

Here are most of the letter combinations used in the English language. Some people refer to these combinations as “phonograms”. These letter combinations, regardless of whether they are made up of one letter or 4 letters, only make one sound. For example, in the word “though”, the combination [ough] says the long “o” sound. It is important to recognize the various combinations based on the sounds being made. For example the word “beach” is made up of three combinations b-ea-ch, while in the word “react”, the letters [e] and [a] are not working together to make one sound, they are each representing their single letter phonogram. “React” can be broken down into 5 phonograms (or sounds) r-e-a-c-t.

Some letter combinations make two or more sounds. When this is so, I will list the sounds in the order that they are most frequently used. Since I do not know how to do phonetic markings with a computer, I am just going to list words that show each of the various sounds that letter/letter combination makes.

Letter Combination	Sample words demonstrating sound/s made		Letter Combination	Sample words demonstrating sound/s made
a	c <u>a</u> t, r <u>a</u> ke, b <u>a</u> ll, <u>a</u> bove		ui	j <u>ui</u> ce (not used at the end of words)
b	<u>b</u> at		ew	<u>fe</u> w
c	<u>c</u> at, <u>c</u> ity		ar	<u>car</u>
d	<u>d</u> ot		or	<u>for</u>
e	h <u>e</u> n, b <u>e</u>		war	<u>war</u> t (ar can say “or” when preceded by the letter [w])
f	<u>f</u> an		wor	<u>wo</u> rd (or can say “er” when preceded by the letter [w])
g	<u>g</u> ap, <u>g</u> ym		wr	<u>wri</u> te
h	<u>h</u> at		mb	<u>com</u> b (The b is silent when this combination is used at the end of a base word.)
i	h <u>i</u> t, h <u>i</u>		th	<u>thi</u> nk, <u>thi</u> s
j	<u>j</u> et		wh	<u>wh</u> ere (“hw”)
k	<u>k</u> ing		sh	<u>shi</u> p
l	<u>l</u> ove		ch	<u>cha</u> t, <u>sch</u> ool, <u>chi</u> valry
m	<u>m</u> an		tch	<u>mat</u> ch (used after a single vowel that doesn’t say its long sound)
n	<u>n</u> ap		ck	<u>ba</u> ck (used after a single vowel that doesn’t say its long sound)
o	<u>o</u> n, <u>go</u> , <u>do</u> , <u>lo</u> ve		dge	<u>brid</u> ge (used after a single vowel that doesn’t say its long sound)
p	<u>p</u> an		ea	<u>bea</u> d, <u>bre</u> ad, <u>brea</u> k
qu	<u>qu</u> ilt ([q] is always followed by the letter [u] in English words.		oo	<u>choo</u> se, <u>boo</u> k (The words “floor” and “door” are the two exceptions to these sounds.)
r	<u>r</u> at		ee	<u>kee</u> p ([ee] always says “ee” with one exception – the word <u>be</u> en)
s	<u>s</u> at, <u>i</u> s		igh	<u>hi</u> gh
t	<u>t</u> ap		eigh	<u>ei</u> ght

u	<u>u</u> p, cu <u>u</u> te, pu <u>u</u> t		ough	th <u>ou</u> gh, thr <u>ou</u> gh, rou <u>gh</u> , cou <u>gh</u> , bou <u>gh</u> t, bou <u>gh</u>
v	<u>v</u> an		augh	ca <u>u</u> gh <u>t</u> , (la <u>u</u> gh is an exception)
w x	<u>w</u> all bo <u>x</u> , xylo <u>ph</u> one ("z")		kn	<u>k</u> now
y	"When it's a consonant it says "y", when it's a vowel it says "ee", "ie" "i". consonant: <u>y</u> ell vowel: ba <u>b</u> y, cr <u>y</u> , g <u>y</u> m		gn	si <u>gn</u> ("n")
z	<u>z</u> oo		gh	<u>gh</u> ost
			ph	<u>ph</u> one
er ir ur wor ear our	These are the 6 different ways to spell the "er" sound. Memorize this sentence: Her <u>f</u> irst ju <u>r</u> y <u>w</u> ork <u>e</u> arned <u>c</u> ourage.		Below are letter combinations that make more than one sound together, but occur so frequently they are worth learning as memorized letter combinations.	
oa	to <u>o</u> d		ing, ang, ong, ung	si <u>ng</u> , sa <u>ng</u> , so <u>ng</u> , su <u>ng</u>
oe	to <u>o</u> e		ink, ank, onk, unk,	si <u>nk</u> , sa <u>nk</u> , ho <u>nk</u> , hu <u>nk</u>
ei	rece <u>i</u> ve, ve <u>i</u> l (not used at the end of words)		alk	wa <u>lk</u>
ey	ke <u>y</u> , the <u>y</u>		ould	cou <u>ld</u>
ie	pie, belie <u>v</u> e		all	ba <u>ll</u>
ou	<u>o</u> ut, <u>o</u> u, bou <u>q</u> uet, cou <u>n</u> try (not used at the end of words except "you" and "thou")		tion	na <u>ti</u> on
ow	<u>n</u> ow, kn <u>o</u> w		cial	spe <u>ci</u> al
au	<u>f</u> ault (not used at the end of words)		cious	spa <u>ci</u> ous
aw	<u>s</u> aw		sion	pen <u>si</u> on, vi <u>si</u> on
ai	<u>p</u> ai <u>l</u> (not used at the end of words)		ild	chi <u>ld</u>
ay	<u>p</u> lay		old	co <u>ld</u>
oi	<u>f</u> oi <u>l</u> (not used at the end of words)		ind	ki <u>nd</u>
oy	<u>b</u> oy		olt	bo <u>lt</u>