

# the 45 sounds

of GB English



19 Vowel Sounds  
26 Consonant Sounds  
Schwa  
3 Tones



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## Introduction

This ebook is an introduction to [GB English](#) pronunciation. It contains the **45 sounds of English** (19 vowels and 26 consonants) with their IPA symbols. Also included is a focus on the most common sound in English - **the Schwa**, and finally **three English intonation patterns**.

Every activity contains audio - if you read this pdf with Adobe reader, the audio is embedded, if not, you can listen to/download the audio on the [45 sounds audio](#) page of the website.

The materials in this ebook are taken from Pronunciation Studio's course book '**The Sound of English**', the full version contains 140 pages and is available as a book, ebook and iBook - [view here](#).

Information on taught courses in London and online are available on the [Pronunciation Studio website](#), along with lots of useful articles and materials to help improve your pronunciation skills.

# 19 Vowel Sounds



## Front Single Vowels (tongue towards front of mouth)

1	i:	ee, ea	need beat team
2	ɪ	i	thin sit rich
3	e	e, ea, ie	went bread friend
4	æ	a	cat, hand, fan

## Centre Single Vowels (tongue relatively flat)

5	ə	a, e, o, u	alive the today supply
6	ɜ:	ir, ur, wor	third turn worse
7	ʌ	u, o	fun love money
8	ɑ:	a, al, ar	glass half car

## Back Single Vowels (tongue pulled back)

9	u:	ew, oo, o_e	few boot lose
10	ʊ	u, oo, ou	put look should
11	ɔ:	al, aw, or, our, oor	talk law port
12	ɒ	o, a	rob top watch

## Double (Diphthong) Vowels (2 positions)

13	eɪ	ay, ea, ae, ai	pay great maid
14	ɔɪ	oi, oy	noise toy choice
15	aɪ	ie, i_e, i, y	fine like might
16	əʊ	o, o_e, oa	no stone road
17	aʊ	ou, ow	round how brown
18	ɪə	eer, ear	beer hear steer
19	eə	are, ere, ea, ai	care there bear

The audio for this Ebook is available online [www.pronunciationstudio.com/45-sounds-audio/](http://www.pronunciationstudio.com/45-sounds-audio/)

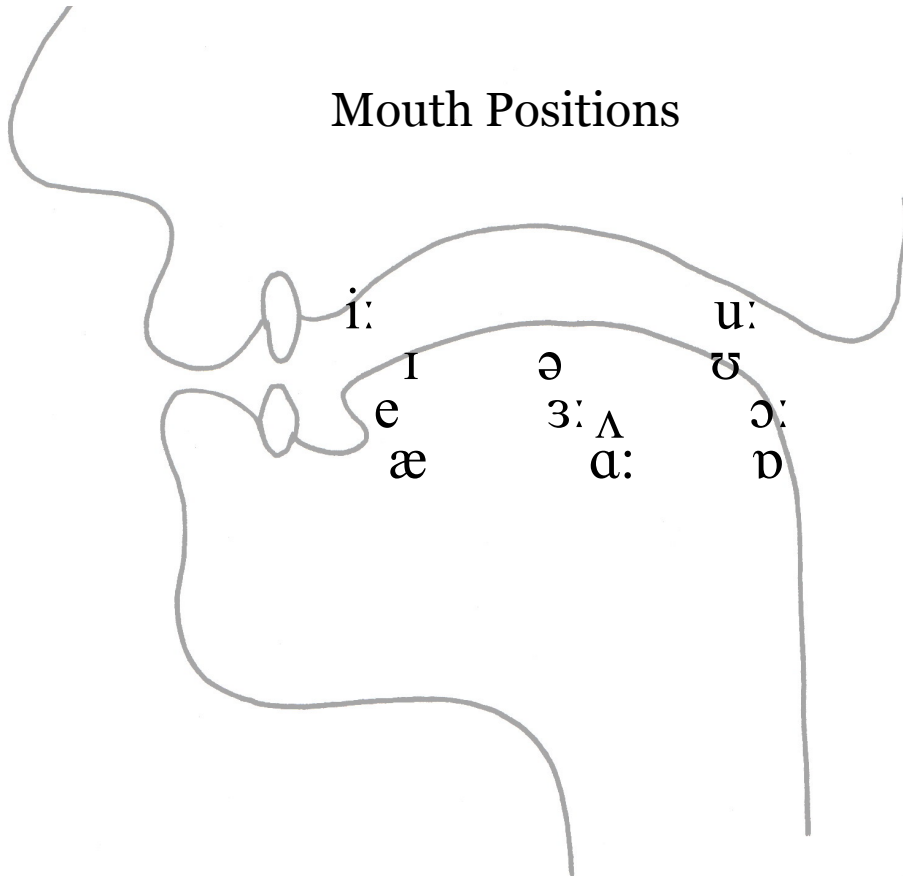
# Vowel Sound Diagrams

- A vowel sound is made by **shaping air** as it leaves the mouth.
- We use the **articulators** to shape the air - lips, jaw, tongue.
- GB English uses **12 positions** of the mouth.
- **Monophthongs** (1-12) are single positions, **Diphthongs** (13-19) are 2 positions.

## IPA Chart

1 i: need	2 ɪ thin	3 e went	4 æ cat	13 eɪ pay	14 ɔɪ noise	15 aɪ fine
5 ə alive	6 ɜ: third	7 ʌ fun	8 ɑ: glass	16 əʊ no	17 aʊ round	
9 u: few	10 ʊ put	11 ɔ: talk	12 ɒ rob	18 ɪə beer	19 eə care	

## Mouth Positions



## 26 Consonant Sounds



20	p	pin cap	<p><b>PLOSIVE</b> a full block of air followed by a sudden release.</p>
21	b	bag rob	
22	t	time late	
23	d	door feed	
24	k	cash sock	
25	g	girl flag	
26	ʔ	football	<p><b>FRICATIVE</b> a constant squeeze of air.</p>
27	f	full knife	
28	v	vest cave	
29	θ	think earth	
30	ð	those bathe	
31	s	sight kiss	
32	z	zoo nose	
33	ʃ	shirt crash	
34	ʒ	pleasure	
35	h	high	
36	tʃ	chose catch	<p><b>AFFRICATE</b> plosive + fricative.</p>
37	dʒ	joy stage	
38	m	mood calm	<p><b>NASAL</b> air released through the nose.</p>
39	n	now turn	
40	ŋ	bang	
41	w	wall	<p><b>APPROXIMANT</b> partial block of air - vowel-like.</p>
42	j	yellow	
43	r	room	
44	l	law	
45	ɫ	pill	

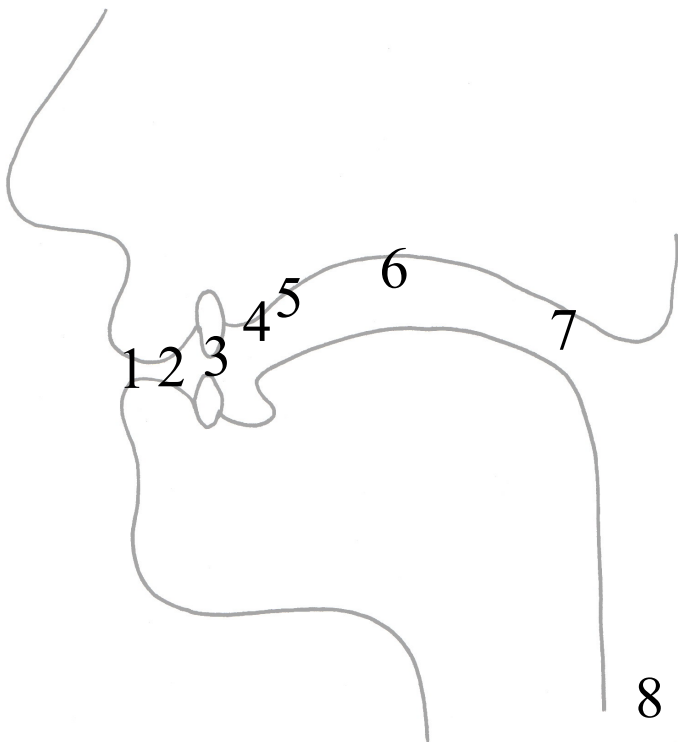
# Consonant Sound Diagrams

- A consonant sound is made by **blocking the air** as it leaves the mouth.
- Different types of consonant sound block the air in different ways (see pg 3).
- We use the **tongue, lips, teeth, mouth** and **throat** to block air.
- Some sounds use the voice (**voiced**), others only air (**voiceless**).

## IPA Chart

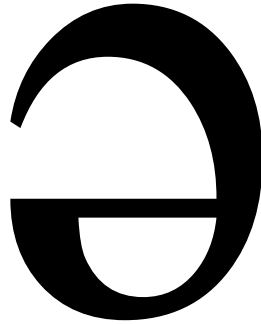
20	21	22	23	24	25	26		
p pin	b bag	t time	d door	k cash	g girl	ʔ football	voiceless	voiced
27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35
f full	v vest	θ think	ð those	s sight	z zoo	ʃ shirt	ʒ pleasure	h high
36	37							
tʃ chose	dʒ joy							
38	39	40		41	42	43	44	45
m mood	n now	ŋ bang		w wall	j yellow	r room	l law	ɫ pill

## Mouth Positions



Position	Sounds
1 Lips (bilabial)	p b m w <sup>1</sup>
2 Lip + Teeth (labiodental)	f v
3 Tongue (dental)	θ ð
4 Tongue (alveolar)	t d l l <sup>1</sup> n r s z
5 Tongue (post alveolar)	ʃ ʒ tʃ dʒ
6 Tongue (palatal)	j
7 Tongue (velar)	k g ŋ l <sup>2</sup> w <sup>2</sup>
8 Throat (glottal)	h ʔ

# The Schwa



- The underlined sound in each word below is the schwa /ə/, listen:



sailə mannə cactə əround

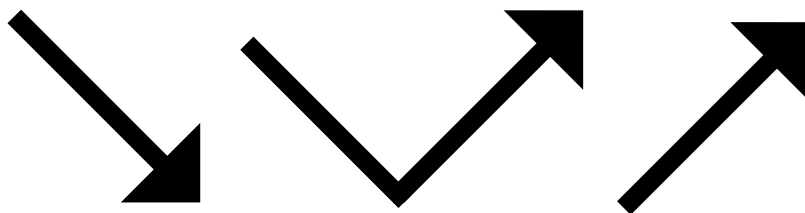
- The Schwa /ə/ is the **most common vowel sound** in English (about 1 in 3).
- It can appear as **any vowel in written English** (A,E,I,O,U).
- It is pronounced with a **neutral**, relaxed position of the mouth.
- Schwa is **never stressed**, it only appears on weak syllable.

- There are 25 schwa sounds in the following paragraph - practise reading it aloud:



I'd like tə go shopping fər ə pair əf shoes,  
bət thə shops ə closed becəse thəs ə weathər  
əlert. əppərəntly lots əf snow is coming in  
frəm thə Highlənds so thə govərnənt həv  
ədvised peopəl tə stay ət home.

# Intonation



- The word 'yes' is said in three different ways, listen:



yes

- Intonation shows the **speaker's attitude** to their words.
- English uses **three intonation patterns**: fall \ fall-rise ∨ rise /.
- Every phrase (speech unit) contains a **main stress** (tonic syllable).

- Practise the sentences with the tone indicated, the main stress is in bold:



1. I haven't seen you for ↘ **ages!**
2. Why can't you ↘ **come?**
3. They were so ↘ **noisy**, ↘ **weren't** they?
4. ↗ **Why** can't you come?
5. Will there be anyone I ↗ **know** there?
6. I'd certainly ↘ ↗ **like** you to.
7. She's a good ↘ ↗ **teacher.**



# What Next?



## Courses

Pronunciation Studio provide tuition in English pronunciation in Central London and online. We run a specialist program for advanced learners of English called 'Accent Reduction'.

The best place to start is with a [free group taster class](#), or an [individual assessment](#) to see how well you can produce the sounds of English. For full details and the next start dates, [visit the website](#).

## Course Book

Pronunciation Studio's course book 'The Sound of English' is a comprehensive course in English pronunciation, connected speech and intonation.

It is available as a book with CDs, a pdf with mp3s, and as a fully interactive iBook for Apple devices - [view all the formats here](#).

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