

Pronunciation of the German Alphabet

I. **The Alphabet:** See *German Alphabet* handout. The German alphabet also has four extra letters used in print: ä, ö, ü, ß

II. Vowels

a. **Umlauted Vowels:** The umlauted vowels are ä, ö, and ü

a	<i>Nase</i>
ä	<i>Mädchen</i>
o	<i>Boden</i>
ö	<i>Schön</i>
u	<i>Stuhl</i>
ü	<i>Tür</i>

b. **The Letters I and Ü.** Round your lips for ü.

<i>spielen</i>	<i>spülen</i>
<i>Fliege</i>	<i>Flügel</i>

III. Consonants

a. **The Letters V & F** Like the English F.

<i>Freitag</i>	<i>vier</i>	<i>fünf</i>	<i>Februar</i>	<i>Vorname</i>
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b. **The Letter W** Like the English V.

<i>Wann</i>	<i>Schwarz</i>	<i>wo</i>	<i>Wort</i>
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c. **The Letter R** Not like the American English R.

<i>Rot</i>	<i>reisen</i>	<i>Freund</i>	<i>Brief</i>
<i>März</i>	<i>Januar</i>		

d. **The Letter Combinations of Kn, Pf, Ps** All letters are sounded in the pronunciation. They're not silent, like in English.

<i>Knie</i>	<i>Pfund</i>	<i>Pflaume</i>	<i>Psychologie</i>
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"R" between 2 vowels: *Gitarre* *Amerika* *Jahre*

e. **The Letter Combination of Ch** Softer sound is *ich*. Harsher sound is *ach*.

Ach = <i>Aachen</i>	<i>Nacht</i>	<i>Noch</i>	<i>Buch</i>
Ich = <i>ich</i>	<i>dich</i>	<i>München</i>	<i>Österreich</i>

f. **The Letter Combination of Sch** Like the English Sh in *shoot*, but with rounded lips.

<i>Schön</i>	<i>schon</i>	<i>Schwester</i>	<i>Schwarzwald</i>
<i>Die Schweiz</i>			

g. **The Letter Combination of Ck** Like the letter K in English & German.

<i>Stück</i>	<i>Rucksack</i>	<i>Knackwurst</i>
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IV. **Word Stress** German words are usually stressed on first syllable, with some exceptions, especially for words from Romance languages.

<i>Nation</i>	<i>System</i>	<i>Humor</i>	<i>Motor</i>
<i>Original</i>	<i>Experiment</i>	<i>Programm</i>	

Extra Hints From Frau Steele

1. ie/ei = "When two vowels go walking, the **second** one does the talking"

	(English sound)	(English translation)
Mai	= "my"	= May
die	= "dee"	= the
Frei	= "fry"	= free

2. "e" at end = extra syllable "ah"

Treue	= "TROY-ah"	= true
Fahne	= "FAHN-ah"	= flag

3. "d" at end = "t" sound

und	= "unt"	= and
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4. "st" at beginning = "sht" sound

staaten	= "SCHTAH-ten"	= states
steht	= "shtayt"	= stands

5. "j" = "y" sound

ja	= "yah"	= yes
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6. "aw" = "ow" sound

Frau	= "frow"	= Mrs.
Auf	= "owf"	= of, to

