

WHAT IS THE INTERNATIONAL PHONETIC ALPHABET (IPA)?

/ˌɪntəˈnæʃənəl fəˈnetɪk ˈælfəbet/

A **narrow transcription** gives much more information regarding the exact way a particular word is pronounced. The transcription is written in square brackets. The word *right*, would sound different in a variety of accents of English. For exact detail of the way it is pronounced in a particular accent, or individual on a particular occasion, a narrow transcription would be needed. The symbols on the IPA chart provide all the detail to describe any human utterance.

“IPA is a phonetic notation system that uses a set of symbols to represent each distinct sound that exists in human spoken language. It encompasses all languages spoken on earth. The system was created in 1886 and was last updated in 2005. It consists of 107 letters, 52 diacritics, and four prosodic marks.

The IPA is based on the Latin alphabet, but includes some non-Latin characters as well. A “diacritical mark” or “diacritical point”, “diacritical signis” is a glyph added to a letter, or basic glyph.

Diacritical marks are added above, under or within a letter. They sometimes can also be placed in between two letters. Prosody is a representation of the rhythm, stress, and intonation of speech.” <http://www.internationalphoneticalphabet.org/>

THE INTERNATIONAL PHONETIC ALPHABET (revised to 2005)

CONSONANTS (PULMONIC)

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	Bilabial	Labiodental	Dental	Alveolar	Postalveolar	Retroflex	Palatal	Velar	Uvular	Pharyngeal	Glottal
Plosive	p b		t d			ʈ ɖ	c ɟ	k ɡ	q ɢ		ʔ
Nasal	m	ɱ	n			ɳ	ɲ	ŋ	ɴ		
Tail	β		r						ʀ		
Tap or Flap		v̥	ɾ			ɽ					
Fricative	f β	v̥ v	θ ð	s z	ʃ ʒ	ʂ ʐ	ç ʝ	x ɣ	χ ʁ	ħ ʕ	h ɦ
Lateral fricative				ɬ ɮ							
Approximant		ʋ	j			ɻ	j	ɰ			
Lateral approximant			l			ɭ	ʎ	ʟ			

Where symbols appear in pairs, the one to the right represents a voiced consonant. Shaded areas denote articulations judged impossible.

CONSONANTS (NON-PULMONIC)

Clicks	Voiced implosives	Ejectives
ʘ Bilabial ǀ Dental ǃ Oral/alveolar ǁ Postalveolar ǂ Alveolar lateral	ɓ Bilabial ɗ Dental/alveolar ɠ Velar ʄ Uvular	ʼ Ejector ɰ Bilabial ɶ Dental/alveolar ɷ Velar ɸ Alveolar fricative

VOWELS

Where symbols appear in pairs, the one to the right represents a rounded vowel.

OTHER SYMBOLS

Λ Voiceless labial-velar fricative	Ɔ Z Alveolo-palatal fricative
W Voiced labial-velar approximant	J Voiced alveolar lateral flap
q Voiced labial-palatal approximant	ɧ Simultaneous ʃ and x
H Voiceless epiglottal fricative	Affricates and double articulations can be represented by two symbols joined by a tie bar if necessary.
ʡ Voiced epiglottal fricative	
ʢ Epiglottal plosive	

kp ts

SUPRASEGMENTALS

- ˈ Primary stress
- ˌ Secondary stress
- ː Long
- ˑ Half-long
- ˚ Extra-short
- ˞ Minor (foot) group
- || Major (intonation) group
- Syllable break
- ~ Linking (absence of a break)

fours/tʃən

High rising

Low falling

Mid

Low

High

Extra-low

Diphthong

Global rise

Global fall

Global level

Global rise

Global fall

Global level

Global rise

Global fall

Global level

Global rise

Global fall

Global level

Global rise

Global fall

Global level

TONES AND WORD ACCENTS

LEVEL

CONTINUOUS

Tone

Pitch

Intensity

Duration

Timbre

Rhythm

Tempo

Mood

"IPA Chart, <http://www.internationalphoneticassociation.org/content/ipa-chart>, available under a Creative Commons Attribution-Sharealike 3.0 Unported License. Copyright © 2005 International Phonetic Association."

A pdf version can be found here:

https://www.internationalphoneticassociation.org/sites/default/files/IPA_chart_%28C%292005.pdf

This is the website of the International Phonetic Association, which was founded in 1886:

<https://www.internationalphoneticassociation.org/>

The alphabet even has its own site: <http://www.internationalphoneticalphabet.org/>

Here is John Wells' page on transcription of English.

<https://www.phon.ucl.ac.uk/home/wells/ipa-english-uni.htm>

For other information on the IPA see Antimoon: <http://www.antimoon.com/how/pronunc-soundsipa.htm#phonchart>