

3. High German (not Austrian, Bavrian, etc.) for BR-2010 (Version 3'-fin) chen@towson.edu

Fallacy: Pronouncing German is easy because “the spelling rules” tell you immediately how to pronounce any word.

Fact: One must first know the accent(s) AND the syllabification; then the chances are very good for success.

Fallacy: 1 vowel = 1 pronunciation. **Fact:** it all depends on context; the 3 e’s in “gegeben” are all different.

A German VOWEL is very often a “ PURE ” sound (i.e., one sound). An Amer-English vowel is almost always a combination of different sounds, a diphthong (Ex. mike).			
	Letter(s)	Appear(s) in German	American equivalent / Hints on pronunciation
1	A (“long”)	da, trage ³ n, Same ³ n, Garbe ³ n, Gras, warte ³ t, empfahe ³ , Abend, abe ³ r, Tage ³ , -dar, hab(e ³ n), ja, gar, Qual, Ze/ba/oth, ent/schlafen, habe ³ n, Arbeit	aahh
	(“short”)	alle(-), das, hat, abgefalle ³ n, Acke ³ rman, da/rübe ³ r, daß, -an-, ha(s)t, da/von, Hand, Ach, nach, Statt, habt, verwandelt, schallen, Stache ³ l, Kraft	shorter, than ↑ ah
2	Ä (long)	Träne ³ n, säe ³ n,	Broad “ eh ”; but OK to sing E1 (just below)
3	E1 (acute) é	d(er), dem, den, des , selig, Seele, wer(de ³ n), gehe ³ n, edle ³ n, Erde ³ , Rege ³ n, Leb(e ³ n), ewig, (l)ehre ³ , sehne ³ t, Zeba/oth, lebe ² ndige ³ n, seh(e ³ n), nehmen, auf/e ² rstehe ³ n, Wese ³ n,	Fix mouth for “ ee ”, say “ a ” through it. Like correctly pronounced French é.
	E2: (grave) è	denn, (!)des, ernte ³ n, es, Herr-, Mensch-, empfahe ³ , Schmerz, weg, wes-, Herz-, letzte ³ n, Werk Prefix: er/greif, ge/-, ver/dorre ³ t, ent/schla-, sterbe ³ n	eh (as in Amer. bet; French: è)
	E3: schwa* ə (in all unacc syll)	final: Blume, rede, meine, Seele, Tage, -eine, Posaune, alle, etc. Prefix and endings: deinem, abgefallen, Menschen, Brüder, aber, sondern, getröstet, wieder, nehmen, sehet, bleibe ³ nde ³ , ve ² rwande ³ lt	ə (Schwa)*; uh, un, utt, us; (Not Ital. notte)
4	I (long) ee (short) ī	ihr(-), mir, dir, wir(-), ihr(-) sind, - ist, (h)in, bringe ³ n, -lich, (-)ich, imme ³ r, will, -i/ge ³ , Dinge, spricht,	ee as in eat ī as in mitt .
5	O (long) oh (short)	so, Zion, Wohnung ³ n, Zeba oth, wo(hl), loben, Posaune, Tod soll(e ³ n), komme ³ n, vor, Wonne ³ , verdorre ³ t, Morge ³ n, doch (da)von, hoffe ³ , Gotte ³ s, sonde ³ rn, folgen	Pure oh (no diphthong!) aw (as in paw; Ital: notte)
6	Ö (long) (short)	getröste ³ t, Erlöse ³ te ³ n, Vorhöfe ³ n köstliche ³ , Hölle ³	Purse lips (as in whistling) and hold; say Amer. ‘a’. To fake: ur (no retroflex, i.e., no tongue curled back).
7	U(long) oo (short) ö	Blume(n), nun, Zu(kunft), geduldig, suchen, du, ruhen und, Zukunft, Frucht, muß, Wohnungen, Mutter, verschlungen	oo (in moon) ö open/shorter
8	Ü, Y (long) (short)	Brüder, darüber, rühret, würdig, müssen, zukünftige ³ ,	Purse mouth (whistling), say “ ee ”. Closest to pure: “ ee ”
German DIPHTHONGS (combination of vowels) appears only in accented-long syllables)			
9	AU	auf, jauchze ³ n, Haupt(e ³), Hause ³ , Traurigkeit, Posaune ³	ah^{oo} (how-now-brown-cow)
10	ÄU=EU	Freude ³ (n), eue ³ r, Freunde ³ (n), euch, freue ³ n	Freud, boy
11	EI (ī)	Leid, Fleisch, -keit, -ein(e ³), bleibe ³ t, ergreife ³ n, -breit, Leib, kleine, Zeit	ah^{ee} (as in eye)
12	IE (ee)	die, sie-, wie(de ³ r), lieb(e ³ n), Ziel, hie, niemand, Sieg	ee

* The “**schwa**” sound can be written as any vowel in Am-English. E.g., in most dialects the **schwa** sound is found in the following: **adept**, **synthesis**, **decim**al, **harm**ony or **lem**on, **medi**um, **sy**ringe.

To **vocalize properly** the **schwa**, *purse the lips a bit as you sing the vowel!*

Consonants (Version 3-fin)			
Like AmEnglish except as noted. N.B. Often different for the begin and end of a syllable. ‘S’ is worst!			
	Letter	Appear(s) in German	American equivalent and Hints on pronunciation
1	__B (end syll)	abgefallen, Leib, <i>NOT blei/ben/de</i>	P; otherwise as in American.
	__ß (an “sz”)	daß, muß	ss
2	CH (w/ bright vowels)	[China], herrlich, köstliche, lieblich, (n)ich(ts), gerechten, euch, sich, spricht, But (!) durch	Fix mouth for saying EE; then blow air through it.
	CH (w/ dark)	Frucht, doch, (-)ach, suchen,	Scots: Loch (Ness monster)
3	__D (end)	sind, leid, wird, und, seid, Abend, Hand-, niemand, Tod,	t
4	G__ (begin)	ewi/ge ³ , Ta/ge ³ , zukünf ³ ti/ge, Geist	g (as in go)
	__G (end)	Tag, Sieg,	k
5	__iG (end)	selig, geduldig, ewig, Traurigkeit, würdig,	Same as CH (w bright vowels)
6	J__ (begin)	jauchze ³ n, ja,	yet
7	__L(L) (end)	abgefalle ³ n, (W)ill(e ³ n), alle ³ , folge ³ n	tongue-tip touches base front teeth
8	--NG (end)	ve ² r ^l anget, singe ³ n, ve ² r ^s chlunge ³ n, Dinge ³ ,	zinng-un, <u>not</u> zin-ghun
9	PS__ (begin)	[Psalm]	ps__
10	QU__ (begin)	Qual,	k (as in Yiddish: kvetsch)
11	R__ (begin)		No retroflex, i.e. no tongue curled back. Best: rolled “rrrr”
	__R (end)	der	rolled; OR Drop “r” and add a “ə” (“der”→ dé-ə)
12	S (+vowel) “voiced s”	selig, sie, soll(e ³ n), säe ³ n, Same ³ n, Seele ³ , sehne ³ t, suche ³ n, sind, Grase ³ s, so, seid, siehe ³ , Seufze ³ n, Hause ³ , sonde ³ rn, Erlöse ³ te ³ n, sich, Posaune ³ , Wese ³ n	z (“voiced”- you buzz on it)
	S, SS, ß	Gras (!), daß, müssen, Ge/heim/nis, Preis,	ss (“unvoiced” - no ‘buzz’)
13	S__ ; SCH	Statt, Fleisch, Schmerz, ent/schlafen, schallen, ver/schlungen, Stachel, ge ² schaffen, spricht,	sh (e.g., shore, bush)
14	__ST (end)	ist, köst/liche ³ , getröst/e ³ (-), hast, Geist	sst
15	TH = T	Ze/ba/oth	t
16	__TZ	letz(ten)	ts (“tse-tse fly”, “bets”)
17	V__	ver/-, (da)von, vor/-, von, ver/wandelt	f (always)
18	W__	e/wi/ge, wird, wie, ve ² r/wande ² lt, werden, We ² rke ³	v (always)
19	Z	Zukunft, Zi/on, Jauch/ze ³ n, Herz, zu, Zeit (Lenz)	ts (“tse-tse fly”, “bets”)

Final reminders and miscellaneous: 1. (Almost) All words in the BR appear at least once in the examples.

2. The CONTEXT in which a vowel/consonant appears is everything.

3. Conductors can modify (e.g., vocal considerations dictate: can be dark/covered . . . light/open)

Websites: <http://pages.towson.edu/chen> *HiChen Jan, 2010 for the Deer Creek Chorale and St. James'*

Mod: H & L Chen 2010 Jan 02.