

		places of articulation							
		bilabial	labiodental	(inter)dental	alveolar ^{5,6}	alveopalatal	palatal	velar	glottal
manners of articulation	stops ^{1,2}	p b			t d			k g	ʔ
	nasals ³	m			n			ŋ	
	fricatives		f v	θ ð	s z	ʃ ʒ			h
	affricates					tʃ dʒ			
	lateral liquid ^{3,4}				l				
	retroflex liquid ⁸				ɭ				
	glide	w ⁷					j	w ⁷	

The consonants of American English have the following properties in most dialects:

¹ At the beginning of words and beginning of stressed syllables, the voiceless (non-glottal) stops are aspirated: [p^hæs] *pass*, [t^hæn] *tan*, etc. When these aspirated stops are followed by liquid or glide, the aspiration is realized as voicelessness in the liquid/glide: [t̚u] *true*, [k̚æs] *class*, [p̚ju] *pew*, etc.

² The voiceless stops are typically preceded by a glottal stop: [p^hæʔt] *pat*, [t^hæʔp] *tap*, etc. For some speakers, this glottal stop overwhelms the original consonant, especially for /t/: [p^hæʔ] *pat*.

³ The nasals and the liquids are syllabic when preceded by a consonant and not followed by a vowel: [spæzɹ̩] *spasm*, [hæpɹ̩d] *happened*, [bɪɹ̩d] *bird*, etc. Sometimes this is perceived as a combination of a vowel plus consonant, especially since the combination is often spelled with a vowel symbol (e.g., *bird*), but a syllabic consonant is a more accurate description. Syllabic [ɹ̩] is sometimes transcribed by the special vowel symbols [ɹ̥] (when stressed, as in [bɪɹ̥d] *bird*) and [ɹ̥̩] (when unstressed, as in [mæstɹ̥̩] *master*).

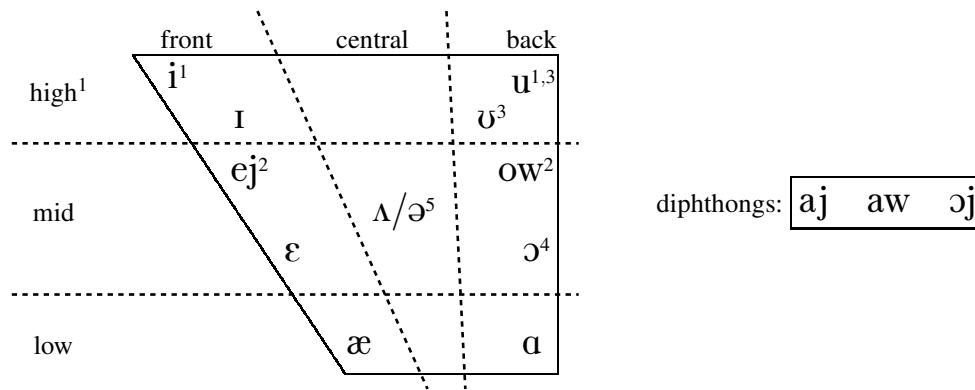
⁴ The lateral liquid is velarized when not followed by a vowel: [p^hæɫ] *pal*, [ɛɫ̚k] *elk*, etc. As in note 3, when it is also preceded by a consonant, it is syllabic: [æp̚ɫ̚] *apple*.

⁵ Alveolar stops and nasals become flaps [ɾ] (oral) and [ɻ̩] (nasal) between two vowels if the second vowel is unstressed: [læt̚ɾ̩] *latter/ladder*, [mæɻ̩] *manner*, etc.

⁶ Alveolar stops and nasals and the lateral liquid are often dentalized when followed by a dental fricative: [p^hæ̠n̠θ̠ɹ̠] *panther*, [wɛ̠ɫ̠θ̠] *wealth*, etc.

⁷ A small number of speakers also have a voiceless labiovelar glide [ɰ], as in [mɪɫ̚ɰ] *which* when it is pronounced differently from [wɪɫ̚ɰ] *witch*.

⁸ The retroflex liquid varies from truly alveolar [ɭ] to retroflex [ɭ̠] (with the tongue tip curled backwards), and it is somewhat rounded for most speakers.



The vowels of American English have the following properties in most dialects:

- ¹ Many speakers realize the tense high vowels as slight diphthongs [ij uw].
- ² The tense mid vowels are usually realized as diphthongs [ej ow], but they can be monophthongs [e o], depending on the speaker's dialect, surrounding sounds, rate of speech, etc.
- ³ In many dialects (especially in the Western and Southern US), the high back round vowels are often pronounced with less lip rounding than other round vowels and/or a bit fronter than other back vowels. This is especially true for [ʊ].
- ⁴ In many dialects (especially in the Western US), the lax mid back vowel [ɔ] is only found before [ɹ], as in [fɔɹɪs] *force*. Many other dialects (especially in the Northeastern US) contrast [ɔ] and low back [ɑ] in pairs like [kɔt] *caught* versus [kat] *cot*.
- ⁵ The mid central vowels are distinguished by stress: [Λ] is always stressed, while [ə] (a.k.a. *schwa*) is always unstressed. Schwa is also called a *reduced* vowel, because it is much shorter and weaker than other vowels, even unstressed vowels. Schwa varies quite a lot in pronunciation, sometimes higher [ɨ] and sometimes also fronter [ɪ], depending on the surrounding consonants.
- ⁶ When the end of the syllable contains only voiced consonants, any stressed vowel is usually lengthened: [luːz] *lose* versus [lus] *loose*, [hɑːɹd] *hard* versus [hɑɹt] *welt*.
- ⁷ When a vowel is followed by a nasal stop in the same syllable, the vowel is (at least partially) nasalized (and if the conditions in Note 6 are met, it will also be lengthened): [bɛ̃nt] *bent*, [bɛ̃ːnd] *bend*, [lūːm] *loom*, [lūːn] *loon*, etc.