

Practice with Vowel Sounds

Task 1: /i/ vs /ɪ/

Read the following sentences aloud. Identify the words that have the /i/ sound and mark them in **bold**.

1. **See** you at **three**.
2. I'm **pleased** to **meet** you this **evening**.
3. **Steve** **eats** **cream** **cheese**.
4. **She** **received** her **teaching** **degree**.
5. The **three** **parties** **reached** a **peace** **agreement**.

Task 2: Read the list of words in each row. Identify the word that does not have the /i/ and mark it in bold. Then transcribe all of the words in IPA.

1	need	been	sleep	thirteen
				/θɜːtin/
2	tin	teen	steam	receive
3	scene	women	these	even
		/wɪmən/		

/i/ - Green tea	/ə/ - A cup of mustard	/æ/ - Black cat	/u/ - Blue moon	/ʊ/ - Wooden hook
/ɪ/ - Silver pin	/ɛ/ - Red dress	/ɑ/ - Coffee pot	/ɔ/ - Auburn dog	/ɜ/ - Purple shirt
/aʊ/ - Brown Cow	/ɔɪ/ - Turquoise toy	/eɪ/ - Gray day	/oʊ/ - Rose Coat	/aɪ/ - White tie

New Symbols		Obvious	
Mythical	/ θ /	/ p /	/ b /
Clothing	/ ð /	/ t /	/ d /
Fisherman	/ ʃ /	/ k /	/ g /
Illusion	/ ʒ /	/ f /	/ v /
Fortune	/ tʃ /	/ s /	/ z /
Enjoyment	/ dʒ /	/ h /	/ m /
Young	/ j /	/ n /	/ l /

Unkle	/ŋ/	/w/	/r/
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Task 3: Read the following sentences aloud. Identify the words that have the /ɪ/ sound and mark them in **bold**.

1. **This is Miss Smith.**
2. **Did** you **give him his gift** yet?
3. What **is this**?
4. **Is** the **building** open for **business**?
5. She **built** a **pretty guitar**.

Task 4: Read the paragraph and mark all the words with the /ɪ/ sound in **bold**.

The Winter Olympics

Since 1924, the **Winter Olympics** have **been** an **international** event. Now these **activities** are seen by **millions** on **television**. Men and women from distant cities and countries participate in this competition. They all wish to be winners. They ski downhill amidst pretty scenery. Figure skaters spin to victory. Skill will make the difference. Some will finish with a silver medal, some with a gold. But all will win our hearts and infinite respect.

Task 5: Minimal pairs are words that differ by only one phoneme. Complete this minimal pair chart to contrast the sounds /i/ and /ɪ/.

/i/	/ɪ/	/i/	/ɪ/
least	list	Heat it now.	Hit it now
seat	sit	Change the wheel	Change the will.
Heat	hit	The meal was big.	The mill was big
feet	fit	A white sheep	A white ship.
leave	live	Buy the beans.	Buy the bins
cheap	chip		

Task 6: Read this tongue twister. Mark all words with /i/ in bold and underline words with /ɪ/. The word “slit” is a noun that means a small cut. It can also be used as a verb.

- I slit the sheet.
- The sheet I slit.
- And on the slitted sheet I sit.

Now try to read the tongue twister as fast as you can.

Task 7: /u/ vs /ʊ/

Read the paragraph and mark all of the words with the /u/ “Blue Moon” sound in bold.

New Orleans

One of the most beautiful cities in the United States is New Orleans. This city is full of unique sites and sounds. New Orleans offers good food and music. Famous chefs create soups and stews influenced by the Creole and Cajun communities. Jazz and the blues started in New Orleans with musicians like Louis Armstrong. Tourists come to Mardi Gras dressed in costumes to look at the truly super homes on St. Charles Avenue. Whether you take a cruise down the Mississippi or choose fine dining spots, you should visit New Orleans in the future.

Now transcribe the following words that contain the /u/ sound. You’ll notice a /pækjulɪər/ hidden consonant sound.

- Beautiful
- /bjutəfʊl/
- United
- /junatɪd/
- Unique
- ...
- Future
- ...
- Music
- ...

Task 8: Complete the minimal pair chart and practice contrasting the words.

/u/	/ʊ/	Transcribe the sentences.
fool	full	The fool was full of fun.
suit	soot	
Luke	look	Take a good look at Luke.
pool	pull	

Task 9: Read the sentences and pay attention to the **bold** words. If the word is pronounced with a /ʊ/, underline it. If it is pronounced with a /u/, leave it alone.

- For example: Pull the raft from the pool.
1. Too many cooks spoil the soup.
 2. There should be a full moon tonight.
 3. Mr. Brooks is good looking.
 4. June is a good month to move.
 5. The butcher cooked a goose.

6. The **news bulletin** was **misunderstood**.
7. **Lucy** had a **loose tooth** **pulled**.

Task 10: /æ/, /ɛ/, and /a/

Complete the minimal pair chart contrasting /æ/ and /ɛ/. Then read the words on the right and mark the letter <a> that is pronounced with the /æ/ sound in bold. What do notice about where the /æ/ sound appears in words?

/æ/	/ɛ/	Mark the /æ/ sound
had		A N I M A L
mat		A F R I C A
	pet	C A L I F O R N I A
	pest	F A S C I N A T E
	ten	A L A S K A
sad		S A T U R D A Y
and		C A N A D A
	bed	P A C K A G E
fad		B A N A N A

/æ/	/a/	Transcribe the sentences.
cap		Did father park the car?
	hot	
	odd	We have lots of photographs from Disneyland.
tap		
lack		The house at the lake lacks a lock.
	solid	
pat		I hate wearing a hat when it's hot.
	log	