

# English Vowels

By

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# What is meant by vowels?

- They are speech sounds that are made(produced) by voiced air passing through different mouth shapes; the differences in the shape of the mouth are caused by different positions of the tongue and of the lips.
- There are 20 vowel sounds in English(12 vowels, 8 diphthongs) . English vowels can be divided into two types: **short vowels( simple vowels)** , they are seven in number. **Long vowels** are six in number.



# Types of vowels

## Simple Vowels

They include the following :

*/ɪ/, /e/, /ə/, /æ/, /ʌ/, /ʊ/, /ɒ/*

**Long Vowels** include the following :

*/i:/, /ɜ:/, /ɔ:/, /u:/, /ɑ: /*

# Vowel Chart

Short vowel	Long vowels
<i>/ɪ/</i>	<i>/i:/</i>
<i>/ə/</i>	<i>/ɜ:/</i>
<i>/ɒ/</i>	<i>/ɔ:/</i>
<i>/ʊ/</i>	<i>/u:/</i>
<i>/æ/</i>	<i>/ɑ:/</i>
<i>/e/</i>	-----
<i>/ʌ/</i>	-----

# Notes

- **When the vowels are followed by a strong consonant , they are shorter than when they are followed by a weak consonant .**
- **The following table shows the differences between /ɪ/ and /i:/**

# The differences between

<b>/i:/</b>	<b>/ɪ/</b>
<b>/lead-wheat- been-cheek-feel- reach-bead- leak-heel-teen- neat-least-ream- beat</b>	<b>Lid-wit-bin- chick-fill-rich- bid-lick-hill-tin- knit-list-rim-bit</b>

# The difference between /æ/, /ɑ: /

/ɑ: /	/æ/
<p><b>Lark-card-dark-last- bark-carp-pass- parched-barn-farm- larks</b></p>	<p><b>Tan-bat-pan-sacks- Dad-mash-bad-lack- Hal-gnat-ram-</b></p>

# differences between /ɒ/ and /ɔ:/

/ɔ:/	/ɒ/
Shored-cord- ward-Paul-	Lock-cod-dock- lost-box-cop- shod-wad-Poll



# The difference between

<i>/ʊ/</i>	<i>/u:/</i>
<b>Should-could- would-look-pull</b>	<b>Shoed-cooed- wooded-Luke- pool</b>

# The difference between

/ ə /

**Banana-again-contain-  
perhaps-entertain-  
amateur- courageous-obey-  
allow-amount-adore-  
annoy-approve-attend-  
obstruct-achieve-account-  
aside-agree-appear-offence-  
adjourn- see page 84**

/ ɜː /

**Purse-heard-perched-  
permanent-adjourn**

# The difference between

**/ʌ/**

**Ton-but-pun-sucks-  
dud-mush-bud-luck-  
hull-nut-lust-rum-cud-  
duk-bucks-cup**

**/e/**

**Led-wet-Ben-check-  
fell-wretch-ten-bet-  
pen-sex-dead-mesh-  
bed-hell-net-lest-bet**

# Some Notes

- The vowel / ə/ is the commonest of the English .It is a short and indistinct when it is not final. In final position, that is before a pause , the vowel/ ə/ **more like /ʌ/**.
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- **There are two main difficulties** with this vowel: First, to identify it and second , to get the right quality. In the first case, do not be deceived by English spelling ; there is no single letter which always stands for / ə/,**so rely on your ear**. Second, it is often useful to think of leaving out the vowel altogether where / ə/ **comes between consonants**.

**/ ə/ occurs in initial, medial, and in final position.**

The End•