

Short Vowels

short vowel

/e/

Dress
Head
Bed
Many

/dres/
/hed/
/bi:'ed/
/men.i/

/ɪ/

Kit
Bid
Hymn
Minute

/kɪt/
/bɪd/
/hɪm/
/mɪn.ɪt/

e - ɪ

similar sounds

/e/ and /ɪ/

Bed	/bi:'ed/	bid	/bɪd/
Medal	/'med. ə l/	middle	/'mɪd.l/
Dead	/ded/	did	/dɪd/
Fell	/fel/	fill	/fɪl/
Pen	/pen/	pin	/pɪn/

ɪ - i: similar sounds

/ɪ/ and /i:/

Hit	/hɪt/	Heat	/hi:t/
Lip	/lɪp/	Leap	/li:p/
Sick	/sɪk/	Seek	/si:k/
Will	/wɪl/	Wheel	/wi:l/

/ɒ/

Lot

/lɒt/

Odd

/ɒd/

Wash

/wɒʃ/

short vowel

ʊ

/ʊ/

Foot

/fʊt/

Put

/pʊt/

Good

/gʊd/

short vowel

æ

/æ/

Trap

/træp/

Stamp

/stæmp/

Back

/bæk/

Lap

/læp/

short vowel

ʌ

/ʌ/

Strut

/strʌt/

Mud

/mʌd/

Love

/lʌv/

Blood

/blʌd/

ʌ - æ

similar sounds

/ʌ/

and

/æ/

Uncle

/ʌŋ.kl/

ankle

/æŋ.kl/

Bunk

/bʌŋk/

bank

/bæŋk/

But

/bʌt/

bat

/bæt/

Cup

/kʌp/

cap

/kæp/

Swum

/swʌm/

swam

/swæm/

short vowel ə

schwa

schwa

/ə/

To make this sound you just relax your mouth

In fact this is a very common sound in English
and many grammar words it's the only vowel sound
such as

a /ə/

the /ðə/

of /əv/

that /ðət/

you also get this sound in many words of more than one syllable

about /ə'baʊt/

common /'kɒm.ən/

standard /'stæn.dəd/

butter /'bʌt.ə r /

Extra information

schwa which is pretty strange when we think about it because the word schwa /ʃwɑː/ doesn't have the schwa sound /ə/ in it. So why is this sound so important, well it's very natural sound for English speakers and it's actually the most frequent sound in English.

It appears in just about every word with more than two syllables and it's very important for getting the stress and rhythm with English right.

Banana /bə'nɑː.nə/

Schwa is usually in unstressed syllables

long vowel

/ɔ:/

/ɔ:/

Thought

/θɔ:t/

Law

/lɔ:/

North

/nɔ:rθ/

War

/wɔ:r/

/ɜ:/

Nurse

/nɜ:s/

Stir

/stɜ:r/

Learn

/lɜ:n/

Refer

/rɪ'fɜ:r/

/i:/

Fleece

/fli:s/

Sea

/si:/

Machine

/mə'ʃi:n/

Similar sounds

/i:/ and /ɪ/

Litre	/ˈli:.tə r /	Litter	/ˈlɪt.ə r /
Cheap	/tʃi:p/	Chip	/tʃɪp/
Feet	/fi:t/	Fit	/fɪt/
He's	/hi:z/	His	/hɪz/
Peach	/pi:tʃ/	Pitch	/pɪtʃ/
Sheep	/ʃi:p/	Ship	/ʃɪp/

Island

/ u: /

Goose	/gu:s/
Two	/tu:/
Blue	/blu:/
Group	/gru:p/