

Pronunciation symbols

The tables below show the pronunciation symbols used in the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (IPA) as well as equivalent traditional symbols (Ox), which may still be more familiar to some.

This page uses Unicode characters which are not yet universally supported, in particular wide combining diacritics. Only Safari 3.1 for Mac is known to render everything correctly. You may prefer the [PDF version](#).

Consonants

IPA	Ox	Word	IPA	Ox
p	p	plosive	'pləʊsɪv	plō'siv
b	b	bilabial	,baɪ'leɪbiəl	bīlā'bīal
t	t	triphthong	'trɪfθɒŋ	trī'fthōng
d	d	digraph	'daɪgrɑ:f	dī'grahf
k	k	comma	'kɒmə	kō'ma
g	g	glottal	'glɒtl	glō'tal
tʃ	ch	chapter	'tʃæptər	chă'pter
dʒ	j	widget	'wɪdʒɪt	wī'jɪt
f	f	phoneme	'fəʊni:m	fō'nēm
v	v	vowel	'vaʊəl	vow'el
θ	th	thesaurus	θɪ'sɔ:rəs	thīsawr'us
ð	dh	feather	'feðər	fē'dher
s	s	subject	'sʌbdʒɪkt	sū'bjɪkt
z	z	zeugma	'zju:gmə	zū'gma
ʃ	sh	dash	dæʃ	dāsh
z	zh	word-division	'wɜ:d-dɪvɪzən	wēd'-dīvɪzhən
h	h	hypotaxis	,haɪpə'tæksɪs	hīpotă'ksɪs
m	m	monologue	'mɒnələg	mō'nolōg
n	n	noun	naʊn	nown
ŋ	ng	spelling	'spelɪŋ	spě'lɪng
l	l	letter	'letər	lē'ter
r	r	rhotic	'rəʊtɪk	rō'tɪk
j	y	yod-dropping	'jɒd-drɒpɪŋ	yöd'-dröpɪng
w	w	quote	kwəʊt	kwōt

Vowels

IPA	Ox	Word	IPA	Ox
i:	ē	read	ri:d	rēd
ɪ	ĭ	syntax	'sɪntæks	sĭ'ntăks
e	ĕ	text	tekst	tĕkst
æ	ǣ	grammar	'græməʳ	grǣ'mer
ɑ:	ah	ideograph	'ɪdɪəgrɑ:f	ĭ'dĭograhf
	āʳ	<i>aide-mémoire</i>	,eɪd-,mem'wa:ʳ	ād-mĕmwāʳ'
ɒ	ɔ̄	cock	kɒk	kɔ̄k
ɔ:	aw	talk	tɔ:k	tawk
	ōʳ	corpus	'kɔ:pəs	cōʳ'pus
ʊ	ō̄	book	bʊk	bō̄k
u:	toot	ō̄	tu:t	tō̄t
ʌ	ŭ	rubber	'rʌbəʳ	rŭ'ber
ɜ:	ēr	learn	lɜ:n	lĕrn
ə	a	alphabet	'ælfəbet	ǣ'lfabĕt
	e	literacy	'lɪtərəsɪ	lĭ'teracĭ
	i	pencil	'pensl	pĕ'nsil
	o	colon	'kəʊlən	kō'lon
	u	circumflex	'sɜ:kəmfleks	sĕʳ'kumflĕks
	er	author	'ɔ:θəʳ	aw'ther
eɪ	ā	paper	'peɪpəʳ	pā'per
əʊ	ō	spoke	spəʊk	spōk
aɪ	ī	write	raɪt	rĭt
aʊ	ow	umlaut	'ʊmlaʊt	ō̄'mlawt
ɔɪ	oi	voiced	vɔɪst	voist
ɪə	ēr	gazetteer	,gæzə'tɪəʳ	găzetĕr'
eə	ār	swear	sweəʳ	swār
ʊə	oor	plural	'plʊərəl	ploor'al

Remarks

In addition to the symbols shown above, the traditional system also employs special symbols for some compound sounds, viz, \bar{r} for \bar{r} er (aə), owr for owr (aʊə), \bar{u} for \bar{u} o (ju:) and \bar{u} r for \bar{u} oor (jʊə).

In the IPA system, r's are only written r when pronounced, and linking r's (r's which are only pronounced immediately before a word starting with a vocalic sound) are indicated by the special symbol ʳ. For vowel symbols in -r in the traditional system, the r is mute in front of a consonant, trilled before a vowel and linking at the end of a word, whereas other r's are always pronounced.

Sounds which share the same IPA symbol are usually indistinguishable.