Note that the 44 sounds have multiple spellings (graphemes) and only the most common ones have been provided in this summary.

**The 44 Sounds of English**

English can be thought of as an alphabetic language consisting of 44 speech sounds (phonemes) which map onto letter patterns (graphemes). Graphemes can be a single letter (graph), or a combination of two (digraph), three (trigraph), or four letters (quadgraph).

# 20 Vowels

6 Short Vowels

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| a |  | e |  | i |  | o |  | u |  | oo    u |
| cat |  | leg |  | sit |  | top |  | rub |  | book   put |

6 Long Vowels

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ai   ay |  | ee   ea |  | ie  igh |  | oe  ow |  |  | oo    ue |  |
| paid  tray |  | bee  beat |  | pie  high |  | toe  flow |  |  | moon   cue |  |

3 R-Controlled Vowels

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ar |  | er   ir   ur |  | or |
| car |  | her  bird  hurt |  | cork |

6 Other Vowels

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ow  ou |  | oy   oi |  | eer  ear |  | air   ere |  | our |
| cow   out |  | boy  void |  | deer  near |  | hair  there |  | tour |

1 Unstressed Vowel

|  |
| --- |
| SCHWA |
| trumpet across suppose |

# 24 Consonants

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **PLACE **  ***Where in the mouth*** |  | **Bilabial** |  |  |  | **Labio-dental** |  |  |  | **Inter-dental** |  |  |  | **Alveolar** |  |  |  | **Post-alveolar** |  |  |  | **Palatal** |  |  |  | **Velar** |  |  |  | **Glottal** |  |  |
| **MANNER   *How the sound is made***  **** |  | *with both lips* |  |  |  | *with lips and teeth* |  |  |  | between teeth |  |  |  | *front of mouth* |  |  |  | *front of mouth* |  |  |  | *top of mouth* |  |  |  | *back of mouth* |  |  |  | *voice box* |  |  |
| ***Stops*** |  | p |  | b |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | t |  | d |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | k  c |  | g |  |  |  |  |
| *air stopped* |  | pet |  | bet |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | tip |  | dip |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | cap |  | gap |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| ***Nasal*** |  |  |  | m |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | n |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | ng |  |  |  |  |
| *through nose* |  |  |  | met |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | net |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | sing |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| ***Fricative*** |  |  |  |  |  | f |  | v |  | th |  | th |  | s |  | z |  | sh |  | ge “zh” |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | h |  |  |
| *high pressure air* |  |  |  |  |  | fan |  | van |  | thin |  | this |  | sue |  | zoo |  | ship |  | beige |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | hat |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| ***Affricates*** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | ch |  | j |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *stop + fricative* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | chain |  | Jane |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| ***Approximants*** |  |  |  | w |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | r |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | y |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *partial closure of airstream* |  |  |  | wet |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | rat |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | yak |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| ***Lateral*** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | l |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *air around side of tongue* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | leg |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

# Additional consonant sounds

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *k* | + | *s* | = | x |
|  |  |  |  | box |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *k* | + | *w* | = | qu |
|  |  |  |  | quit |