

**Norwegian Pronunciation,  
Rhythm and Tone**

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**Lecture 8**

**Today's Topics:**

- Retrospective overview
- More pronunciation practise

*We will go over the vowels again and some explanations and tasks left over from previous lectures.*

On the next page there are a number of short newspaper headlines which we will use to test the various pronunciation rules we have covered. Check point 5 and 6 below for a reminder of what to look for.

**Summary**

We can now look back and summarise the most important strategies for an improved pronunciation. Each element is described fuller in earlier handouts, and will have been covered live in the relevant lectures (these handouts are only notes). By order of impact we begin with the most recent strategies we covered:

1. Speak flat with a level tone (*Lecture 7*). There is too much to mimic in tonal variation and much of this is related to social signals rather than correct rhythm and stress, and focusing on just *one* thing, an even tone, is much easier.
2. The field is then open to focus on the second most important feature of spoken Norwegian: long vowels and consonants (*Lecture 3*) and rhythm/stress (*Lecture 2*). Every word in Norwegian has *one* long sound, which can be a vowel (lese, fine, en, tak) or consonant (lesse, finne, enn, takk). This is crucial; whenever the word is stressed this feature is clearly audible to a Norwegian, and very noticeable if you don't produce it. Even plosives (p, b, d, t, k, g) can be long (*see Lecture 3*). When the word is *unstressed* these sounds are more even. Most Norwegian words have stress on the first syllable.
3. There are nine distinctly different vowel sounds in Norwegian, and especially the æ, ø, u and o are crucial to produce accurately (*Lecture 1 & 2*)
4. Tonemes (*see Lecture 5*). When a word is *stressed*, Norwegians are also very sensitive to its toneme. There are two tonemes, a drop on the first syllable, or a flat tone instead. When the word is *unstressed* most words are flattened to toneme 1.
5. Spelling and sounds. A number of sounds don't have their own letter. Some are spelled the same every time though, like ng = ŋ, kj = ç or skj/sj = ʃ. Other sounds happen when consonants happen to meet, like rd = ɖ, rt = ʈ, rn = ɳ, rl = ɭ (retroflexes) or rs = ʃ (*Lecture 2 & 3 especially*). Norwegian spelling doesn't always make it obvious how a word should be pronounced, but a double consonant is nearly always long.
6. Other phonetic features: liten, pennen [liit-n, penn-n], en kaffe [eŋ-kaffe], drink [driŋk], en pakke [em-pakke], har ikke [harikke], har kanskje [ha-kanfe], vil du [vidu], skal gå [skaga], vil ikke [vil-ikke].

**Spelling to  
phonetic  
symbol:**

rd = ɖ  
rt = ʈ  
rn = ɳ  
rl = ɭ  
ng = ŋ  
skj/sj/rs = ʃ  
kj = ç

A quick test of all the things we have covered:

Here are various short headlines from newspapers. How would you read them aloud?

**- De  
beste  
skal gå**

Ung debatt

Det er på tide  
at byrådet  
skjerper seg

Lover  
å komme  
tilbake

**Skattepengene  
kan komme i april**

**Gutter skyr unna helse-  
stasjoner for ungdom**

**Dømt til  
over tre år  
i fengsel**

**Går glipp av French Open**

Utsolgt for festivalpass

**Drapssiktet  
15-åring avhørt  
uten forsvarer**

**Tre år med  
stadig mer  
dramatiske  
varsler**

**Søker støtte**

**Tre gutter  
siktet •**

**Norges  
første eldre-  
ombud**

**Blir i City hvis han får lov**

**To personer  
omkom  
i skred**

**Bedre vern for bonusbarn**