

Phonetics

Phonetics is a branch of linguistics which deals with the sounds of speech and their pronunciation. They represent the of written symbols accepted by International Phonetic Association. The phonetic transcription is a convenient device to indicate the way the words are pronounced.

In English there is no one to one correspondence between the sounds and the letters of alphabet. The English language has 26 letters of alphabet but as many as 44 sounds.

Production of sound depends on two important things

1. Point of articulation
2. Manner of articulation

Phonetic sounds are divided into two categories

1. Vowels
2. Consonants

Consonants:

A consonant sound is a sound that is characterized by a constriction or a closure at one or more points along the vocal tract.

Sounds that are articulated with the vibration of the vocal chords are called as voiced sounds and the sounds that are uttered without the vibration of vocal cords are called voiceless sounds.

There are 24 consonants among 44 phonetic sounds.

S no.	Symbol	Keyword	Phonetic Transcription
1.	/ b/	bachelor , abbey balance	/bætʃələr/
2.	/d/	danger, add, daddy	/deɪndʒər/
3.	/t /	tent, tender, attend	/tent/
4.	/ k/	knock, book, accept	/buk/

5. /g/	god, dog, regard	
6. /p/	pigeon, appear, cop	/pi:dʒin/
7. /m/	meager, murmur, drum,	/mi:ʒər/
8. /n/	near, drink, turn	/niər/
9. /ŋ/	king, ring, finger	/kiŋ/
10. /dʒ/	germ, danger, lounge	/dʒɜ:m/
11. /tʃ/	chamber, touch, pitch	/tʃeimbə(r)/
12. /s/	sober, tense, cycle	/səubər/
13. /z/	zoo, zero, tinsel	/zu:/
14. /ʒ/	pleasure, measure, leisure	/pleʒə(r)/
15. /ʃ/	show, fish, fashion	/ʃəu/
16. /l/	linger, tall, tremble	/liŋər/
17. /r/	raw, arrow, rare	/rɜ:/
18. /v/	vanish, river, live	/væniʃ/
19. /w/	wonder, window, twinkle	/wʌndə(r)/
20. /h/	harmony, haul, ahead	/hɑ:məni/
21. /f/	laugh, feather, calf	/la:f/
22. /θ/	thunder, truth, telepathy	/θʌndə(r)/
23. /ð/	father, their,	/fa:ðə(r)/
24. /j/	yellow, yonder, yak	/jeləu/

Vowels:

They are of two kinds – Monophthongs and diphthongs. Of the 12 pure vowels, seven are short and five are long which are categorized on the basis of the duration of their articulation.

Monophthongs:

S.No	Symbol	Key words	Phonetic transcription
1	/ə/	above, ago, allow	/əbəʊ/
2	/ʌ/	cut, bulb, fun	/kʌt/
3	/ɑː/	dance, farm, calm	/dɑːns/
4	/ɪ/	sit, city, milk	/sɪt/
5	/iː/	sheep, mean, week	/ʃiːp/
6	/e/	ten, wet, bet	/ten/
7	/u/	pull, book, foot	/pʊl/
8	/uː/	pool, food, room	/puːl/
9	/ɒ/	cot, dog, god	/kɒt/
10	/ɔː/	Bought, court, caught	/bɔːt/
11	/æ/	apple, cat, plank	/æpl/
12	/ɜː/	curl, curtain, bird,	/kɜːl/

Diphthong is a combination of two vowel sounds usually involving a quick but smooth movement (glide) from one vowel sound to another often interpreted by listeners as a single vocal sound. There are 8 diphthongs in English.

Diphthongs

S.No	Symbol	Key words	Phonetic transcription
1.	/ei/	mail, pail, tail	/meil/
2.	/ai/	mile, file, smile	/mai/
3.	/au/	now, town, cow	/nau/
4.	/eə/	air, hair, their	/eə(r)/
5.	/iə/	fear, tear, near	/fiə(r)/
6.	/ʊə/	poor, tour, pure	/puə/
7.	/ɔɪ/	coil, oil, toil	/kɔɪl/
8.	/əʊ/	old, go, blow	/əʊld/

Activity

1. Underline the letter or letters that represent the same sound in each set .

i) reason ii) zone iii) lose iv) busy

i) should ii) look iii) bush iv) fury

i) fair ii) wear iii) bear iv) there

i) bird ii) curtain iii) curl iv) worse

i) fire ii) laugh iii) photo iv) rough

i) time ii) dried iii) write iv) plight

i) water ii) wine iii) wean iv) win

i) bench ii) culture iii) question iv) ketchup

i) bridge ii) judge iii) language iv) gene

i) think ii) death iii) nothing iv) earth

2. Transcribe the following words

A. i. punch ii. Tribe iii. Shoot iv. Mail v. plank

B. i. /p r i : tʃ / ii. / k ɜ : d / iii. / r a ɪ s / iv) / b æ k /