

Phonetic symbol <i>Standard or RP English</i>	Example English lexical item	Notes
i	<i>me, knee, pea, tea, key, fee, sea, she, fleece</i>	The length diacritic is optional. Usually reserved for close phonetic transcription.
u	<i>moon, noon, goose, soon, June, loose</i>	The length diacritic is optional. Usually reserved for close phonetic transcription.
ɪ	<i>nip, knit, pip, pit, tip, kip, kit, fit, sit, ship</i>	The symbol looks like a capital 'i' but is the same height as other symbols
ʊ	<i>could, good, foot</i>	In Northern English this vowel is used instead of / ʌ /.
e	<i>men, pen, ten, bed, fed, said, shed dress</i>	You may encounter this symbol from other systems: / ε /
ɜ	<i>mercy, nurse, purse, terse, curse, bird, dirt, first, certain, shirt,</i>	
ə	<i>apart, above, arise, natter, matter, patter, butter, better</i>	This vowel is called schwa and is the most commonly used English vowel. It is typically used in unstressed syllables.
ɔ	<i>port, taught, caught, bore, door, gore, four, sore, shore</i>	In some accents, this vowel is replaced with the diphthong / uə /.
æ	<i>pan, tan, can, bad, dad, gap, fan, sad, sham, trap</i>	In some texts you may see this vowel transcribed as / a /.
ʌ	<i>cut, butter, up, strut</i>	In Northern English accents you will hear / ʊ / instead of this vowel.
ɒ	<i>hot, pot, top, cot, font, sock, shock</i>	
ɑ	<i>path, palm, tart, cart, bath, dart, guard, farm, sharp, laugh</i>	The length diacritic is optional. In Northern English accents you will hear / æ / instead of this vowel.
Diphthongs		Analyse as V , not VV for word and syllable structure
eɪ	<i>mate, plate, Kate, great, fate</i>	
aʊ	<i>mouth, how</i>	
əʊ	<i>toe, dough, go, foe, sew, show, throw</i>	
aɪ	<i>pie, by, tie, dye, kite, guide, fight, sight, shy, high</i>	
ɔɪ	<i>point, boy, toy, coy, coin</i>	
ʊə	<i>poor</i>	In some accents this diphthong is produced as the vowel / ɔ /.
eə	<i>pear, tear, care, bear, dare, fair, share, chair, there, where</i>	Note that the word final voiced alveolar approximant is not produced in English, but may be present in rhotic accents such as Irish English.
ɪə	<i>ear, here,</i>	
aɪə	<i>fire, sire,</i>	Analyse as VV . For some accents a voiced palatal approximant / j / (a yod) would split these vowel, i.e. / faɪjə / and / plɛɪjə /
eɪə	<i>player</i>	
aʊə	<i>power, tower, cower, flower, sour, shower</i>	Analyse as VV . For some accents a voiced labio-velar approximant would split these vowel, i.e. / paʊwə /

The transcription of vowels has changed over the years as the system of phonetics transcription has developed and evolved. You may encounter different transcriptions to the ones listed below. The list includes symbols from the standard system and should be used for all English lexical items. If transcribing disordered speech where vowels are affected then please use the IPA vowel chart.

References

Both of these texts are available as eBooks via the University of Manchester online library:

Gut, U., (2014). *Introduction to English Phonetics and Phonology*. (Peter Lang: GmbH). Available from: <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/manchester/detail.action?docID=1632537>

Knight, R.A., (2012). *Phonetics*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press). Available from: <https://www.dawsonera.com/abstract/9781139214070>