

Help:IPA for Mandarin

The charts below show the way in which the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) represents Mandarin Chinese pronunciations in Wikipedia articles.

See Mandarin phonology for a more thorough look at the sounds of Mandarin. Please note that English equivalents given in this page may only represent very approximate sounds to the original pronunciations.

Consonants			
IPA	Pinyin	Bopomofo	English approximation
ɕ	x	ㄒ	she
f	f	ㄈ	fan
j	y-, -i-	ㄟ	you
k	g	ㄎ	scan
k ^h	k	ㄏ	can
l	l	ㄌ	leaf
m	m	ㄇ	moon
n	n-, -n	ㄋ, ㄣ	noon
ŋ	-ng	ㄣ	song
p	b	ㄅ	span
p ^h	p	ㄆ	pan
ɹ	-r	ㄖ	car (ends syllable)
s	s	ㄙ	see
ʃ	sh	ㄕ	sure
t	d	ㄊ	stop
t ^h	t	ㄊ	top
tɕ	j	ㄐ	itchy
tɕ ^h	q	ㄑ	cheer
ts	z	ㄗ	cats
ts ^h	c	ㄘ	tsunami
tʃ	zh	ㄗ	pitcher
tʃ ^h	ch	ㄘ	church
w	w-, -u-	ㄨ	water
x	h	ㄏ	house or loch
ɥ	yu-, -ü-, y-, -i- ^[1]	ㄩ	(simultaneous y and w)
ʐ	r-	ㄖ ^[2]	pleasure (starts syllable)

Vowels			
IPA	Pinyin	Bopomofo	English approximation
a	a (<i>a</i> , <i>an</i>)	ㄚ, ㄛ	cat
aɪ	ai	ㄞ	time
ɑ	a (<i>ang</i>), e (<i>er</i>)	ㄞ, ㄟ	father
ɑʊ	ao	ㄞ	how
eɪ	eɪ ^[3]	ㄟ	hey
ɛ	e (<i>ye</i>), a (<i>yan</i> , <i>yuan</i>)	ㄝ, ㄞ, ㄟ	yes
œ	e (<i>yue</i>)	ㄟ	Somewhat like bird
ə	e (<i>en</i> ^[3] , <i>eng</i>)	ㄟ, ㄠ	comma
ɤ	e	ㄝ	Somewhat like good
ɨ	yi/-i (<i>yi</i> , <i>yin</i> , <i>ying</i>)	ㄟ	see (shorter)
ɨ̥	i (<i>si</i> , <i>zi</i> , <i>ci</i> , <i>shi</i> , <i>zhi</i> , <i>chi</i> , <i>ri</i>) (buzzing) ^[4]	ㄟ	ticket
oʊ	ou ^[3]	ㄠ	hoe
ɔ	o (<i>wo</i> ^[5])	ㄠ	war
u	wu/-u	ㄠ	woo (shorter)
ʊ	o (<i>ong</i>)	ㄠ, ㄡ	hook
y	yu/-ü ^[1] (<i>yu</i> , <i>yun</i>)	ㄡ	Somewhat like cute
Nasal ^[6]			
ɑ̃	ang (<i>angr</i>)		No English equivalent; nasal [ɑ]
ɛ̃	eng (<i>engr</i>)		No English equivalent; nasal [ə]
ʊ̃	ong (<i>ongr</i>)		No English equivalent; nasal [ʊ]

IPA	Pinyin	Description
Tones		
ǎ ㄣˇ	á, é	mid rising: ㄣ
â ㄞˊ	à, è	high falling: ㄞ
á ㄞˊ	ā, ē	high: ㄞ
à, ㄞˊ	ǎ, ě	medially, low: ㄞ initially, mid falling: ㄣ finally, low rising: ㄞ in isolation, dipping: ㄣ
a, ㄞˊ	a, e	"toneless": low after a falling tone [â]; mid after all other tones

Notes

- [1] *ü* ([y], [ɥ]) is spelled *u* after *j*, *q*, *x* as [u], [w] cannot occur after these consonants. *y*- and *-i*- are only pronounced this way in the sequences *yong* and *-iong*.
- [2] [ʐ] can be pronounced [ʔ].
- [3] *wei*, *you*, *wen* are spelled *ui*, *iu*, *un* respectively in pinyin, but pronounced identically, when preceded by a consonant.
- [4] Slightly "buzzing" vowels. In *shi*, *zhi*, *chi*, *ri*, the vowel is also retracted: [ɨ̟], rather like the *ir* in US English *bird*. These are sometimes transcribed as syllabic fricatives ([ʐ], [ʑ]), but there is little frication.
- [5] *uo* is spelled *o* when preceded by *b*, *p*, *m* or *f*; however, it is pronounced similarly.
- [6] Only occurs in *erhua* and generally not considered part of the main vowel inventory.

External links

- Chinese Phonetic Transcription Converter (http://project-modelino.com/chinese-phonetic-transcription-converter.php?site_language=english)—Free Online Tool to convert Chinese Text to IPA Phonetic Transcription

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