

# The 44 Sounds (Phonemes) of English

## Consonants

| Sound | Common spelling | Spelling alternatives                                                               |               |                 |               |                  |                  |
|-------|-----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|------------------|------------------|
| /b/   | b<br>ball       |                                                                                     | bb<br>ribbon  |                 |               |                  |                  |
| /d/   | d<br>dog        |                                                                                     | dd<br>add     | ed<br>filled    |               |                  |                  |
| /f/   | f<br>fan        |    | ff<br>cliff   | ph<br>phone     | gh<br>laugh   | lf<br>calf       | ft<br>often      |
| /g/   | g<br>grapes     |                                                                                     | gg<br>egg     | gh<br>ghost     | gu<br>guest   | gue<br>catalogue |                  |
| /h/   | h<br>hat        |                                                                                     | wh<br>who     |                 |               |                  |                  |
| /j/   | j<br>jellyfish  |                                                                                     | ge<br>cage    | g<br>giraffe    | dge<br>edge   | di<br>soldier    | gg<br>exaggerate |
| /k/   | k<br>kite       |                                                                                     | c<br>cat      | ch<br>christmas | cc<br>acclaim | lk<br>folk       | qu<br>bouquet    |
|       |                 |                                                                                     | q(u)<br>queen | ck<br>back      | X<br>box      |                  |                  |
| /l/   | l<br>leaf       |  | ll<br>spell   |                 |               |                  |                  |
| /m/   | m<br>monkey     |                                                                                     | mm<br>summer  | mb<br>climb     | mn<br>autumn  | lm<br>palm       |                  |
| /n/   | n<br>nest       |                                                                                     | nn<br>funny   | kn<br>knight    | gn<br>gnat    | pn<br>pneumonia  |                  |
| /ng/  | ng<br>ring      |  | n<br>sink     | ngue<br>tongue  |               |                  |                  |
| /p/   | p<br>pig        |                                                                                     | pp<br>happy   |                 |               |                  |                  |
| /r/   | r<br>robot      |                                                                                     | rr<br>carrot  | wr<br>wrong     | rh<br>rhyme   |                  |                  |
| /p/   | p<br>pig        |                                                                                     | pp<br>happy   |                 |               |                  |                  |

|     |            |  |              |                 |                |                  |              |
|-----|------------|--|--------------|-----------------|----------------|------------------|--------------|
| /r/ | r<br>robot |  | rr<br>carrot | wr<br>wrong     | rh<br>rhyme    |                  |              |
| /s/ | s<br>sun   |  | ss<br>mess   | c<br>circus     | sc<br>science  | ps<br>psychology | st<br>listen |
|     |            |  | ce<br>rice   | se<br>horse     |                |                  |              |
| /t/ | t<br>tap   |  | tt<br>batter | th<br>thomas    | ed<br>tapped   |                  |              |
| /v/ | v<br>van   |  | f<br>of      | ph<br>stephen   | ve<br>five     |                  |              |
| /w/ | w<br>web   |  | wh<br>why    | u<br>quick      | o<br>choir     |                  |              |
| /y/ | y<br>yo-yo |  | i<br>opinion | j<br>hallelujah |                |                  |              |
| /z/ | z<br>zebra |  | zz<br>buzz   | s<br>has        | ss<br>scissors | x<br>xylophone   | ze<br>maze   |
|     |            |  | se<br>cheese |                 |                |                  |              |

### Digraphs

| Sound              | Common spelling | Spelling alternatives |                   |               |                |                 |               |
|--------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|-------------------|---------------|----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| /zh/               | s<br>treasure   |                       | si<br>division    | z<br>azure    |                |                 |               |
| /ch/               | ch<br>cheese    |                       | tch<br>watch      | tu<br>future  | ti<br>question | te<br>righteous |               |
| /sh/               | sh<br>shark     |                       | ce<br>ocean       | s<br>sure     | ci<br>special  | si<br>tension   | ch<br>machine |
|                    |                 |                       | sci<br>conscience | ti<br>station |                |                 |               |
| /th/<br>(unvoiced) | th<br>thongs    |                       |                   |               |                |                 |               |
| /th/<br>(voiced)   | th<br>feather   |                       |                   |               |                |                 |               |

## Short vowels

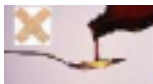
| Sound | Common spelling | Spelling alternatives |               |              |                 |             |           |
|-------|-----------------|-----------------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------|-------------|-----------|
| /a/   | a<br>cat        |                       | ai<br>plaid   |              |                 |             |           |
| /e/   | e<br>egg        |                       | ea<br>bread   | u<br>bury    | ie<br>friend    | ai<br>said  | a<br>many |
|       |                 |                       | eo<br>leopard | ei<br>heifer | ae<br>aesthetic | ay<br>say   |           |
| /i/   | i<br>igloo      |                       | e<br>england  | o<br>women   | u<br>busy       | ui<br>build | y<br>hymn |
|       |                 |                       | ie<br>sieve   |              |                 |             |           |
| /o/   | o<br>orange     |                       | a<br>swan     | ho<br>honest |                 |             |           |
| /u/   | u<br>mug        |                       | o<br>monkey   | oo<br>flood  | ou<br>trouble   |             |           |
| /oo/  | oo<br>book      |                       | u<br>bush     | ou<br>could  | o<br>wolf       |             |           |

## Long vowels

|     |             |  |             |               |                  |              |                |
|-----|-------------|--|-------------|---------------|------------------|--------------|----------------|
| /ā/ | ai<br>snail |  | a<br>baby   | eigh<br>weigh | aigh<br>straight | ay<br>hay    | et<br>croquet  |
|     |             |  | ei<br>vein  | au<br>gauge   | a-e<br>cake      | ea<br>break  | ey<br>they     |
| /ē/ | ee<br>bee   |  | e<br>me     | ea<br>seat    | y<br>lady        | ey<br>key    | oe<br>phoenix  |
|     |             |  | ie<br>brief | i<br>ski      | ei<br>receive    | eo<br>people | ay<br>quay     |
| /ī/ | i<br>spider |  | y<br>fly    | igh<br>night  | ie<br>pie        | uy<br>buy    | ye<br>rye      |
|     |             |  | ai<br>aisle | is<br>island  | eigh<br>height   | i-e<br>kite  |                |
| /ō/ | oa<br>boat  |  | o-e<br>bone | o<br>open     | oe<br>toe        | ow<br>low    | ough<br>Though |
|     |             |  | eau<br>beau | oo<br>brooch  | ew<br>sew        |              |                |
| /ü/ | oo          |  | ew          | ue            | u-e              | oe           | ough           |

|                      |              |                                                                                   |               |               |                  |                  |              |
|----------------------|--------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|------------------|------------------|--------------|
|                      | moon         |                                                                                   | screw         | blue          | flute            | shoe             | through      |
|                      |              |                                                                                   | ui<br>fruit   | o<br>who      | oeu<br>manoeuvre | ou<br>croup      |              |
| /y//ü/<br>(2 sounds) | u<br>uniform |  | you<br>you    | ew<br>few     | iew<br>view      | yu<br>yule       | eue<br>queue |
|                      |              |                                                                                   | eau<br>beauty | ieu<br>adieu  | eu<br>feud       |                  |              |
| /oi/                 | oi<br>coin   |                                                                                   | oy<br>boy     | uoy<br>buoy   |                  |                  |              |
| /ow/                 | ow<br>cow    |                                                                                   | ou<br>shout   | ough<br>bough |                  |                  |              |
| /ə/<br>(Schwa sound) | er<br>ladder |                                                                                   | ar<br>dollar  | our<br>honour | or<br>doctor     | i<br>dolphin     | e<br>ticket  |
|                      |              |                                                                                   | u<br>cactus   | ur<br>augur   | re<br>centre     | eur<br>chauffeur |              |

#### 'R' controlled vowels

|      |              |                                                                                     |                |                |                |                |                |
|------|--------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| /ä/  | air<br>chair |                                                                                     | are<br>square  | ear<br>pear    | ere<br>where   | eir<br>their   | ayer<br>prayer |
| /ä/  | ar<br>car    |                                                                                     | a<br>bath      | au<br>laugh    | er<br>sergeant | ear<br>heart   |                |
| /û/  | ir<br>bird   |                                                                                     | er<br>term     | ur<br>burn     | ear<br>pearl   | or<br>word     | our<br>journey |
|      |              |                                                                                     | yr<br>myrtle   |                |                |                |                |
| /ô/  | aw<br>paw    |  | a<br>ball      | or<br>fork     | oor<br>door    | ore<br>more    | oar<br>board   |
|      |              |                                                                                     | our<br>four    | augh<br>taught | ar<br>war      | ough<br>bought | au<br>sauce    |
| /ēə/ | ear<br>ear   |                                                                                     | eer<br>steer   | ere<br>here    | ier<br>pier    |                |                |
| /üə/ | ure<br>cure  |  | our<br>tourist |                |                |                |                |