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## **PRONUNCIATION**

**German alphabets are very similar to English. However, two more alphabets are used in German. The followings are the German alphabets with their names in English in brackets:**

**A (ah)    B (be)    C (ce)    D (de)    E (eh)    F (eff)    G (ge)**

**H (hah)    I (ee)    J (yot)    K (ka)    L (ell)    M (emm)**

**N (enn)    O (oh)    P (pe)    Q (koo)    R (err)    S (ess)    T (te)**

**U (oo)    V (fow)    W (ve)    X (iks)    Y (ipsilon)    Z (tsett)**

**ß (esstsett)    .. (umlauts)**

**Out of twenty eight alphabets five are the vowels and the rest are consonants. There are some basic rules regarding the pronunciation of vowels :**

- 1. A vowel is short if followed by two consonants.**
- 2. A vowel is long if followed by single consonant, followed by 'h' or the same vowel coming twice.**
- 3. Unstressed vowels are usually short. In German generally the first syllable is stressed.**
- 4. H is not pronounced after a vowel and 't'. 'D' is silent before 't'. Examples: Theater, Methode, Stadt**

5. In German the first letter of all the nouns are written in capital.

### Simple Vowels

Vowels	Long/Short	English Examples	German Examples
a	short	b <u>u</u> t, c <u>u</u> t	Mann (man), lang (long), Pass (passport)
aa, ah	long	f <u>a</u> ther	Haar (hair), Bahn (path ), war (was), klar (clear)
e	short	p <u>e</u> n, b <u>e</u> t	denn (then), Fest (festival) , lernen (to learn)
ee, eh	long	p <u>a</u> in, m <u>a</u> il	Meer (sea), leer (empty), sehen (to see), mehr (more), der (the)

*'e' at the end of a word is usually pronounced like 'but'*

i	short	b <u>i</u> t, f <u>i</u> t	Kind (child), Bild (picture), finden (to find), ist (is)
ii, ih	long	d <u>ee</u> p, s <u>ee</u>	variieren (to vary), ihm (to him), Paris, Mathematik
o	short	n <u>o</u> t, h <u>o</u> t	oft (often), kommen (to come), Post, offen (open)

<b>oo, oh</b>	<b>long</b>	<b><u>t</u>one, <u>o</u>ne</b>	<b>Boot (boat), Ton (tone), ohne (without), rot (red), Brot (bread)</b>
<b>u</b>	<b>short</b>	<b><u>pu</u>t, <u>U</u>ma</b>	<b>Mutter (mother), Butter(butter) Grund (ground), und (and)</b>
<b>uu,uh</b>	<b>long</b>	<b><u>f</u>ood, <u>r</u>ule</b>	<b>Vakuum (vacuum), Uhr (watch), Stuhl (chair), Kuh (cow), gut (good)</b>

### **Diphthongs (combination of vowels)**

*There are mainly five diphthongs in German language.*

**AI & EI, AU, EU, IE**

<b>Diphthongs</b>	<b>English Examples</b>	<b>German examples</b>
<b>AI &amp; EI</b>	<b><u>m</u>ine, <u>h</u>eight</b>	<b>klein (small), Mai (May), drei (three), Rhein, Mainz</b>
<b>AU</b>	<b><u>h</u>ouse</b>	<b>Haus (house), Baum (tree), blau(blue), Frau(wife)</b>
<b>EU</b>	<b><u>b</u>oy</b>	<b>neu (new), heute (today), neun (nine), Freund (friend)</b>
<b>IE</b>	<b><u>th</u>ief</b>	<b>die (the), wie (how), wieder (again), hier (here)</b>

## Modified Vowels

The followings are the modified vowels:

Ä (ae)  
Ö (oe)  
Ü (ue)  
Äu

Vowels	English Examples	German Examples
ä	<u>c</u> are	spät(ate), Lärm(noise), Qualität (quality)
ö	w <u>o</u> rth	öl (oil), können (can), schön(beautiful), Lösung (solution)
ü	ac <u>u</u> te	füllen ( to fill), für (for), fünf (five), müssen (must)
äu	bo <u>y</u>	Häuser (houses), Fräulein (miss)

## **Consonants**

- B** (i) At the beginning of a syllable, it is pronounced like ‘b’ in bread.  
Examples: Brot (bread), Bruder (brother), Butter (butter)
- (ii) At the end of a syllable, it is pronounced like ‘p’ in pen. Examples:  
halb (half), Kalb (calf), blieb ( stayed).
- CH** (i) After a, o, u and au it is pronounced like kh .Examples:  
Bach (stream), Loch (hole), Buch (book), auch (also).
- (ii) After i, e, eu, modified vowels and l, r it is pronounced like ‘sh’ as in  
shot. Examples : ich (I), brechen (to break), euch (you), lächeln  
(to smile), möchte ( would like), Bücher(books), Milch(milk),  
durch (through).
- D** (i) At the beginning of a syllable, it is pronounced like ‘d’ in did.  
Examples: der(the), Drama, durch
- (ii) At the end of a syllable, it is pronounced lik ‘t’ in ten. Examples:  
Hand, Bad (bath room), Kind (child), und (and), Freund (friend).

- G** (i) At the beginning of a syllable, it is pronounced like **g** in good.  
Examples: gut(good), geben (to give), Geologie (Geology).
- (ii) At the end of a syllable, it is pronounced like **k** in king. Examples:  
Tag (day), Zug (train), Weg (way), täglich (daily).
- (iii) ‘ig’ at the end of a word is pronounced like ‘sh’ in ich. Examples:  
wenig (little), König (king), zwanzig (twenty).

**J** It is pronounced like ‘y’ in yes. Examples: ja (yes), Jahr (year), Juli (july), Japan

- S** (i) At the beginning of a syllable, it is pronounced like ‘z’ in zero.  
Examples: sein (his), besuchen (to visit), sagen (to say), Rose (rose).
- (ii) At the end of a syllable, it is pronounced like ‘s’ in sing. Examples:  
das (the), was (what), Glas (glass), Haus (house).

**SCH/SP/ST** These all are pronounced like ‘sh’ in shoe. Examples :  
Fisch (fish), Sprache (language), Student

- V** (i) At the beginning of a syllable, it is pronounced like ‘f’ in father.  
Examples : Vater (father), verstehen (to understand), viel (much)
- (ii) It is pronounced like ‘v’ in very in the words of foreign origin.  
Examples : Universität (university), November, Aktivität (activity)
- W** It is pronounced like v in very. Examples : Wetter (weather), wenn (when), Wasser (water), warten (to wait)
- X** It is pronounced like ‘x’ in fox. Examples : Taxi, Examen (examination), Axt (axe).
- Y** It is pronounced like ‘ü’ in für. Examples : Physik (physics) Lyrik (lyrics), typisch (typical).
- Z** It is pronounced like ‘ts’ in cats. Examples: zu (to), zehn (ten), zeigen (to show), Zigarette (cigarette).
- ß** It is pronounced like ‘ss’. Examples: muß (must)

*The following consonants are pronounced very similar to English.*

- F**      **Frau (wife), frei (free), laufen (to run)**
- H**      **Haus (house), haben (to have), Hammer**
- K**      **klein (small), kommen, Kopie**
- L**      **lachen (to laugh), Loch (hole), leben (to live)**
- M**      **Mann (man/husband), mein (my), Mutter (mother)**
- N**      **nein (no), neun (nine), Nacht (night)**
- P**      **Post, Papier (paper), Prost (cheers)**
- Q**      **Qualität, Quantität**



**R**     **Haar (hair), rauchen (to smoke), Wasser (water)**

**T**     **Tee (tea), trinken (to drink), Tochter (daughter)**

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