**.

ph	always like	f	in	ferro
gh	mostly not pronounced rarely like	f	in	ferro
w	always like	u	in	Kauã
wh	always like	u	in	Kauã
y	always like	i	in	boia
h	always like	r	in	raso
si	in Latin words like else like	j	in	joelho
sh	always like	s + i		
ti	in Latin words like else like	x	in	caixa
th	see remarks below	x	in	caixa
		t + i		
ck	always like	c	in	casa

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	dyouing
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	styudent
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
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	aia	in	caía
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	oi	in	boia
oy	like	oi	in	boia
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.

Therefore, the following vowels sound similar to each other in English.

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
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	aia in	caía
oo	all sound like	u in	uvas
oi, oy	all sound like	oi in	boia
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**scen**dants of Jacob numbered seventy in all; Joseph was al**re**ady in Egypt.

Now Joseph and all his brothers and all that gene**ra**tion died, but the Israelites were ex**cee**dingly fruitful; they multiplied greatly, in**cre**ased in numbers and be**ca**me 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 **co**me even more numerous and, if war breaks out, will join our enemies, fight a**ga**inst us and leave the country."

So they put slave masters over them to opp**ress** them with forced labor, and they built Pithom and Rameses as store cities for Pharaoh. But the more they were opp**ressed**, the more they multiplied and spread; so the **Egypt**ians 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 **Egypt**ians 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~~l~~ivery stool, if you see that the baby is a boy, kill him; but if it is a girl, let her live." The midwives, how~~e~~ver, 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~~g~~yp~~t~~ian women; they are vigorous and give birth before the midwives ar~~r~~ive."

So God was kind to the midwives and the people in~~c~~re~~a~~sed and became even more numerous. And be~~c~~ause 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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