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Pronunciation - Silent Letters

From Kenneth Beare,
Your Guide to English as 2nd Language.
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Here is a list of common letter combinations with silent letters. This list contains most of the silent letters that give English as a second language students difficulties.

Silent B

B is not pronounced when following M at the end of a word.

climb
crumb
dumb
comb

Silent C

C is not pronounced in the ending "scl"

muscle

Silent D

D is not pronounced in the following common words:

handkerchief
sandwich
Wednesday

Silent E

E is not pronounced at the end of words and usually makes the vowel long.

hope
drive
gave
write
site

Silent G

G is not often not pronounced when followed by an N

champagne
foreign
sign
feign

Silent GH

GH is not pronounced before T and at the end of many words

thought
through
daughter
light
might
right
fight
weigh

Silent H

H is not pronounced when following W. Some speakers whisper the H before the W.

what
who
when
where
whether
why

Silent H

H is not pronounced at the beginning of many words. Use the article "an" with unvoiced H. Here are some of the most common:

hour
honest
honor
heir
herb

Pronounced H

H is pronounced at the beginning of these common words. Use the article "a" with voiced H.

hill
history
height
happy
hangover

Silent K

K is not pronounced when followed by N at the beginning of a word.

knife
knee
know
knock
knowledge

Silent L

L is often not pronounced before L, D, F, M, K.

calm
half
salmon
talk
balk
would
should

Silent N

N is not pronounced following M at the end of a word.

autumn
hymn

Silent P

P is not pronounced at the beginning of many words using the suffix "psych" and "pneu".

psychiatrist
pneumonia
psychotherapy
psychotic

Silent S

S is not pronounced before L in the following words:

island
isle

Silent T

T is not pronounced in these common words:

castle
Christmas
fasten
listen
often
whistle
thistle

Silent U

U is not pronounced before after G and before a vowel.

guess
guidance
guitar
guest

Silent W

W is not pronounced at the beginning of a word followed by an R.

wrap
write
wrong

Silent W

W is not pronounced with these three pronouns:

who
whose
whom

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<http://esl.about.com/od/speakingenglish/a/silent.htm>

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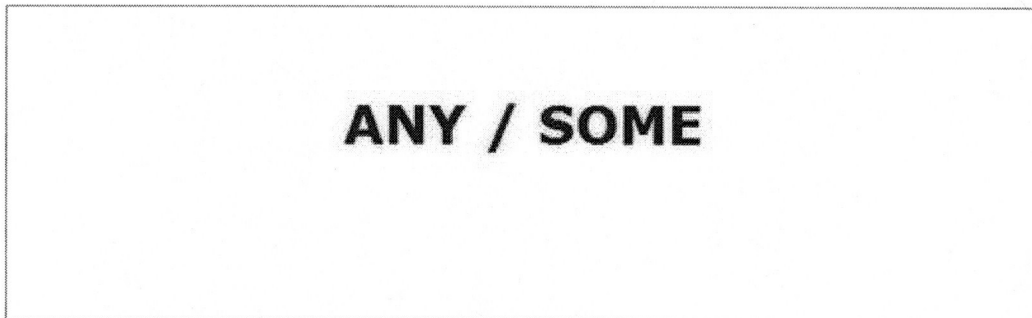
From Kenneth Beare

When to Use Any or Some

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Image 1 of 25

< [Prev.](#) [1](#) [2](#) [3](#) [4](#) [5](#) [6](#) [7](#) [8](#) [9](#) [10](#) [Next](#) >



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- Use "some" in positive sentences. We use some for both countable and uncountable nouns.

Example: I have some friends.

- Use "any" in negative sentences or questions. We use any for both countable and uncountable nouns.

Example: Do you have any cheese? - He doesn't have any friends in Chicago.

- Use "some" in questions when offering or requesting something that is there.

Example: Would you like some bread? (offer) - Could I have some water? (request)

- Use "any" in negative sentences or questions. We use any for both countable and uncountable nouns.

Example: Do you have any cheese? - He doesn't have any friends in Chicago.

- Use "some" words - somebody, someone, somewhere and something - in positive sentences.

Example: He lives somewhere near here.

- Use "any" words - anybody, anyone, anywhere and anything - in negative sentences or questions.

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English Pronunciation Exercises - E Diphthongs

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The following series of pronunciation exercises combines words beginning with the same diphthong sound followed by similar diphthong sounds. Voiced and voiceless consonants are paired (b - voiced / p - voiceless, d - voiced / t - voiceless, etc.) to help students compare and contrast similar consonant formation.

1. Repeat each line slowly, listen for the minor differences between the vowel and consonant sounds.
2. Repeat each line three times. Each time repeat more quickly trying to keep the sounds distinct.
3. Find a partner and listen to each other repeat the lines.
4. Try to invent sentences using each sound at least once. For example: The bear went into the bar and had a beer. - Don't worry too much about the sentence making much sense!

Note: The following diphthongs are pronounced differently in British and American English. British English drops the 'r' sound and pronounces a slight 'uh' - 'hair' becomes 'hehuh'. In American English the 'r' is strongly pronounced - 'hair' becomes 'hehrrr'.

'ieh(r)' as in 'near'

beer

peer

dear

tear (drop of water)

gear

clear

seer

sheer

jeer

cheer

here

'ehi(r)' as in 'hair'

bear

pear

dare

tear (rip)

garish

Claire

snare

share

Jerry

chair

hair

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Vowel Sounds

'eh' - as in 'let', 'ih' - as in 'hit', 'ee' - as in 'see', and 'ae' - as in 'cat'
'long ah' - as in 'car', 'short ah' - as in 'got'
'long uh' - as in 'put', 'short uh' - as in 'up', 'oo' - as in 'through'

Diphthong Sounds

'ay' - as in 'day', 'ai' - as in 'sky'

'ou' - as in 'home', 'ow' - as in 'mouse', 'oi' - as in 'boy'

'ieh(r)' - as in 'near', 'ehi(r)' - as in 'hair'

http://esl.about.com/od/speakingenglish/a/pr_dipehv.htm

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4. Try to invent sentences using each sound at least once. For example: We ate cake and flew a kite on my birthday. - Don't worry too much about the sentence making much sense!

'ay' as in 'day'

bay

pay

day

table

gay

cake

say

zany

shape

Jake

chase

hey!

'ai' as in 'die'

buy

pie

die

tie

guy

kite

sigh

Zaire

shy

jive

child

hi

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Vowel Sounds

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Diphthong Sounds

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English Pronunciation Exercises - O Diphthongs

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3. Find a partner and listen to each other repeat the lines.
4. Try to invent sentences using each sound at least once. For example: The Pope went to the pow-wow and was very poised. - Don't worry too much about the sentence making much sense!

'ou' as in 'home'	'ow' as in 'house'	'oi' as in 'boy'
bowl	bow	boy
Pope	pow-wow	poise
don't	Dow	doily
toe	towel	toy
go	gouge	goiter
cope	cow	coy
soap	sour	soy sauce
zone	zowie!	(none)
show	shower	(none)
Jones	jowl	join
chose	ciao!	choice
home	howl	hoist

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Vowel Sounds

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'long ah' - as in 'car', 'short ah' - as in 'got'
'long uh' - as in 'put', 'short uh' - as in 'up', 'oo' - as in 'through'

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English Pronunciation Exercises - Short Vowels and Consonants

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3. Find a partner and listen to each other repeat the lines.
4. Try to invent sentences using each sound at least once. For example: The big bat bet he could beat the others. - Don't worry too much about the sentence making much sense!

ih - pronounced 'ih' as in 'hit'	ee - pronounced 'ee' as in 'see'	eh - pronounced 'eh' as in 'let'	ae - pronounced 'ae' as in 'cat'
big	beat	bet	bat
pig	peep	pet	pat
did	deal	death	dad
tip	teeth	tell	tap
gill	gee!	get	gap
kill	keep	kept	cat
sip	see	set	sat
zip	zeal	zeppelin	zap
ship	sheet	shelf	shaft
gin	jeep	jell	jack
chip	cheek	chess	chat
hit	heat	help	hat

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'long uh' - as in 'put', 'short uh' - as in 'up', 'oo' - as in 'through'

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'ieh(r)' - as in 'near', 'ehi(r)' - as in 'hair'

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English Pronunciation Exercises - Long Vowels and Consonants

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4. Try to invent sentences using each sound at least once. For example: The man at the bar bought drinks for all. - Don't worry too much about the sentence making much sense!

'long ah' as in 'heart'

bar

par

dark

tar

Garth

carpet

sergeant

Zagreb

sharp

John

charred

heart

'short ah' as in 'got'

bought

paw

dot

taught

got

caught

saw

Zola

shawl

jot

chocolate

hop

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'long uh' as in 'put'	'short uh' as in 'up'	'oo' as in 'shoe'
butcher	but	boot
put	pup	poof!
(none)	duck	do
Tokay	tough	tooth
good	gulp	Google
cook	cup	cool
soot	supper	suit
(none)	(none)	zoom
shook	shut	shoot
(none)	jump	June
churn	Chuck	choose
hook	hup!	who

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