NewEng Vowel Diacritics and Example Words

Contents

Vowel diacritics

Summary table

	bare a	macron	breve	tittle	ring	chevron	caron	diaeresis	r	l	y	w
	a	ā	ă	ȧ	å	â	ǎ	ä	ar	al	ay	aw
	unchecked	Magic E	/ɛ/ or /ə/	/ɪ/	tighten	/ɑ-ʌ/	shield	long	/V*ɹ/	/V*ɬ/	/V*j/	/Vw/
a	a /a/	ā /ɛj/	ă /ɛ:/	ȧ /ɪ/	å /o:/	â /ɑ:/	ǎ /a/	-	ar, âr /ɑɹ/	ål, al /o:ɬ/	ăy /ɛj/	aw /aw/
æ	æ /e/	ǣ /ɪj/	-	ǣ̇ /ɪ/	æ̊ = œ	-	-	-	aer, ær /eɹ/	-	-	-
e	e /ɛ/	ē /ɪj/	ĕ /ɛ:/	ė /ɪ/	e̊ /ɔ/	ê /ɑ/	ě /ɛ/	ë /ɪj/	er /ɜɹ/	-	ey /ɛj/	-
i	i /ɪ/	ī /ɑj/	ĭ - ?	i - alt for ï /ɪj/?	î = œ	î - alt for ī	ǐ /ɪ/	ï /ɪj/	ir /ɜɹ/	-	-	-
o	o /ɔ/	ō /ɜʉ/	ŏ /ə/	ȯ /ɪ/	o̊ /o:/	ô /ʌ/	ǒ /ɔ/	ö /əʉ/	or /oɹ/	ōl /ɔɬ~ɜʉ/	oy /oj/	ōw /ɜʉ/
œ	œ /ɪ/	œ̄ /ɪj/	-	œ̇ /ɪ/	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
u	u /ʌ/	ū /jəʉ/	ŭ /ə/	u̇ /ɪ/	-	û /ɛ/	ǔ /ʌ/	ü /əʉ/	ur /ɜɹ/	-	uy /ɑj/	-
ɤ	ɤ /ə/	ɤ̄ /ɜʉ/	ɤ̆ = ɤ	-	ɤ̊ /o:/	ɤ̂ /ʌ/	-	ɤ̈ /əʉ/	ɤr /ɜɹ/	ɤ̄l /ɔɬ~ɜʉ/	-	-
w	w /w/	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	wr /ʷɹ/	wl /wɬ/	-	-
ɤɤ	ɤɤ /ə/	ɤ̄ɤ /əʉ/	ɤ̆ɤ = ɤɤ	-	-	ɤɤ̂ /ʌ/	-	ɤ̈ɤ = ɤ̄ɤ	ɤɤr /əɹ/	ɤɤl /əʉɬ/	-	-
y	y /ɪ/	ȳ /ɑj/	-	ẏ /ɪ/	-	-	y̌ /ɪ/	ÿ /ɪj/	yr /ɜɹ/	-	-	-

Respellings:

OU and OW
/aʉ/ ou → ⟨aʊ̆⟩ and ow → ⟨aw⟩
flour → flaʊ̆r
how → haw
flower → flawer

EA series
Reduce EA to E, otherwise:
read /ɪj/ → rēàd
bread /ɛ/ → breàd
break /ɛj/ → breàk

OA series
Reduce OA to O, otherwise:
boat /ɜʉ/ → bōàt
broad /ɛ/ → brôàd / brôd
board /ɛj/ → boàrd / bord

OO series
Reduce OO to ɤɤ, and mark:
good /ə/ → gɤɤd
food /əʉ/ → fɤ̄ɤd
floor /əɹ/ → flɤɤr
blood /ʌ/ → blɤ̂ɤd

Example vocabulary table

	bare a	macron	breve	tittle	ring	chevron	caron	diaeresis	r	l	y	w
	a	ā	ă	ȧ	å	â	ǎ	ä	ar	al	ay	aw
	unchecked	Magic E	/ɛ/ or /ə/	/ɪ/	tighten	/ɑ-ʌ/	shield	long	/V*ɹ/	/V*ɬ/	/V*j/	/Vw/
a	a /a/ cat	ā /ɛj/ face - fãç	ă /ɛː/ vary - văry	ȧ /ɪ/ ravage - rávȧǧ	å /oː/ fall - fål	â /ɑː/ staff - stâf laugh - lâʒ	ǎ /a/ carry - cǎry	-	ar, âr /ɑɹ/ star - stâr	ål, al /oːɬ/ fall - fål	ăy /ɛj/ day - dăy	aw /aw/ how - haw
æ	æ /e/ æsthetic	ǣ /ɪj/ aether - ǣþer	-	ǡ /ɪ/ ?	ǻ = œ	-	-	-	aer, ær /eɹ/ Earth - Ærþ	-	-	-
e	e /ɛ/ bed	ē /ɪj/ heed - hēd	ě /ɛː/ there	ė /ɪ/ exam	ẻ /ɔ/ genre	ê /ɑ/ eye	ě /ɛ/ ferry	ë /ɪj/ Zoë	er /ɜɹ/ internal	-	ey /ɛj/ hey	-
i	i /ɪ/ hit	ī /aj/ mine	ĭ ?	i İ alt for ï /ɪj/ ?	î = œ ?	î - alt for ī cos it can look like a t	ǐ /ɪ/ mirror	ï /ɪj/ ravine	ir /ɜɹ/ fir	-	-	-
o	o /ɔ/ hot	ō /ɜʉ/ bone	ǒ /ə/ today	ȯ /ɪ/ women	ỏ /oː/ broad	ô /ʌ/ done	ǒ /ɔ/ borrow	ö /ɵʉ/ do	or /oɹ/ more	ōl /ɔɬ~ɜʉ/ cold	oy /oj/ boy	ōw /ɜʉ/ blow
œ	œ /ɪ/ œcónomy	œ̄ /ɪj/ ēcosystem	-	œ̇ /ɪ/ œcónomy	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
u	u /ʌ/ under	ū /jɵʉ/ ūnion	ŭ /ə/ pŭt	u̇ /ɪ/ bu̇zy	-	û /ɛ/ bûry	ǔ /ʌ/ hǔrry	ü /ɵʉ/ sue - sü	ur /ɜɹ/ burn	-	uy /aj/ buy	-
ȣ	ȣ /ə/ could - cȣld	ȣ̄ /ɜʉ/ dough - dȣʒ	ȣ̆ = ȣ /ə/ ?	-	ȣ̊ /oː/ bought - bȣ̊t	ȣ̂ /ʌ/ double - dȣ̂ble	-	ȣ̈ /ɵʉ/ you - yȣ̈	ȣr /ɜɹ/ jȣ̆rny	ȣ̊l /ɔɬ~ɜʉ/ mȣ̊ld	-	-
w	w /w/ low, new	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	wr /ʷɹ/ write	wl /wɬ/ bowl	-	-
ꝏ	ꝏ /ə/ gꝏd	ꝏ̄ /ɵʉ/ fꝏd	ꝏ̆ = ꝏ /ə/ ?	-	-	ꝏ̂ /ʌ/ blꝏ̂d	-	ꝏ̈ = ꝏ̄ ?	ꝏr /ɵɹ/ pꝏr	ꝏl /ɵʉɬ/ fꝏl, pꝏl	-	-
y	y /ɪ/ ?	ȳ /aj/ my	-	ẏ /ɪ/	-	-	y̌ /ɪ/	ÿ /ɪj/ happÿ	yr /ɜɹ/ myrrh	-	-	-

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floor /ɵɹ/ → flꝏr
blood /ʌ/ → blꝏ̂d

Respellings

- Sometimes a silent vowel cannot be removed because it would increase ambiguity. In these instances, silence it using the grave: **à**.
- ou and ow as /aʉ/ are now ⟨aŭ⟩ word-mid and ⟨aw⟩ word-mid & word-final (based on original spelling)
    - flour /aʉ/ → flaŭr   haŭr aŭr faŭnd saŭnd araŭnd raŭnd baŭnd abaŭnd abaŭt flaŭt haŭse maŭse spaŭse jaŭst *(ŭ can be reduced to u)*
    - how /aʉ/ → haw   naw brawn caw baw raw saw
    - flower /aʉ/ → flawer   tawer pawer shawer
- ea series:
    - if ea cannot be reduced to a simpler vowel due to spelling ambiguity, diacritique as follows:
    - read /ɪj/ → rēàd   strēàk lēàk bēàk pēàk wēàk plēàd frēàk
    - bread /ɛ/ → breàd   reàd leàd steàd insteàd treàd
    - break /ɛj/ → breàk   steàk
    - *ea* as a weird vowel may originate from ae, æ. NewEng may re-adopt this old spelling, as it looks more interesting and seems more sensible.
- oa series:
    - boat /əw/ → bōàt   mōàt glōàt flōàt tōàd rōàd cōàl lōàm
    - broad /o:/ → brôàd / brôd / bråd
    - board /oɹ/ → boàrd / bord / bård
- oo series:
    - good /ɵ/ → gœod / gœ̆d   foot look took rook
    - food /ɵʉ/ → fœōd   spook boot room doom loom
    - floor /ɵɚ/ → flœor / flœ̆r   poor moor
    - blood /ʌ/ → blœôd   flood

Detailed information

Bare vowels, unmarked, all bear the default vowel, that is the unchecked "short" vowel. (/ə/ is oo not u.)

Acute

The acute diacritic á is used to indicate stress. If there is no stressed vowel marked, there is a hierarchy of which diacritics are stressed.

1. Acute. This is *always* stressed.
2. If there is only one vowel marked with any diacritic, that vowel is stressed.
3. Macron - Magic E - these are usually stressed syllables. Some words have more than one.
4. Ring, chevron, caron, diaeresis - these tend to be stressed syllables.
5. Breve - these are usually relaxed, collapsed syllables.
6. Tittle - these are nearly always relaxed, collapsed syllables.
7. Unmarked vowels - never stressed except for single-syllable words and word roots in simple words with simple suffixes.

Macron

The macron diacritic is used for the "long vowels" as they are known, spelled by appending a letter E after the consonant after the vowel, often called "Magic E". This is one of the weirdest spelling rules in English, and it gets broken all the time. In many dialects of modern English, these exist almost entirely as diphthongs, but in some dialects they are still elongated monophthongs, apparently closer to how they used to be pronounced.

The use of this diacritic necessitates the removal of the Magic E, which has several knock-on effects due to the E's ability to modify several other letters.

Breve

The breve looks like a tiny U, so that is its primary function: the breve reduces back-mouth vowels to the /ə/ sound, as in *put* and *today*. It can also be used for ou → ŏ and oo → ꭢ if clarity is desired.

ŏ	ŭ	ꭤ̆	ꭢ
today	put	could	good
tomorrow		should	foot
to (weak)		would	whoops

The letter A mimics the letter E in -ay and -ai, so the breve has been co-opted for the /ɛ/ sound in these sequences: *păin, dăy*. The A also does this in -air, -are, -airy and -ary sequences, so the breve is used again: *făir, făr (fare), făiry, prėcări8s, vocabulăry*.

	ai	ay	are	ary	air	airy	aire	ayer
	ăi	ăy	ăr	ăry	ăir	ăiry	ăire	ăyr
	făil	făy	făre	míšionăry	făir	făiry		prăyr (not prăyer)
	păin	păy	păre	Măry	lăir	lăiry	milionăire	
	Spăin	spăy	spăre	wăry	stăir		quesťionăire	
		dăy	dăr	văry	lăir	dăiry		
	чăin		ʃăre		чăir	hăiry		

The letter E before R for /ɛ/ has the caron diacritic as a shield, but this is always a short /ɛ/ such as in very *věry* and merry *měry*. There are instances when E before R is actually long, or has a rhotic/schwa end-point, as in there, where, bear, pear, tear. In this case, the breve is used over the E: **ĕ** (akin to the breve over the A: **ă**): *đĕr, ɦĕr, bĕàr, pĕàr, tĕàr*.

ere	ear	eir
ĕr	ĕàr	ĕir
ɦĕr	wĕàr	đĕir
đĕr	bĕàr	ɦĕir
wĕrwŏlf	pĕàr	
	tĕàr	

Tittle

The tittle is perhaps the only consistent diacritic: it reduces its vowel to the /ɪ/ sound, the unchecked i of "it" /ɪt/.

ȧ	ǣ	ė	ȯ	œ̇	u̇	ẏ
mánȧğ	ǣþĕric	ėxam	wómėn	œ̇cónomy	bu̇zy	?
rávȧğ		ėẍáctly				
bágȧğ						
cábȧğ						

Ring

The ring essentially tightens the lips.

Å, Ȯ and ɤ̊ are more common, used for /oː/. Ė is rare, used for /ɔ/ in only a few French words like *genre* and *envelope*.

- Å tends to come from a darkening at the back of the mouth, such as in the graphs *au* and *augh*, and in *al* and *all*.
- Ȯ comes from the graph *oa*, that seems to be the only one.
- ɤ̊ comes from graphs *ou*, *ough*, *our*. (Note that *our/ɤ̊r* is often /ɜː/ɝ/ when stressed and /ə/ɚ/ when unstressed.)

/oː/							/ɔ/
au	augh	al	all	oa	ough	our	e
å	åʒ	ål	åll	ȯà	ɤ̊ʒ	ɤ̊r	ė
audio → ådiō	taught → tåʒt	also → ålsō	call → cål	broad → brȯàd	ought → ɤ̊ʒt	four → fɤ̊r	genre → ğĕnre
auto → åtō	caught → cåʒt	although → ålđɤ̊ʒ	fall → fål		fought → fɤ̊ʒt		envelope

/oː/								/ɔ/
au	augh	al	all	oa	ough	our		e
å	åʒ	ål	åll	ǒà	ð̊ʒ	ð̊r		ė
aural → åral	fraught → frå̊ʒt		tall → tål		bought→ bð̊ʒt			
aura → åra			ball → bål		brought→brð̊ʒt			
			wall → wål		wrought→wrð̊ʒt			

Chevron

The chevron is technically called a circumflex, but I've chosen to call it a chevron, in parity with its inverse, the caron.

The chevron does the opposite to the ring in that it stretches the mouth wider.

- Front-mouth vowels move to /ʌ/, back-mouth move to /ɑ/.
- U moves to /ɛ/, for the only word I can find, *bury*.

U as /ʌ/ before R uses the caron shield diacritic, ŭ, such as in burrow, furrow, hurry, Murray, curry, etc.

/ɑː~a/	/ɑ/		/ʌ/			/ɛ/
a → â	e → ê		o → ô	ou → ộ	oo → ô͡o	u → û
staff	eye		done	double	blood	bury
father	height		love	trouble	flood	
rather			above			
lather			come			

Caron

The caron is used as a "shield" diacritic: that is, it protects the value of a vowel from being altered by a proceeding letter. This may be used to protect against both vowels and consonants, but due to the structure of English, it will most regularly be used to shield against the letter R. Usage against W is permitted, but W-digraphs have been removed from NewEng orthography so it is not necessary -- however, writers may use the caron if they wish to remind the readers that the vowel is *not* modified by the proceeding W. This usage will naturally fade over time anyway, because it won't have a real function, so once people are comfortable with parsing vowel-W sequences correctly, the caron over a vowel before a W will lose its meaning.

There may be instances in which usage is recommended, such as portmanteaus, suffixes and suffixes which alter the root's pronunciation.

One example is *know* and *knowledge*:

know   /nəw/   → k̀nōw

knowledge   /ˈnɔ.lɪʤ/   → k̀nố̀wliğ   → k̀nố̀wlij   (future orthography may replace k with ĸ and ğ with j)

In this word, usage of the caron is recommended because omission of the macron may seem like a mistake: addition of the caron indicates that it was intentional and thus that the written pronunciation of k̀nő̀wlĭğ is correct.

In handwriting and in font design, it is important that the caron is very pointy, so as to clearly distinguish it from the breve: ă vs ǎ.

The English vowel "system" is so atrocious that, unfortunately, both diacritics must be used (at this time, anyway).

arr	err	irr	orr	urr	yr	yrr
ăr	ěr	ĭr	ŏr	ŭr	y̌r	y̆r
barry	berry		borrow	burrow		
marry	merry	mirror	Morris			
parry	Perry					
tarry	Terry				syrup	tyrrany
carry	Kerry				syringe	
Larry						

Diaeresis

The diaeresis doesn't have much use, but there are a few instances in which a long form of a vowel is required without the other baggage that goes with it.

For the /ou/ sound: you, shoe, canoe, to (strong), do.

For the /ɪj/ sound: the -ine suffix - magazine, etc.

Letter E as /ɪj/ can probably be written with ē always, but ë exists just in case.

ë	ï	ÿ	ö	ÿ̈	?
Zoe	machine	happy	do	you	
	ravine	copy	to	youth	
	magazine	multiply	canoe	couth	
	saline		shoe	uncouth	
	caffeine				

Letter Y as /ɪj/ in the suffix position is uncertain because it may be pronounced as a short /i/ instead of long /iː/. M marking it is pretty redundant, although there are instances in which disambiguation is useful, such as when the zero-marked vowel is likely to be assumed to be a mistake. Consider *multiply*:

		IPA	NewEng
verb	multiply	/ˈmʌɫ.tʰɪ.pʰlɑj/	múltiplÿ
adverb	multiply	/ˈmʌɫ.tʰɪ.pʰlɪj/	múltiplÿ

Glides

What's the deal with R, Y and W anyway?

Basically, vowels in English must either be "checked" -- followed by a consonant -- or elongated in some way.

There are three ways that a "long" vowel can end: /ɹ/ or /w/ or /j/.

From my explorations so far, it seems that all vowels follow the pattern of this system, regardless of whether an accent uses these actual sounds to terminate the vowels or not.

- Non-rhotic accents mutate the R-paired vowels slightly, and elongate them.
- Non-palatal-diphthong accents squash the palatal diphthongs slightly, and elongate them. (This may have been the original pronunciation.)
- Non-labial-diphthong accents widen the labial diphthongs somewhat, and elongate them.

Vowel + R

R and W are the craziest letters in the English alphabet. W's chaotic magic has been nixed from NewEng so we only have R to contend with. Luckily, R is a lot more regimented than W, calm enough that we can charter it with reasonable sensibility.

- *This does not include R-shielded vowels (caron).*
- *This is not an exhaustive list: some graphs have an array of vowels grouped with R, and most are handled by their diacritics.*

current	NewEng	rhotic	non-rho	1	2	3
ar	**ar, âr**	/ɑɹ/	/ɑː/	star, stâr		
ear	**eàr, ær**	/ɜɹ/	/ɜː/	leàrn, lærn Eàrþ, Ærþ		
er	**er**	/ɜɹ/	/ɜː/	internal		
ere	**er, ĕr, ēr**	/ɜɹ, ɛɹ, ɪjɹ/	/ɜː, ɛə, ɪjə/	were → wer	there → ðĕr	here → hēr
eir	**ĕir**	/ɛɹ/	/ɛə/	heir → hĕir		
ir	**ir**	/ɜɹ/	/ɜː/	fir		
or	**or**	/oɹ/	/oː/	for		
ore	**or**	/oɹ/	/oː/	more → mor		
ur	**ur**	/ɜɹ/	/ɜː/	fur		
ure	**ūr, ŭr?**	/jɵɹ/	/jɵː/	cure → cūr fury → fūry		
our	**ŏr, ǒr, ɤr**	/ɜɹ, oɹ, ɚ/	/ɜː, oː, ə/	journal → jǒrnal	four → fɤr	colour → côlɤr
oor	**ɶr**	/oɹ/	/oː/	moor		
yr ?	**yr**					
yre	**ȳr**	/ɑjɚ/	/ɑjə/	tyre → tȳr		

Vowel + W

No special changes with appending a W.

However, current English has A WHOLE HOST OF CRAZY THINGS WITH W so actually unstitching the W effects has a LOT of ramifications. The respellings reach far and wide. (This also includes W + vowel, but that will be in a dedicated section.)

current	aw /oː/		ow /aʊ/		ew /jɵʊ/		ow /ɜʊ/		
NewEng	**åw**		**aw**		**ūw ???**		**ōw**		
	awful	→ åwfŭl	how	→ haw	hue	→ hūw ???			
	awesome	→ åwsŏm			view	→ vūw	flow	→ flōw	
	fawn	→ fåwn	fowl	→ fawl	few	→ fūw			
			plow	→ plaw	blue	→ blūw ???	blow	→ blōw	
	pawn	→ påwn			pew	→ pūw			
			bow	→ baw	imbue	→ imbūw ???	bow	→ bōw	
	brawn	→ bråwn	brow.n	→ braw.n	brew	→ brūw			
	caw	→ cåw	cow	→ caw	queue	→ qūw			
	claw	→ clåw	crowd	→ crawd	crew	→ crūw	crow	→ crōw	
	law	→ låw	allow	→ aláw	lieu	→ lūw			
	raw	→ råw	row	→ raw			row	→ rōw	
					grew	→ grūw	grow	→ grōw	
	gnaw	→ ġnåw	now	→ naw	new	→ nūw	know	→ k̀nōw	

Vowel + Y

No special changes with appending a Y.

The weird ones of current English are modified in NewEng by keeping the same spelling and adding a diacritic to the vowel.

ay → ăy	ey	ey	oy	uy
hay	hey	key	coy	
lay	ley		toy	
pay			boy	buy
may				
ray			Roy	
tray			Troy	
Jay			joy	
day			buoy	

Vowel + L

The darkening of vowels by the phone L only has a noticeable effect on the vowels A and O. This is probably because they are quite wide, so the darkening drags the tongue through a longer path, resulting in excessive time spent in an additional position. These additional positions lay within the phonology of English, thus, listeners perceive different phonemes and will probably even develop their own speech model to use these phonemes here.

High-mouth vowels /ij ɪ e ɵ u/ and wide-mouth wide-lip vowels /æ ʌ/ are not noticeably affected by L darkening (known as pre-L backing).

Thus, this is not an actual aspect of the pronunciation model, but it IS a phenomenologically real aspect and should be considered when teaching learners both pronunciation and listening skills. As this phenomenon is present in a wide array of dialects and accents, it is sensible to record it in the orthography. Indeed, distinctions like these are exactly the kind of thing that eventually leads to new phonemic distinction and an enriching of the phonology of a language.

/oːɫ/			/ɔʉɫ/				
al	all		ol	ole	oal	oul	owl
ål	ål		ol	ole	ōàl	ȣl	owl
also	all		old			boulder	bowl
although	fall		fold	dole	foal	shoulder	
always	call		cold		coal		
	ball		roll	role			
	tall		toll	tole			
	wall		mold	mole		mould	