

English Vowels Pronunciation – By Sound

Single Vowel Sounds

[ɪ] “i” as in ‘sit’

- a ... private, mortgage
- e ... pretty, wanted
- ee ... been
- eig ... foreign
- i ... him, trip, wisdom
- o ... women
- u ... minute
- ui ... build
- y ... symbol, typical

[i] “ee” as in ‘she’

- ay ... quay
- e ... be, here, scene, gene
- ea ... heat, teacher, team
- ee ... weep, sheep, need
- ei ... receive, weird, deceit
- eo ... people
- ey ... key
- i ... police
- ie ... brief, believe, piece
- y ... melody, party, lazy

[ɛ] “e” as in ‘ten’

- a ... share
- ai ... said
- ay ... says
- e ... shed, met, left, send
- ea ... head, jealous, deaf
- eo ... leopard
- ie ... friend
- u ... bury

[ɔ] “aw” as in ‘law’

- a ... fall, talk, walk
- au ... cause, sauce
- augh ... daughter
- aw ... shawl, yawn, jaw
- ough ... thought

[ɑ] “ah” as in ‘father’

- a ... father, car, arch, hard
- aa ... bazaar, aardvark
- e ... sergeant
- ea ... heart
- o ... body, pot, mop
- ough ... cough, trough (adds an “f” sound after)

[æ] “a” as in ‘bat’

- a ... glass, exact, hand
- ai ... plaid
- au ... aunt
- i ... timbre

[ʊ] “oo uh” as in ‘book’

- o ... wolf
- oo ... wood, good, stood
- ou ... could
- u ... sugar, butcher

[u] “oo” as in ‘boo’

- eu ... sleuth
- ew ... blew, threw, chew
- o ... do, to, who, lose
- oe ... shoe
- oo ... too, shoot, gloomy
- ou ... you, soup
- ough ... through
- u ... flute, flu
- ue ... blue, flue
- ui ... juice, bruise, suit
- wo ... two

[ʌ] “uh” as in ‘butter’

- a ... was
- o ... love, money, come
- oe ... does
- oo ... blood, flood
- ou ... trouble
- ough ... enough, rough (adds an “f” sound after)
- u ... up, fun, buzz

[ə] “uh” (schwa) as in ‘supply’

- a ... about, again
- e ... anthem
- ea ... ocean
- i ... possible
- o ... button
- ou ... jealous
- u ... autumn
- y ... syringe

[ɜ] “ur” as in ‘bird’

- ar ... altar
- ear ... learn, yearn, early
- er ... her, expert, letter
- eur ... chauffeur
- ir ... bird, circle, third
- or ... word, jailor, worse
- our ... journey
- ur ... burned, turn, yogurt
- yr ... myrtle

Diphthong Vowel Sounds

[eɪ] “ei” as in ‘say’

- a ... able, base, lazy, ate
- ai ... plain, wait, trail, pain, train
- au ... gauge
- ay ... pay, may, lay
- e ... suede, café
- ea ... great
- ee ... puree
- ei ... veil, rein, neighbor
- eig ... reign
- eigh ... weigh, eight
- ey ... they

[ɔɪ] “oy” as in ‘toy’

- oi ... moist, voice, coin
- oy ... joy, boy, decoy

[aɪ] “ai” as in ‘buy’

- ai ... aisle
- ay ... aye, bayou
- eigh ... height, night
- ie ... lie, tie
- i ... time, bite, wiser, vise
- igh ... high, sighing, fight
- oi ... choir (adds a “w” sound before)
- uy ... buy
- y ... rhyme, thyme, my, by, try
- ye ... bye, eye

[oʊ] “oh” as in ‘no’

- au ... chauffeur
- eau ... beau
- ew ... sew
- o ... no, go, yogurt, bone
- oa ... oat, poach, float
- oe ... foe
- oo ... brooch
- ou ... soul
- ough ... though, dough
- ow ... row, tow, show

[aʊ] “ow” as in ‘now’

- ou ... round, mouth, house
- ough ... bough, plough
- ow ... cow, now

[iʊ] “ew” as in ‘few’

- eau ... beauty
- eu ... feud
- ew ... few, knew, dew
- u ... union, unique, unit (adds a “y” sound before)