SOUNDS IN ENGLISH

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Language as a means of Communication

- Verbal
  - Written
  - Spoken
- Non verbal
  - Gestures
  - Body Language
Difference Between Letters and Sounds

- Same Letter different sounds /o/ as in god, good, women, come, go

- Different letters same sound /k/ as in kill, come, question, chemistry, duck
Each language has its own number of Speech Sounds

44 Speech Sounds in RP English

Consonants (24)

Vowels (20)

Pure Vowels (12)

Diphthongs (8)
Consonants (24)

Three Term Labels

- Manner of Articulation
- Place of Articulation
- Position of the Vocal Cords
The Organs of Articulation

The diagram shows the anatomical location of the vocal organs involved in the description of English vowels and consonants. It is not a complete representation of all the vocal organs—the lungs, for example, are not shown.
Plosives:

Plosives are made by making a complete closure between some point and the vocal tract. Pressure builds up behind the closure which is released with sudden explosive sound.

This group includes the sounds of /p, b t, d, k, g/

The sounds /p/ and /b/ are made by bringing the lower lip to touch the upper lip

• /p/ is voiceless as in paper, problem, picture
• /b/ is voiced as in ball, basket, banner

These are know as Bilabial Plosives

/p b/ are know as Bilabial Plosives
/t d/ are known as Alveolar Plosives

The sounds /t/ & /d/ are made by raising the tongue to touch the front of the alveolar ridge just behind the teeth.

- /t/ is voiceless plosive as in talk, table, teacher and talked
- /d/ is voiced plosive as in doll, door, danger and robbed

The sounds /k/ & /g/ are made by raising the tongue at the back of the mouth to make a complete closure.

- /k/ is a voiceless plosive sound as in the words come, kill question, chemistry, cucumber and duck
- /g/ is a voiced plosive sound as in the words go, gate, tag, ago

/k g/ are known as Velar Plosives
Fricatives

Fricatives are made by moving two vocal organs together to restrict the release of sound. The top front teeth are placed on the top of the bottom lip. The sound is squeezed through the small gaps.

The sounds /f/ and /v/ are made by bringing the lower lip to touch the upper teeth.

• /f/ is **voiceless fricative** as in the words *five*, *cough*, *rough*, *half* and *photo*

• /v/ is **voiced fricative** as in the words *van*, *video*, *love* and *move*

/f v/ are known as Labio-dental Fricatives
/θ ð/ are known as Dental Fricatives

/θ ð/ are made by touching the tongue to the upper teeth, usually just behind the front teeth.

• /θ/ is a voiced sound, found in the, there & feather
• /ð/ is a voiceless sound found in think, thin & thought

/s z/ are made by moving the tip of the tongue towards the edge of the soft plate and the alveolar ridge. The sound is made by squeezing the sound through the gap.

• /s/ is a voiceless sound as found in seven, glass and talks
• /z/ is a voiced sound as found in zoo, has, freeze, cars and owns

/s z/ are known as Alveolar Fricatives
are made by raising the blade of the tongue to make light contact with the soft palate. The sound is squeezed through the gap making /ʃ, ʒ/ sounds

- /ʃ/ is a **voiceless sound** can be found in *she*, *wash*, *sure* & *champagne*

- /ʒ/ is a **voiced sound** is found in *television*, *revision*, *pleasure*, and *treasure*

/h/ is made by raising the back of the tongue to lightly touch the soft plate, air from the lungs is pushed up past the glottis and through the small gap.

/h/ is **voiced sound** as found in the words *hotel*, *behind*, and *home*

/h/ is known as **Glottal Fricative**
/ tz\ dz / sound are made by combining the two sounds shown here. Affricatives are made by making a complete closure at some point in the mouth, similar to plosives. However, affricatives differ as the air is released slower than a plosive.

• / tz / is a voiceless sound as found in the words church, crunch, lunch and much.

• /dz / is voiced sound ‘as found in the words in jeans, generator & bridge.
Nasal sounds

Nasal sounds are made by making a complete closure in the mouth (oral cavity) and allowing the air to escape through the nose (nasal cavity). These sounds are made by blocking off part of the mouth by using the tongue. The air moving through the nasal passages and creates the sound.

/m/ is a voiced sound as found in the words make, mouse,

/n/ is voiced sound ‘as found in the words name, nose, nice

/ŋ/ is a voiced sound as found in the words king, think,

/m/ is known as Bilabial Nasal sound
/n/ is Alveolar Nasal
/ŋ/ is Velar known as Nasal sounds
The sound /r/ is made when the tip of the tongue is held close to the alveolar ridge (but not touching). The side of the tongue should touch the lower back teeth.

• /r/ is voiced sound as found in the words red, describe, bread, free, drain, trouble

The sound of /l/ is divided into two distinct sounds, which occur according to the following rules. If the sound occurs at the beginning or middle of the word then ‘clear l’ is made; if the sound occurs at the end of the word then the sound is a ‘dark l’.

/l/ is a voiced sound as in the words lily, silly, love, listen and dark in the words bottle, little
A Semi Vowel is sound that is produced like a vowel but functions as a consonant. /j/ and /w/ are the two semi vowels in English.

/j/ sound is made by raising the centre of the tongue towards the soft palate and lips are neutral. It is a glide From /I/ to /a/

/w/ sound is similar to the you sound but the lips are rounded to give more tension. The tongue too is similarly positioned only it is raised slightly more. It is a glide from /u/ to /a/.

/j/ is a voiced sound yes, your, yet, beauty and yesterday

/w/ is a voiced sound as in the words wedding, window, where, was, what, wear, rewind

/j/ is known as Palatal semi-vowel

/w/ is known as Velar semi vowel
A Vowel is a voiced sound in forming which the air issues in a continuous stream through the pharynx and mouth, there being no obstruction and no narrowing such as would cause audible friction.

**Monophthongs** single vowel sounds also known as pure vowels. There are 12 pure vowels such as 7 short: /ɪ, e, æ, ʌ, ɒ, ü, ə/ and 5 long: /i:, a:, œ:, ɔ:, u:/

**Diphthongs** made up of two vowel sounds also known as diphthongs. There are 08 diphthongs. 5 closing: /ei, ai, oi, au, œu/ and (3) centring: /œ, əœ, ʊə/
**Vowels**

**Monophthongs**

/ɪ/ as in sit
/e/ as in set
/ə/ as in cot
/ʊ/ as in full
/ɑː/ as in car
/ʌ/ as in bus

/iː/ as in seat
/æ/ as in set
/ɔː/ as in caught
/uː/ as in fool
/ə/ as in ago
/ɔː/ as in girl

**Diphthongs**

/ɪɛ/ year
/ʊɛ/ poor
/eɪ/ say
/ɔɪ/ oil
/əʊ/ no

/eʊ/ their
/ai/ time
/au/ now
Vowel Chart

- **Close**
- **Front**
- **Central**
- **Back**

- **Mid-open**
- **Open**
Thank you for your kind attention

If you have any questions or comments please contact me:

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