

# Phonetics: vowels

This table shows English vowel sounds with **IPA** symbols (International Phonetic Alphabet) and standard symbols (**Std**). The words in parentheses represent the IPA transcription. Standard symbols are used in most English dictionaries.

For each sound there is a word that demonstrates where the sound occurs (word initial, middle, or word final) and how the sound occurs (what letter or letter combinations). Click on the words to get an idea of these sounds. Pay attention to the sound of the letters in **bold**.

English Vowel Sounds				
IPA	Std	examples		
<b>I</b>	<b>ĩ</b>	<b>it</b> (It)	<b>dish</b> (dIʃ)	
<b>i</b>	<b>ē</b>	<b>she</b> (ʃi)	<b>green</b> (gɹin)	<b>machine</b> (mæʃin)
		<b>sunny</b> (sʌni)	<b>ski</b> (ski)	<b>please</b> (pliz)
<b>ɛ</b>	<b>ě</b>	<b>red</b> (ɹɛd)	<b>head</b> (hɛd)	<b>said</b> (sɛd)
		<b>any</b> (ɛni)		
<b>æ</b>	<b>ǎ</b>	<b>and</b> (ænd)	<b>plaid</b> (plæd)	
<b>ɑ</b>	<b>ǒ</b>	<b>hot</b> (hɑt)	<b>father</b> (fɑðə)	
<b>ɔ</b>	<b>ô</b>	<b>August</b> (ɔgʌst)	<b>thaw</b> (θɔ)	<b>bought</b> (bɔt)
		<b>fall</b> (fɔl)		
<b>ʊ</b>	<b>ü</b>	<b>put</b> (pʊt)	<b>book</b> (bʊk)	<b>should</b> (ʃʊd)
<b>u</b>	<b>ū</b>	<b>room</b> (rum)	<b>who</b> (hu)	<b>through</b> (θru)

		<b>you</b> (ju)	<b>shoe</b> (ʃu)	<b>July</b> (dʒuli)
		<b>flew</b> (flu)	<b>two</b> (tu)	<b>blue</b> (blu)
<b>ʌ</b>	<b>ʊ</b>	<b>up</b> (ʌp)	<b>tough</b> (tʌf)	
<b>ə</b>	<b>ə</b>	<b>sofa</b> (sʊfə)	<b>enemy</b> (ɛnəmi)	<b>incredible</b> (ɪnkredəbl)
		<b>gallop</b> (gæləp)	<b>focus</b> (fʊkəs)	
...The ə symbol is called a <b>schwa</b> .				
<b>Diphthongs</b>				
<b>eɪ</b>	<b>ā</b>	<b>they</b> (ðeɪ)	<b>gray</b> (gɹeɪ)	<b>aid</b> (eɪd)
		<b>ate</b> (eɪt)	<b>great</b> (greɪt)	<b>freight</b> (freɪt)
		<b>résumé</b> (rɛzumeɪ)		
<b>aɪ</b>	<b>ī</b>	<b>fine</b> (faɪn)	<b>aisle</b> (aɪl)	<b>sight</b> (saɪt)
		<b>why</b> (waɪ)	<b>bye</b> (baɪ)	<b>lie</b> (laɪ)
		<b>buy</b> (baɪ)	<b>guide</b> (gaɪd)	
<b>ɔɪ</b>	<b>oi</b>	<b>toy</b> (tɔɪ)	<b>noise</b> (nɔɪz)	
<b>ɑʊ</b>	<b>ou</b>	<b>cow</b> (kɑʊ)	<b>house</b> (haʊs)	
<b>oʊ</b>	<b>ō</b>	<b>snowing</b> (snəʊwɪŋ)	<b>sew</b> (səʊ)	<b>though</b> (ðəʊ)
		<b>hello</b> (hɛləʊ)	<b>toe</b> (toʊ)	<b>soap</b> (səʊp)

ju	y <u>oo</u>	unite (juna <u>It</u> )	humid (hjum <u>Id</u> )	few (fju)
		ewe (ju)	youth (ju <u>θ</u> )	eulogy (julə gi)
<b>Vowel sounds with "r" endings</b>				
<u>ɑ</u> I		arm ( <u>ɑ</u> Im)	guard (g <u>ɑ</u> Id)	heart (h <u>ɑ</u> It)
<u>o</u> I		ore ( <u>o</u> I)	floor (fl <u>o</u> Ir)	four (f <u>o</u> I)
		more (m <u>o</u> I)		
<u>ɪ</u> I		near (n <u>ɪ</u> I)	here (h <u>ɪ</u> I)	cheers (tʃ <u>ɪ</u> Is)
		pier (p <u>ɪ</u> I)		
<u>ɛ</u> I		hair (h <u>ɛ</u> I)	where (w <u>ɛ</u> I)	mare (m <u>ɛ</u> I)
		merry (m <u>ɛ</u> ɪI)	their (ð <u>ɛ</u> I)	
<u>ʊ</u> I		burn (b <u>ʊ</u> In)	learn (l <u>ʊ</u> In)	sir (s <u>ʊ</u> I)
		October ( <u>ɑ</u> kt <u>oʊ</u> b <u>ʊ</u> I)	worm (w <u>ʊ</u> Im)	