

# Vowel Sounds

spell -ing	IPA symbol	sound-alikes	position	examples
a	[a]	more open than English <i>a</i> , approaching <i>ah</i>	stressed	falo ( <i>I speak</i> ); fala ( <i>you speak</i> ); mapa ( <i>map</i> ); mala ( <i>suitcase</i> )
a	[ɐ]	resembling <i>a</i> as in <i>among</i> but longer	stressed, before <b>m</b> or <b>n</b> starting a new syllable	cama ( <i>bed</i> ); ano ( <i>year</i> ); falamos ( <i>we speak</i> )
a	[ɑ]	between <i>a</i> and <i>ah</i> , as above, but pronounced further back in the mouth	before <b>l</b> or <b>u</b> in the same syllable	hospital ( <i>hospital</i> ); mau ( <i>bad</i> ); carnaval ( <i>carnival</i> )
á, à	[a]	between <i>a</i> and <i>ah</i> , as above	stressed	há ( <i>there is</i> ); lá ( <i>there</i> )
â	[ɐ]	resembling <i>a</i> as in <i>among</i> , as above	stressed	câmara ( <i>council</i> )
a	[ɐ]	resembling <i>a</i> as in <i>among</i>	unstressed, at the end of word, and elsewhere	mala ( <i>suitcase</i> ); cama ( <i>bed</i> ); falamos ( <i>we speak</i> )
e	[ɛ]	resembling <i>e</i> in <i>tell</i>	stressed	zero ( <i>zero</i> ); ela ( <i>she</i> )
e	[ɛ]	like <i>ey</i> in <i>they</i> but without the final glide (like the French word <i>et</i> )	stressed and unstressed depending on the origin of the word and/or its surrounding sounds	mesa ( <i>table</i> ); caneta ( <i>pen</i> ); esteve ( <i>it was</i> ); ele ( <i>he</i> ); comer ( <i>to eat</i> )
é	[ɛ]	resembling <i>e</i> in <i>tell</i>	stressed	café ( <i>coffee</i> ); pé ( <i>foot</i> )
ê	[ɛ]	like <i>ey</i> , as above	stressed	você ( <i>you</i> ); mês ( <i>month</i> )
e	[i]	resembling <i>i</i> in <i>cigarette</i>	unstressed, particularly before a vowel or at the beginning of syllable	compreendo ( <i>I understand</i> ); está ( <i>it is</i> ); exame ( <i>exam</i> )
e	[ə]	like <i>e</i> in <i>butter</i> , or disappears (Eur.)	at the end of word	noite ( <i>night</i> ); vinte ( <i>twenty</i> ); nome ( <i>name</i> ); me ( <i>me</i> ); cigarro ( <i>cigarette</i> )
i	[i]	resembling <i>i</i> in <i>cigarette</i>	unstressed	
i	[i]	like <i>i</i> in <i>pill</i>	before <b>l</b> or <b>u</b> in the same syllable	mil ( <i>thousand</i> ); partiu ( <i>s/he left</i> )
í	[i]	like <i>ee</i> in <i>meet</i> but usually shorter	stressed	saí ( <i>I got out</i> )
i	[j]	like <i>y</i> in <i>yet</i>	before another vowel other than <b>u</b>	fazia ( <i>s/he used to do</i> )
o	[ɔ]	resembling <i>o</i> in <i>jolly</i>	stressed	ovos ( <i>eggs</i> ); come ( <i>you eat</i> )
o	[o]	a bit like <i>o</i> in <i>note</i> (like French <i>au</i> in <i>chaud</i> )	stressed and unstressed depending on the origin of the word and/or its surrounding sounds	ovo ( <i>egg</i> ); bolo ( <i>cake</i> ); fogo ( <i>fire</i> ); porto ( <i>port</i> ); como ( <i>I eat</i> ); como ( <i>how</i> ; <i>as</i> ); todo ( <i>all</i> )
ó	[ɔ]	resembling <i>o</i> in <i>jolly</i>	stressed	avó ( <i>grandmother</i> ); próximo ( <i>next</i> )
ô	[o]	a bit like <i>o</i> in <i>note</i> , as above	stressed	avô ( <i>grandfather</i> ); pôr ( <i>to put</i> )
o	[u]	resembling <i>u</i> in <i>put</i>	unstressed, at end of word	ovo, ovos ( <i>egg/s</i> )
u	[u]	resembling <i>oo</i> in <i>soon</i> (like French <i>ou</i> in <i>où</i> )	stressed	tudo ( <i>everything</i> ); uva ( <i>grape</i> ); aluno ( <i>pupil, student</i> )
ú	[u]	a bit like <i>oo</i> in <i>soon</i> , as above	stressed	número ( <i>number</i> )
u	[u]	like <i>ou</i> in <i>could</i>	before <b>l</b> in the same syllable	azul ( <i>blue</i> ); sul ( <i>south</i> )
u	[w]	like <i>w</i> in <i>water</i>	after <b>g</b> or <b>q</b> and before <b>a</b> or <b>o</b>	quando ( <i>when</i> ); quanto ( <i>how much</i> ); água ( <i>water</i> )
u	[ ]	silent	after <b>g</b> or <b>q</b> and before <b>e</b> or <b>i</b> , in general	aqui ( <i>here</i> ); quero ( <i>I want</i> ); seguir ( <i>to follow</i> )
u	[w]	like <i>w</i> in <i>water</i>	after <b>g</b> or <b>q</b> and before <b>e</b> or <b>i</b> , in some cases (European spelling)	cinquenta ( <i>fifty</i> ) (Eur.); aguentar ( <i>to stand, bear</i> ) (Eur.)
ü	[w]	like <i>w</i> in <i>water</i>	after <b>g</b> or <b>q</b> and before <b>e</b> or <b>i</b> , in some cases (Brazilian spelling)	cinquenta ( <i>fifty</i> ) (Br.); agüentar ( <i>to stand, bear</i> ) (Br.)
ai	[aj]	like <i>y</i> in <i>my</i>	any position	pai ( <i>father</i> ); mais ( <i>more</i> )

spell -ing	IPA symbol	sound-alikes	position	examples
<b>au</b>	[au]	resembling <i>ow</i> in <i>how</i>	any position	<b>mau</b> ( <i>bad</i> )
<b>ei</b>	[ɛj]	resembling <i>ay</i> in <i>pay</i> (Eur.)	any position	<b>direita</b> ( <i>right</i> ); <b>leite</b> ( <i>milk</i> ); <b>sei</b> ( <i>I know</i> )
	[ej]	resembling <i>ey</i> in <i>they</i> (Br.)		
<b>eu</b>	[eu]	a bit like <i>ey</i> in <i>they</i> plus <i>oo</i> in <i>soon</i> (like the French word <i>et</i> plus the French spelling <i>ou</i> )	any position	<b>eu</b> ( <i>I</i> ); <b>meu</b> ( <i>my</i> ); <b>seu</b> ( <i>your</i> ); <b>Europa</b> ( <i>Europe</i> )
<b>oi</b>	[oj]	a bit like <i>o</i> in <i>note</i> (like French <i>au</i> in <i>chaud</i> ) plus <i>y</i> in <i>yet</i>	any position	<b>coisa</b> ( <i>thing</i> ); <b>dois</b> ( <i>two</i> )
<b>ou</b>	[o]	a bit like <i>o</i> in <i>note</i> (French <i>au</i> in <i>chaud</i> ) (Eur.)	any position	<b>sou</b> ( <i>I am</i> ); <b>vou</b> ( <i>I go</i> ); <b>outro</b> ( <i>other</i> )
	[ou]	resembling <i>o</i> in <i>note</i> (Br.)		
<b>ui</b>	[uj]	a bit like <i>oo</i> in <i>soon</i> plus <i>y</i> in <i>yet</i>	in general, but in the word <b>muito</b> ( <i>much</i> ; <i>very</i> ) it is often pronounced like <i>ui</i> in <i>ruin</i>	<b>fui</b> ( <i>I went</i> )

## Nasal Vowel Sounds

<b>ã, am, an</b>	[ɐ̃]	a bit like <i>an</i> in <i>anchor</i>	any position as one syllable (spelling <b>am</b> before <b>p</b> or <b>b</b> )	amanhã ( <i>tomorrow</i> ); <b>ambos</b> ( <i>both</i> ); <b>banco</b> ( <i>bank</i> )
<b>am, ão</b>	[ɐ̃ũ]	like <i>ow</i> in <i>how</i> but nasalised, i.e., pronounced through your nose	any position (spelling <b>am</b> in unstressed 3rd-person verbal endings)	falam ( <i>they speak</i> ); <b>não</b> ( <i>no</i> ); <b>pão</b> ( <i>bread</i> ); <b>irmão</b> ( <i>brother</i> )
<b>em, ãe</b>	[ɐ̃j]	like <i>ay</i> in <i>pay</i> but nasalised (Eur.)	end of word	<b>em</b> ( <i>in, on</i> ); <b>bem</b> ( <i>well</i> ); <b>homem</b> ( <i>man</i> ); <b>mãe</b> ( <i>mother</i> ); <b>pães</b> ( <i>loaves</i> )
	[ɛ̃j]	like <i>ey</i> in <i>they</i> but nasalised (Br.)		
<b>êm</b>	[ɛ̃j]	(Eur.) the same as for the spelling <b>em</b> above but the sound should be repeated	end of word (3rd -p. plural verb ending)	<b>têm</b> ( <i>they have</i> )
	[ɛ̃j]	(Br.)		
<b>em, en</b>	[ɛ̃]	like <i>ey</i> in <i>they</i> but without the final glide and nasalised	any position (but not end of word)	<b>emprego</b> ( <i>job, employment</i> ); <b>entre</b> ( <i>enter, come/go in</i> )
<b>im, in</b>	[ĩ]	like <i>ee</i> in <i>meet</i> but nasalised	any position	<b>sim</b> ( <i>yes</i> ); <b>cinco</b> ( <i>five</i> )
<b>om, on</b>	[õ]	like <i>o</i> in <i>note</i> but nasalised	any position	<b>bom</b> ( <i>good</i> ); <b>conta</b> ( <i>bill</i> )
<b>õe</b>	[õj]	like <i>o</i> in <i>note</i> plus <i>y</i> in <i>yet</i> but nasalised	any position	lições ( <i>lessons</i> ); <b>põe</b> ( <i>s/he puts</i> )
<b>um, un</b>	[ũ]	like <i>oo</i> in <i>soon</i> but nasalised	any position	<b>um</b> ( <i>one</i> ); <b>juntos</b> ( <i>together</i> )

# Consonants

<b>b</b>	[b]	as in English, but softer	any position	belo ( <i>beautiful</i> )
<b>c</b>	[s]	as English <i>s</i>	before <b>e</b> or <b>i</b>	cem ( <i>a hundred</i> ); cinco ( <i>five</i> )
<b>c</b>	[ ] or [k]	silent or like <i>c</i> in <i>cat</i>	in words with original -ct- (Eur.)	facto ( <i>fact</i> ); acto ( <i>act</i> )
<b>c</b>	[k]	like <i>c</i> in <i>cat</i>	elsewhere	carro ( <i>car</i> ); com ( <i>with</i> )
<b>ç</b>	[s]	as English <i>s</i>	any position	informação ( <i>information</i> )
<b>ch</b>	[ʃ]	like <i>sh</i> in <i>show</i>	any position	chave ( <i>key</i> ); achar ( <i>to find</i> )
<b>d</b>	[d]	as in English, but with tip of tongue against teeth, not gum ridge	any position (Eur.) in general (Br.)	dar ( <i>to give</i> ); tarde ( <i>late</i> ); universidade ( <i>university</i> )
<b>d</b>	[dj]	the same as explained for <b>d</b> above, plus <i>y</i> in <i>yet</i>	before sound [i], in some parts of Brazil	tarde ( <i>late</i> ); universidade ( <i>university</i> )
<b>f</b>	[f]	as in English	any position	fácil ( <i>easy</i> )
<b>g</b>	[ʒ]	like <i>s</i> in <i>pleasure</i>	before <b>e</b> or <b>i</b>	gente ( <i>people</i> )
<b>g</b>	[g]	like <i>g</i> in <i>good</i>	elsewhere	grande ( <i>large</i> ); garrafa ( <i>bottle</i> )
<b>h</b>	[ ]	silent	in general	hotel ( <i>hotel</i> ); homem ( <i>man</i> )
<b>j</b>	[ʒ]	like <i>s</i> in <i>pleasure</i>	any position	loja ( <i>shop</i> ); hoje ( <i>today</i> )
<b>l</b>	[ʎ]	as in English, but drawing your tongue back	at the end of syllable	sol ( <i>sun</i> ); mil ( <i>thousand</i> ); almoço ( <i>lunch</i> )
<b>l</b>	[l]	as in English	elsewhere	lanche ( <i>snack</i> ); falar ( <i>to speak</i> )
<b>lh</b>	[ʎ]	resembling <i>lli</i> in <i>million</i>	any position	filho ( <i>son</i> ); trabalho ( <i>work</i> )
<b>m</b>	[m]	as in English	at beginning of syllable	mãe ( <i>mother</i> ); mesa ( <i>table</i> )
<b>n</b>	[n]	as in English	at beginning of syllable	nome ( <i>name</i> ); nada ( <i>nothing</i> )
<b>nh</b>	[ɲ]	resembling <i>ni</i> in <i>onion</i>	any position	vinho ( <i>wine</i> ); senhora ( <i>lady</i> )
<b>p</b>	[p]	as in English, but softer	any position	pai ( <i>father</i> ); perto ( <i>near</i> )
<b>p</b>	[ ]	silent	in words with original -pt- (Eur.)	excepto ( <i>except</i> )
<b>q</b>	[k]	like <i>c</i> in <i>cat</i>	any position	quatro ( <i>four</i> ); quente ( <i>hot</i> )
<b>r</b>	[r̃] or [ɹ]	like the rolled Scottish <i>r</i> , with multiple trill, or like <i>ch</i> in <i>loch</i> or a very heavy English <i>h</i>	at the beginning of word and generally at the beginning of syllable	rua ( <i>road</i> ); rio ( <i>river</i> ); refeição ( <i>meal</i> ); repetir ( <i>to repeat</i> )
<b>r</b>	[r] or [ɹ]	like the <i>r</i> in <i>baker</i> , or 'swallowed'	at end of word and generally at the end of syllable	jantar ( <i>dinner</i> ); fazer ( <i>to do</i> ); porta ( <i>door</i> ); norte ( <i>north</i> )
<b>r</b>	[r]	like the <i>r</i> in <i>bakery</i>	elsewhere	caro ( <i>dear</i> ); barato ( <i>cheap</i> )
<b>rr</b>	[r̃] or [ɹ]	as explained above for spelling <i>r</i> at the beginning of word and generally at the beginning of syllable	between vowels	carro ( <i>car</i> )
<b>s</b>	[s]	like <i>s</i> in <i>so</i>	at the beginning of word or after a consonant	sol ( <i>sun</i> ); semana ( <i>week</i> ); observar ( <i>to watch</i> )
<b>s</b>	[ʃ]	like <i>s</i> in <i>push</i> (Eur.) and (Br.) Rio de Janeiro	at the end of word or syllable	dois ( <i>two</i> ); homens ( <i>men</i> ); esquerda ( <i>left</i> ); nascer ( <i>to be born</i> )
	[s]	like <i>s</i> in <i>so</i> (Br.) but not in Rio de Janeiro		
<b>s</b>	[ʒ] [z]	like <i>s</i> in <i>pleasure</i> (Eur.) and (Br.) Rio de Janeiro like English <i>z</i> (Br.) but not in Rio de Janeiro	before a voiced consonant	mesmo ( <i>same</i> ); desde ( <i>since</i> ); desfazer ( <i>to undo</i> )
<b>s</b>	[z]	like English <i>z</i>	between vowels	casa ( <i>house, home</i> )
<b>ss</b>	[s]	like <i>s</i> in <i>so</i>	between vowels	passaporte ( <i>passport</i> )
<b>t</b>	[t]	as in English, but with tip of tongue against teeth, not gum ridge	in general	tudo ( <i>everything</i> ); tive ( <i>I had</i> ); noite ( <i>night</i> )
<b>t</b>	[tj]	the same as explained for <b>t</b> above, plus <i>y</i> in <i>yet</i>	before sound [i], in some parts of Brazil	tive ( <i>I had</i> ); noite ( <i>night</i> )
<b>v</b>	[v]	as in English	any position	vago ( <i>vacant</i> )
<b>x</b>	[ʃ]	like <i>sh</i> in <i>show</i>	at the beginning of word or syllable and in some cases between vowels	xarope ( <i>syrup</i> ); xícara ( <i>cup</i> ); xadrez ( <i>checked</i> ); caixa ( <i>check-out</i> ); puxar ( <i>to pull</i> )
<b>x</b>	[z]	like English <i>z</i>	where <b>ex</b> comes before a vowel	exame ( <i>exam</i> )
<b>x</b>	[ks]	like <i>x</i> in <i>taxi</i>	in some words	táxi ( <i>taxi</i> ); fixo ( <i>fixed</i> )
<b>x</b>	[s]	like <i>s</i> in <i>so</i>	between vowels, other than above	próximo ( <i>next</i> ); trouxe ( <i>I brought</i> )
<b>x</b>	[ʃ] [s]	like <i>sh</i> in <i>push</i> (Eur.) and (Br.) Rio de Janeiro like <i>s</i> in <i>so</i> (Br.) but not in Rio de Janeiro	before a consonant	extra ( <i>extra</i> ); sexta-feira ( <i>Friday</i> )
<b>z</b>	[z]	like English <i>z</i>	at the beginning of a word and between vowels	zero ( <i>zero</i> ); fazer ( <i>to do</i> )
<b>z</b>	[ʃ]	like <i>sh</i> in <i>push</i>	at end of word	luz ( <i>light</i> ); feliz ( <i>happy</i> )
<b>z</b>	[ʒ] [z]	like <i>s</i> in <i>pleasure</i> like English <i>z</i> (Br.) but not in Rio de Janeiro	before a voiced consonant	Feliz Natal ( <i>Happy Christmas</i> )