STUDENT'S GUIDE

Singers study the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) to discover accurate pronunciation of foreign language repertoire. Defining the sounds represented by phonetic symbols also helps singers explore the function of the voice.

The keystrokes needed to create documents with IPA are awkward for both the sighted and the blind. This new system provides a mutually accessible set of characters. Uppercase and lowercase letters along with a few punctuation marks are used to indicate the sung pronunciation of English, Italian, Latin, German, and French. The symbols are visually similar to standard IPA helping the sighted transition to a new system.

Chart: *IPA Braille for Lyric Diction*

The IPA symbols on the following chart are listed in alphabetical order. Symbols are enclosed in brackets to distinguish them from other content within the text. A link to a sound example of each sound is included.

Uppercase [A]: father bit.ly/2WuU5q2
Lowercase [a]: voila bit.ly/3gYXg2X
Lowercase [ae]: glad bit.ly/3fpGZmA
Lowercase [b]: baby bit.ly/3c9R5WG
Lowercase [c]: There is no *c* in IPA.
Lowercase [d]: deed bit.ly/35APdUe
Lowercase *d* uppercase Z [dZ]: judge bit.ly/3djkUnS
Lowercase [e]: chaos bit.ly/2WupTex
Uppercase [E]: bell bit.ly/3b1FWWA
Lowercase [f]: faith bit.ly/2L30LX3
Lowercase [g]: good bit.ly/2SHAcuJ
Lowercase [h]: heart bit.ly/3cbRckG
Lowercase [i]: key bit.ly/2YCmFs8
Lowercase [I]: sit bit.ly/3b8PiQ8
Lowercase [j]: yet bit.ly/2yzX2O7
Lowercase [k]: kiss bit.ly/35B6FrO
Lowercase [l]: little bit.ly/35BOHWe
Uppercase [L]: Italian figlio bit.ly/3agoSiQ
Lowercase [m]: mist bit.ly/3beJdlD
Lowercase [n]: nine bit.ly/2YHrrVh
Uppercase [N]: wing bit.ly/2SE2gPN
Dash [-] + lowercase [j]: Italian signore
Lowercase [o]: obey bit.ly/3bb6q7Y
Uppercase [O]: ought bit.ly/3diCQ1U
Lowercase [oe]: German schön bit.ly/3h2GuAc
Uppercase [OE]: German können bit.ly/37oGZBa
Lowercase [p]: pure bit.ly/3dlWDh4
Lowercase [q]: song
Uppercase [R]: rose bit.ly/2SFsQrP
Lowercase [r]: thread bit.ly/2xDxsHz
Double lowercase [rr] is a rolled r: Italian rosa bit.ly/2Kb9mdi
Lowercase [s]: sing bit.ly/2YD76QR
Uppercase [S]: sheep bit.ly/3dmEXSs
Lowercase [t]: tone bit.ly/2SI9MZX
Lowercase *t* uppercase S [tS]: child bit.ly/35ChxG8
Lowercase [th]: thin bit.ly/2L5gDsg
Uppercase T lowercase *h* [Th]: them bit.ly/2L5gDsg
Lowercase [u]: moon bit.ly/2SHwcdF
Uppercase [U]: book bit.ly/2SJ3V6G
Lowercase [v]: voice bit.ly/2L62Sti
Uppercase [V]: the uh sound of up bit.ly/2Wtvv93
Lowercase [w]: wish bit.ly/2YHtbhh

Uppercase [W]: wheat bit.ly/35zvbJW
Lowercase [x]: hue bit.ly/3gYY1sP
Uppercase [X]: Nacht bit.ly/2KvtaIg
Lowercase [y]: German Blüte bit.ly/3nttPbJ
Uppercase [Y]: German Küsse bit.ly/2IVCepm
Lowercase [z]: zeal bit.ly/2SFvgqg
Uppercase [Z]: measure bit.ly/3b8OOd9

The schwa is indicated with a period [.]. The schwa represents an undefined sound in an unstressed syllable. Pronunciation must be assigned. For example, the word *remarkable* contains two pronunciations of the schwa. If the schwas were defined with specific IPA symbols, the third syllable would be transcribed with an uppercase [V], while the fourth syllable would be transcribed with an uppercase [U].

The glottal stop is indicated with a question mark [?]. The glottal stop is a speech sound in English and German. It is a manner of articulating a word or element that begins with a vowel. Notice the attack in the throat that occurs while enunciating the words *I*, *ever*, and *it*. These words could be transcribed with a glottal stop at the beginning of the word. Articulation of the glottal stop should be executed with care. It is reserved for initial vowel words or elements that are stressed within the phrase.

A stressed syllable is indicated with a comma [,]. The comma is placed before the stressed syllable. For example, *believe* is transcribed with a comma preceding the second syllable. Stress indications are not necessary for French. The final syllable of a French word or phrase is stressed, except when that syllable contains a schwa. The penultimate syllable is stressed for final schwa words. Stress is executed in French by lengthening the vowel sound (not with a weighted accentuation).

A long mark is indicated with a semicolon [;]. A semicolon is placed after the vowel that is lengthened. In English, the first vowel of a diphthong or triphthong is lengthened while singing. Vowel length is not typically indicated. However, the long mark is necessary for the transcription of other languages. For example, the *i* of the Italian word *mio* is long in both the spoken and sung forms of the word.

A dash [-] is used to indicate nasality. The French language has four nasal vowels. A nasal mark precedes the nasalized vowel. For instance, the word *l'ombre* is transcribed with a dash preceding a lowercase [o] symbol: [-o].

Nasal consonants. There is one consonant in this system that has a nasal mark. The *gn* spelling of *signore* has a lowercase [j] formation with nasal air flow. The dash plus lowercase [j] symbol describes formation as well as air flow: [-j]. Words with *ng* spelling, as in *sing* and *finger*, are transcribed with an uppercase [N].