

Consonant Sounds of American English

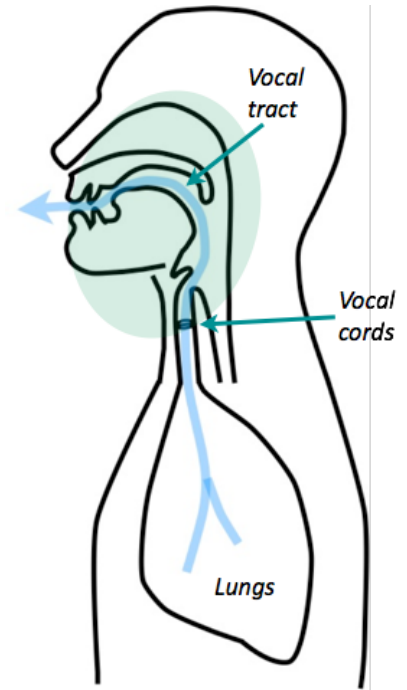
Voiced and Voiceless Sounds

What happens when we talk?

Air comes out of our lungs, up through our throat, and out of our mouth or nose.

The air passes through our vocal cords. When we say some sounds, our vocal cords vibrate. We call those sounds “voiced.”

When we say other sounds, our vocal cords are not vibrating. The sound is like a whisper. We call those sounds “voiceless.”



These sounds are voiced:	These sounds are voiceless:
/b/ <u>b</u> e	/p/ <u>p</u> ink
/d/ <u>d</u> id	/t/ <u>t</u> op
/g/ <u>g</u> o	/k/ <u>c</u> at
/v/ <u>v</u> ery	/f/ <u>f</u> ish
/ð/ <u>th</u> e	/θ/ <u>th</u> ink
/z/ <u>z</u> oo	/s/ <u>s</u> o
/ʒ/ <u>t</u> ele <u>v</u> ision	/ʃ/ <u>sh</u> op
/dʒ/ <u>j</u> ust	/tʃ/ <u>ch</u> ip
/m/ <u>m</u> e	/h/ <u>h</u> ome
/n/ <u>n</u> o	
/ŋ/ <u>sing</u>	
/l/ <u>l</u> ips	
/r/ <u>r</u> ed	
/w/ <u>w</u> e	
/y/ <u>y</u> ou	
And all the vowels	

If you touch your throat when you say a voiced sound, you can feel vibration.

If you touch your throat when you say a voiceless sound, you can't feel any vibration.

Are these sounds voiced or voiceless?

- /ʃ/ as in shop ☐ voiced ☐ voiceless
- /m/ as in many ☐ voiced ☐ voiceless
- /l/ as in lucky ☐ voiced ☐ voiceless
- /p/ as in past ☐ voiced ☐ voiceless

Write 5 words that start with voiced sounds.	Write 5 words that start with voiceless sounds.