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A Lyric Diction Handbook

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LYRIC DICTION HANDBOOK

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LYRIC DICTION HANDBOOK

Perhaps the most important thing to remember when approaching diction is that the relationship between original language, phonetic symbols, and pronunciation is not absolute. Different regions of countries pronounce words differently. One phonetic symbol might be pronounced slightly differently in two or more original languages. And, most importantly, spoken pronunciation is not always the same as sung pronunciation. This handbook is intended to provide a concise guide to pronunciation of English, French, German, and Italian for singers. As many variables as possible will be addressed, but it is recommended that students of diction watch recordings of native speakers singing in their language and studying more specialized texts focused on each individual language, as necessary.

FIRST THINGS FIRST

A few definitions to cover first:

1. Phonetics- the study of speech sounds and how they are created.
2. Phoneme- a single speech sound. (ex. the word "sheath" is made of six orthographic letters, but only 3 phonemes➔ [ʃiϴ])
3. Vowel- a speech sound produced without impeding or redirecting the flow of air through movement of articulators.
4. Consonant- a speech sound produced by impeding or redirecting the flow of air through movement of the articulators.
5. Lyric diction- a overarching term referring to articulation, pronunciation, enunciation, and linkage of words and phrases in singing.
    a. Articulation- the correct movement of speech organs to create phonemes.
    b. Pronunciation- the uttering of words and phrases with correct inflection, stress, and tone for each language.
    c. Enunciation- crisp articulation and pronunciation in a clear manner.
    d. Linkage- connection of words and phrases within a musical setting to create legato lines and clear communication of meaning.

SPEECH ORGANS AND ARTICULATORS
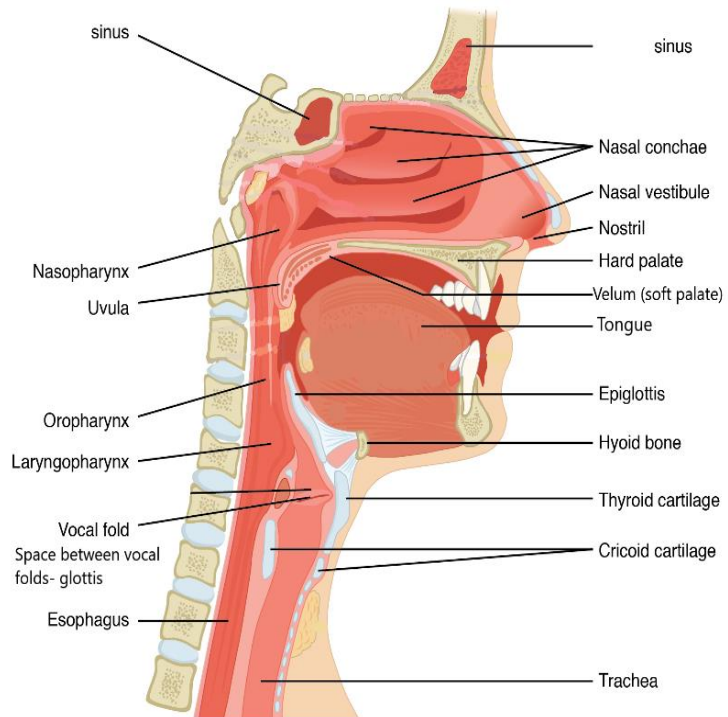
Singing is made up of several steps: respiration (inhaling), phonation (vocal fold vibration), resonation (adjustment of the vocal tract to ensure vocal efficiency), articulation (movement of speech organs), and communication. Clear articulation is necessary to ensure correct pronunciation and intelligibility of text. Let us divide the study of phonemes into **Consonants** and **Vowels.**

Consonants

To fully understand pronunciation of consonants, it's necessary to learn 1. What the articulators are, 2. How the articulators move and/or come together to produce sounds, and 3. How the air flows between, around, or through the articulators to produce consonants.

- o Articulators- speech organs involved in production of phonemes when speaking singing. The jaw, teeth, alveolar ridge, palate, velum (soft palate), tongue, lips, glottis (space between vocal folds) are speech organs involved in lyric diction. See diagram.

Diagram labels:
sinus — sinus — Nasal conchae — Nasal vestibule — Nostril — Hard palate — Velum (soft palate) — Tongue — Nasopharynx — Uvula — Oropharynx — Laryngopharynx — Epiglottis — Hyoid bone — Thyroid cartilage — Vocal fold — Space between vocal folds- glottis — Cricoid cartilage — Esophagus — Trachea

- o Articulators move and/or come into contact with one another to create different phonemes (individual speech sounds). These places of articulation for consonants are named as follows:
  - **Bilabial** consonants are those produced with both lips. (ex. [p] and [w])
  - **Labiodental** consonants are produced with the lower lip and upper teeth. (ex. [f] and [v])
  - **Dental** refers to consonants created with the tongue and the back of the upper teeth. (ex. [d] and [n])
  - **Alveolar** consonants are produced between the tip of the tongue and the alveolar ridge. (ex. [s] and [l])
  - **Prepalatal** consonants involve the tip of the tongue and the space between the alveolar ridge and the hard palate. (ex. [ɲ] and [tʃ])
  - **Palatal** are those consonants created by the tongue coming into contact with the hard palate. (ex. [ç])
  - **Velar** consonants are created with the back of the tongue arch and the soft palate (ex. [x] and [k])
  - **Glottal** consonants are created by airflow passing through the nearly closed vocal folds. (ex. [h]) **Often the term *glottal* is used to refer to [g] or [k], but the point of articulation for both is at the soft palate.
- o The manner of articulation refers to HOW the air flows between, around, or through the point of articulation:
  - **Plosive** consonants are created through momentary closure and then release of the articulators. (ex. [b] is created by closing the lips and then exploding the air through them with vocal fold vibration)
  - **Fricatives** are speech sounds created through friction of air between two approximated articulators. (ex. [f] is formed by air friction between the top teeth and bottom lip and [z] is created through air friction between the teeth while the tongue tip rests between the alveolar ridge and hard palate)
  - **Affricate** consonants are created through a combination of plosive and fricative activity in the airflow. (ex. [ʤ] is created by an explosion of air AND friction of air between the molars on both sides of the mouth)
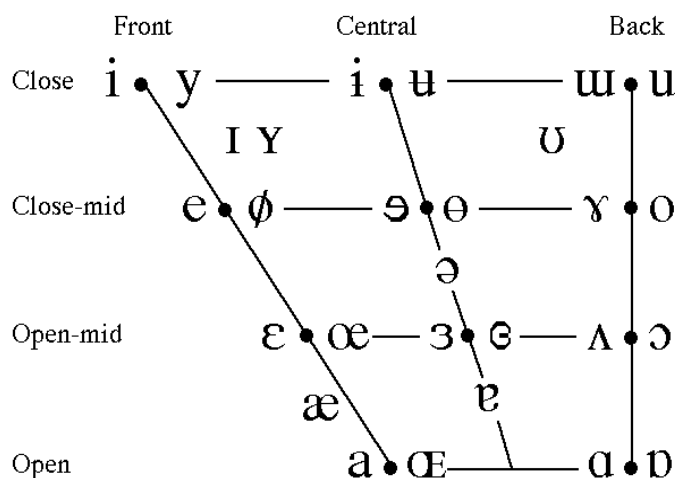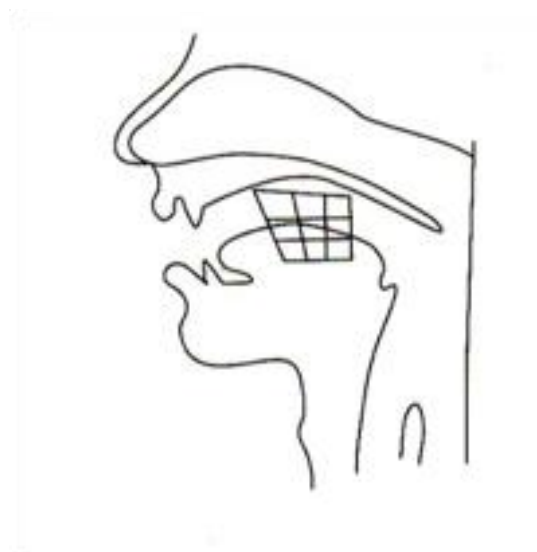
2

- **Nasal** consonants are those sounds produced by directing vocal tone through the nasal passages. (ex. [m])
- **Laterals** are consonants created by directing vocal tone around the sides of the tongue while the tip is in contact with another articulator. (ex. [l])
- **Glides** are consonant sounds that are produced by quickly moving articulators from one position to another. Glides are USUALLY followed by vowels. (ex. [j] and [w])
- **Trills** are formed by tapping the tip of the tongue rapidly against the alveolar ridge or upper front teeth. (ex. rolled [r])
- **Retroflex** refers to consonants created by the tip of the tongue curling up toward the roof of the mouth. (ex. [ɻ])

In addition to the descriptions of manner and placement of sounds, consonants can also be described as voiced or unvoiced. This is determined by the presence of vibration in the vocal folds ([g]) or the absences of vibration of the vocal folds ([k]). They can also be described as continuant or non-continuant. Continuants are those sounds that can be sustained ([ʃ], [l], [m]). Those sounds that cannot be sustained are non-continuant ([p], [tʃ], [g]).

Vowels

Like consonants, the description of vowels can also be divided into parts: 1. Tongue arch height, 2. Tongue arch placement, and 3. open or closed. Vowels can also be described as bright and dark, but those terms are often subjective. Discuss as a class which vowels are dark or bright, depending on the language being studied.

o Tongue arch height refers to the distance between the base of the tongue and the arch of the tongue when producing vowel sounds. The arch height can be high, middle, or low.

o Tongue arch placement refers to how far forward in the oral cavity the tongue arch is placed. The arch placement can be forward, central, or back.

o Open or closed is a designation given to a vowel based on which IPA symbol is used and how much oral space is needed to produce the sound. (ex. open e is [ɛ] as in the word "bed," while closed e is [e] as in the word [bade] (without the diphthong)

Where symbols appear in pairs, the one to the right represents a rounded vowel.

Why should anyone learn the points or manner of articulation? Why does it matter if a vowel is high and forward or low and back? If one can simply emulate the correct phoneme, why take the time to learn these terms and concepts? First and foremost, some sounds only exist in certain languages and some sounds are produced slightly differently from one language to another. The understanding of placement and manner of articulation is invaluable to ensuring correct and clear pronunciation. Secondly, by knowing the terms and concepts, the music teacher is able to describe certain challenging sounds in multiple ways to help struggling students. If they struggle with the manner of articulation, they can focus on the placement first, for example.

INTERNATIONAL PHONETIC ALPHABET

The International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) was created by a group of linguists who first gathered to form the International Phonetic Association in 1886. Their first alphabet was released in 1888 and provided people with a set of symbols, in which one symbol represented a single sound. Individual languages use orthographic letters (symbols used to represent one or more speech sounds) to create words and phrases. By creating an international phonetic alphabet, the linguists provided speakers, diplomats, teachers, singers, and others a transcription of sounds that applied to many languages. An Italian could look at an English word, transcribe the sounds into IPA, and pronounce the word correctly. It was no longer necessary to be poly-lingual to know how to pronounce words in multiple languages. **Remember that in IPA, 1 symbol= 1 sound.**

> Example- English letter "a" is pronounced differently in the words hat, about, and grape.
> The transcription of these words into IPA shows 3 different symbols for 3 separate sounds.
> hat→ [hæt]   about → [ə 'ba:ʊt]   grape → [grep]

Before we explore the symbols and sounds, there are a few transcription "rules" you need to follow to ensure that the IPA symbols you write represent the sounds you intend to create.

1. Use brackets to show IPA.
2. The changing of orthographic letters into the International Phonetic Alphabet is called TRANSCRIPTION.
3. Orthographic letters (symbols used in each language's alphabet) may be capitalized at the start of a word or sentence. These do NOT carry over into the IPA. Capital [I] represents a different sound from lower-case [i].
4. Accent marks and punctuation in the original language do NOT carry over into the IPA. Apostrophes ['] and commas [,] are used to show stress points within the IPA.
5. When IPA'ing an entire poem or song text, there should be an open bracket ([ ) at the start of the poem or song text and a closed bracket ( ]) at the end.
6. Primary syllabic stress is indicated with an apostrophe before the syllable: "apple"→ ['æ pəl].
   Secondary syllabic stress is indicated on polysyllabic words with a comma before the syllable: "fundamental"→ [,fʌn də 'mɛn təl]. There must be space between syllables to see division.

Example text: Diction can be a lot of fun → ['dIk ʃən kæn bi ʌ lɑt əv ,fʌn].

The Symbols

The following chart is the 2020 revision of the International Phonetic Alphabet. Look at it and see if you recognize any symbols. Many of the symbols are pronounced as the orthographic letter in English. For example, the symbol for "s" is [s] in IPA and is pronounced the same. What other symbols do you recognize?

THE INTERNATIONAL PHONETIC ALPHABET (revised to 2020)

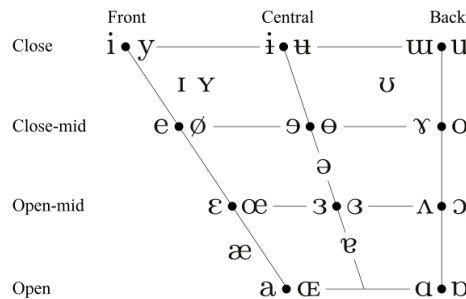CONSONANTS (PULMONIC)   ©ⓘⓔ 2020 IPA

	Bilabial	Labiodental	Dental	Alveolar	Postalveolar	Retroflex	Palatal	Velar	Uvular	Pharyngeal	Glottal
Plosive	p b			t d		ʈ ɖ	c ɟ	k ɡ	q ɢ		ʔ
Nasal	m	ɱ		n		ɳ	ɲ	ŋ	N		
Trill	ʙ			r					ʀ		
Tap or Flap		ⱱ		ɾ		ɽ					
Fricative	ɸ β	f v	θ ð	s z	ʃ ʒ	ʂ ʐ	ç ʝ	x ɣ	χ ʁ	ħ ʕ	h ɦ
Lateral fricative				ɬ ɮ							
Approximant		ʋ		ɹ		ɻ	j	ɰ			
Lateral approximant				l		ɭ	ʎ	ʟ			

Symbols to the right in a cell are voiced, to the left are voiceless. Shaded areas denote articulations judged impossible.

CONSONANTS (NON-PULMONIC)

Clicks	Voiced implosives	Ejectives
ʘ Bilabial	ɓ Bilabial	ʼ Examples:
ǀ Dental	ɗ Dental/alveolar	pʼ Bilabial
ǃ (Post)alveolar	ʄ Palatal	tʼ Dental/alveolar
ǂ Palatoalveolar	ɠ Velar	kʼ Velar
ǁ Alveolar lateral	ʛ Uvular	sʼ Alveolar fricative

OTHER SYMBOLS

ʍ Voiceless labial-velar fricative   ɕ ʑ Alveolo-palatal fricatives
w Voiced labial-velar approximant   ɺ Voiced alveolar lateral flap
ɥ Voiced labial-palatal approximant   ɧ Simultaneous ʃ and x
ʜ Voiceless epiglottal fricative
ʢ Voiced epiglottal fricative   Affricates and double articulations can be represented by two symbols joined by a tie bar if necessary.   t͡s k͡p
ʡ Epiglottal plosive

VOWELS

Where symbols appear in pairs, the one to the right represents a rounded vowel.

SUPRASEGMENTALS

ˈ	Primary stress	ˌfoʊnəˈtɪʃən
ˌ	Secondary stress	
ː	Long	eː
ˑ	Half-long	eˑ
˘	Extra-short	ĕ
ǀ	Minor (foot) group	
‖	Major (intonation) group	
.	Syllable break	ɹi.ækt
‿	Linking (absence of a break)	

DIACRITICS

◌̥ Voiceless	n̥ d̥	◌̤ Breathy voiced	b̤ a̤	◌̪ Dental	t̪ d̪
◌̬ Voiced	s̬ t̬	◌̰ Creaky voiced	b̰ a̰	◌̺ Apical	t̺ d̺
◌ʰ Aspirated	tʰ dʰ	◌̼ Linguolabial	t̼ d̼	◌̻ Laminal	t̻ d̻
◌̹ More rounded	ɔ̹	◌ʷ Labialized	tʷ dʷ	◌̃ Nasalized	ẽ
◌̜ Less rounded	ɔ̜	◌ʲ Palatalized	tʲ dʲ	◌ⁿ Nasal release	dⁿ
◌̟ Advanced	u̟	◌ˠ Velarized	tˠ dˠ	◌ˡ Lateral release	dˡ
◌̠ Retracted	e̠	◌ˤ Pharyngealized	tˤ dˤ	◌̚ No audible release	d̚
◌̈ Centralized	ë	◌̴ Velarized or pharyngealized	ɫ		
◌̽ Mid-centralized	ẽ	◌̝ Raised	e̝ (ɹ̝ = voiced alveolar fricative)		
◌̩ Syllabic	n̩	◌̞ Lowered	e̞ (β̞ = voiced bilabial approximant)		
◌̯ Non-syllabic	e̯	◌̘ Advanced Tongue Root	e̘		
◌˞ Rhoticity	ɚ a˞	◌̙ Retracted Tongue Root	e̙		

Some diacritics may be placed above a symbol with a descender, e.g. ŋ̊

TONES AND WORD ACCENTS

LEVEL		CONTOUR	
e̋ or ˥ Extra high		ě or ˩˥ Rising	
é ˦ High		ê ˥˩ Falling	
ē ˧ Mid		e᷄ ˧˥ High rising	
è ˨ Low		e᷅ ˩˧ Low rising	
ȅ ˩ Extra low		e᷈ ˧˩˧ Rising-falling	
ꜜ Downstep		↗ Global rise	
ꜛ Upstep		↘ Global fall	

Typefaces: Doulos SIL (metatext); unitipa (symbols)

ENGLISH DICTION

For those whose first language is English, studying lyric diction can be very frustrating because many words are mis-pronounced in everyday speech. Differences in pronunciation matter little in day-to-day discussions as long as communication of meaning is clear. In lyric diction, however, awareness of correct articulation, pronunciation, and enunciation is key. For example, the word "nuclear" might be pronounced ['nu kju lɚ] in everyday discussion. As long as the speaker and listener know the context and meaning, it does not matter. In lyric diction, however, correct pronunciation and order of phonemes are necessary to create legato, communicative lines of text that are understood by listeners of all backgrounds and languages. Nuclear's correct pronunciation is ['nu kliɚ]. Another example "string." In parts of the United States, speakers will articulate "str" as [ʃtɹ]. When singing the word, it must be articulated as [stɹIŋ].

These everyday mispronunciations that plague the English language and must be considered when singing the language can be organized into four categories:

1. Insufficiencies:
   a. Insufficient nasality pertains to nasal consonants that are not phonated long enough or not clearly articulated. (ex. "Amen" is articulated as [ɑ 'mƐ] with no perceived [n])
   b. Insufficient friction pertains to fricative consonants that are not created with enough airflow to be clear. (ex. "love" is heard as [lʌ] without enough air or time on [v])
   c. Insufficient stoppage refers to plosive and fricative consonants that are not fully closed or don't have enough explosion of air to be clearly understand. (ex. "Lord" comes out [lɔɹ])
2. Inclusion: When an incorrect sound is added to the pronunciation of the word. (ex. "street" becomes [ʃtɹit])
3. Exclusion: When a phoneme is left out of the pronunciation of the word. (ex. "picture" is mispronounced as ['pI tʃɚ] instead of ['pIk tʃɚ])
4. Mis-stress: When a syllable is incorrectly stressed, or the stressed syllable is left unstressed. (ex. "away" should be [ə 'wƐ:I] but is often sung as ['ʌ 'wƐ:I] or ['Ɛ:I wƐ:I])

In addition to the issues that can arise in studying English diction, dialects add another layer of complexity to the language. Dialects and accents are heard across the US. The southeastern US "southern twang" is one of the most recognizable, but the southern accent in Tennessee is different than the southern accent in Florida or Texas. There is also Pennsylvania Dutch, Midwestern, New England, Brooklyn, and Canadian accents, to name a few. This guide is designed with mid-Atlantic English as a reference. Performers and teachers must remember that operas, musicals, and other music set in certain areas of the United States will call for different pronunciation. Additionally, African American Vernacular English and the pronunciation of words used in African American Spirituals require careful study and practice to ensure correct articulation and pronunciation, but also culturally appropriate performance practices. In all these cases, books and articles dedicated to the particular dialect or accent are highly recommended.

ENGLISH CONSONANTS

b: [b]	k: [k]	s: [s] sh: [ʃ]
c, "cut": [k] c, "cell": [s] ch: [tʃ]	l: [l] l, similar to "bullion": [ʎ:ʎ]	t: [t] th, "that": [ð] th, "thimble": [θ]
d: [d]	m: [m]	v: [v]
f: [f]	n, not: [n] ng, "sing": [ŋ] n, similar to "union" or "onion": [ɲ:ɲ]	w: [w]
g, "George": [dʒ] g, "glad": [g]	p: [p] ph: [f]	x, "xylophone": [z] x, "exact": [gz] x, "extra": [ks]
h: [h] silent h has no IPA symbol	q: [kw]	y: [j]
j, "jar": [dʒ]	r, "ripe": [ɹ] r, "pretty" (British)	z, "zoo": [z] z, "pizza": [ts]

ENGLISH VOWELS

a, "about": [ə] a, "ape": [e] a, "way": [ɛ:I] a, "hat": [æ] a, "father": [ɑ] aw, "awkward": [ɔ]	o, "obey": [o] o, "hot": [ɑ] o, "month": [ʌ] ou, "fought": [ɔ] ou, "through": [u] oo, "foot": [ʊ]	Diphthongs: oy/oi, "boy": [ɔ:I] i/igh, "fight": [ɑ:I] ou/au, "mouse": [ɑ:ʊ] ey/ay, "day": [ɛ:I]
e, "met": [ɛ] e, "meet": [i] ea, "eagle": [i] ea, "earn": [ɝ] er, "anger": [ɚ]	u, "hut": [ʌ] u, "guy": [ɑ:I] u, "unite": [ju]	Triphthongs: "fire": [a:I:ɚ] "flower": [a:ʊ:ɚ]
i, "hit": [I] y, "only": [I] when unstressed and final i, "kite": [ɑ:I] ir, er (stressed), "fir": [ɝ] ir, er (stressed, British), "fir": [ɜ]	Glides: [j]: "yellow" [w]: "will" [hw]: "when"	

Schwa

The schwa is an unstressed neutral vowel (ə) that is used very often in English. Though many unstressed vowels can become schwa in IPA transcription, the most common are "e" and "a." Look at examples above. "Er" endings in words become schwar (ɚ), a schwa with an added r-hook. (ex. "fewer"→ ['fju wɚ]) This sound is a rounded schwa with a hint of r-color. Schwar is used because ending a word with retroflex r (ɹ) creates a chewed, closed sound.

Diphthongs, Triphthongs, and Glides (oh my!)

The four diphthongs and two triphthongs listed above are combinations of vowels in which the first vowel is longer than the second. In the case of triphthongs, the second is longer than the third. The diphthongs and triphthongs in

sung English must be sung as they are written, with a longer first vowel and shorter second and third to ensure open, clear pronunciation. Remember, a **diphthong** is 2 vowels in the same syllable that function as one element with the first vowel being longer and the second being shorter. The longer vowel is indicated with a colon **after** the long vowel in IPA. (ex. "high" → [hɑ:I] with [ɑ] being the longer vowel) A **glide** is 2 vowels in the same syllable that function as one element with the first vowel being shorter and the second being longer. (ex. "young" → [jʌŋ])

British vs. American English Pronunciation

- "wh": in American English, "wh" is commonly pronounced as [w]. However, in British and mid-Atlantic English, "wh" is pronounced as [hw]. This is executed by rounding the lips into the [w] shape and creating an [h] sound through the [w] into the vowel that follows. Try it on the words "whisper," "what," and "why."
- "r": in American English, "r" is commonly pronounced as the retroflex [ɻ]. In British and mid-Atlantic English, "r" is pronounced differently depending on what it follows.
    - "R" that follows a vowel is eliminated or diminished to an r-color, executed by rounding the lips at the end of the preceding vowel. ("heart"→ [hɑt]) In IPA, r-color can be added to any vowel by using schwar. (ex. "hear" → [hiɚ]).
    - "Er" sounds that are stressed, as in the words "hurt," "fir," or "bird" become rounded with very little "r." (ex. "hurt"→ [h3t]) In American English, there is slightly more "r-color," so the symbol becomes [ɝ]. (ex. "bird"→ [bɝd])
    - "R" that starts a word or syllable or is intervocalic becomes flipped ([ɾ]). (ex. "praise"—> [pɾɛ:Iz])

SYLLABIFICATION

After determining the appropriate IPA symbols for the sounds in a word, the next step is to break the word into syllables. This will be important when looking at musical settings of the text. How syllables are determined and marked:

1. When possible, divide syllables after vowels and before consonants. (ex. "Latin" → ['læ tIn])
2. When a consonant is between two vowels in a polysyllable word, divide after the first vowel. This also applies to double consonants in English. (ex. "heaven" → ['hɛ vən]; "hilarity" → [hI 'lɛ ɹI tI]; "apple"→ ['æ pəl])
3. When a consonant cluster is between two vowels, there are two options:
    a. If the consonants function as a combination, divide BEFORE the cluster. (ex. "leather" → ['lɛ ðɚ]; "singer"→ ['sI ŋɚ])
    b. If the consonants do not function as a combination, divide BETWEEN the consonants. Remember LeMoNeR. When the cluster starts with L, M, N, or R, often divide after that first consonant. (ex. "harmony"→ ['hɑɚ mə nI]; "helpful"→ ['hɛlp fəl]; "arachnid"→ [ə 'ɹæk nId])
4. When a vowel cluster is present, there are two options:
    a. If the vowels function as a combination (diphthong or glide and vowel) keep them together and divide after the vowels. (ex. "beautiful"→ ['bju tI fʊl]; "Friday"→ ['fɹɑ:I dɛ:I]).
    b. If the vowels do not function as a combination, divide between them. (ex. "chaos"→ ['ke ɑs]; "naïve"→ [nɑ 'iv]).

5. A syllable may contain only vowels, but a syllable MAY NOT contain only consonants. Every syllable must have at least one vowel.

6. Don't forget to indicate the primary stressed syllable by putting an apostrophe at the start of the syllable. Secondary stress is indicated with a comma before the syllable.

LINKAGE AND SETTING TO MUSIC

Transcribing English words into IPA is only half the process. Words don't exist in a vacuum. They are grouped together in phrases and set to pitches or rhythms. Concerns/Issues in linkage and text setting:

o One open bracket is placed at the start of the poem, song, or phrase. One closed bracket is placed at the end of the poem, song, or phrase.

o Align (to the best of your ability) the syllable under the appropriate pitch or rhythm.

o When grace notes are present, there must be a vowel for the pitch.

o In addition to syllabic stress for each word, locate the stressed word or words in the larger phrase.

o Transcribe the diphthongs under the appropriate pitch or rhythm, BUT when singing diphthongs, delay the second vowel as long as possible.

o When possible, connect between words to ensure legato singing. HOWEVER, when connection would cause an unwanted word to form, put a small space between words. If the second word starts with a vowel, use a glottal stroke (gentle closure of vocal folds before an initial vowel) to clarify text. The IPA symbol is [ʔ]

*   Example with initial vowel: "it's extra special" will IPA as [It 'sɛk stɹə spɛ ʃəl] creating the word "sex" at the beginning. Instead, use a glottal stroke: [Its ʔɛk stɹə spɛ ʃəl].

*   Example with initial consonant: "it's not him" will IPA as [It snɑt hIm] creating the word "snot" at the beginning. Instead, put a slight space between the first two words: [Its nɑt hIm].

VOWEL MODIFICATION

Vowel modification is the altering of a vowel shape to make singing easier or to blend with other singers. Some teachers do not believe in teaching vowel modification, or they use a different term. Other teachers are insistent that modification only applies to certain areas of the vocal range. Whatever the case, consider the effect on the pronunciation if vowel modification is used.

ITALIAN DICTION

First and foremost, this guide follows standard Italian lyric diction rules, based mostly on Florentine Italian. the Venitian dialect is significantly different, but there are many resources available to help in pronunciation of Venetian songs.

The Italian language has several rules of pronunciation to follow, but those rules are FAR more consistent than any rules in English. Some linguists and musicians say when it comes to Italian, "What you see is what you get." Though there are exceptions to rules, this statement is mostly correct. When beginning to study Italian lyric diction, look at the vowels and consonants that are present in the word and start simply. For example, look at the Italian word "respirare" is IPA'd [re spi 'ra re]. Nine orthographic letters are transcribed into nine IPA symbols. There exist a few combinations of consonants and/or vowels in Italian that are transcribed into a specific IPA symbol (ex. "gn" → [ɲːɲ]), but after combinations are transcribed, orthographic consonants and vowels often keep their symbol in IPA.

SYLLABIFICATION

Before delving into individual sounds and symbols, there are rules for syllabification in Italian that GREATLY impact pronunciation. Therefore, it is far more efficient and effective to discuss syllabification first. The three most common stressed syllables in Italian are:

1. Penultimate syllable- the next-to-the-last syllable is the most-often stressed. Examples include "caro"→ ['ka ɾo], "spaghetti"→ [spa 'get:ti] and "liberazione"→ [li be ɾa 'tsjo ne]. If the word does not fall into the other syllabification categories below, it's a safe bet to stress the penultimate syllable. There are exceptions, of course, but it's a place to start. The Italian word for stress falling on the penultimate syllable is *parola piana.*

2. Antepenultimate syllable- the next-to-the-next-to-the-last syllable is stressed when certain word endings are present. For example, "ibile, abile, obile" are all endings of words that stress the antepenultimate syllable. ("mobile"→ ['mo bi le] and "cantabile"→ [kan'ta bi le])
   a. Common endings that result in an antepenultimate stress include:
      -agine, -igine, -udine, -edine
      -abile, -obile, -ibile
      -nomo, -gono, -logo, -voro
      -tesi, -stato, -mane

   The Italian word for stress on the antepenultimate syllable is *parola sdrucciola.*

3. Ultimate syllable- the last syllable is stressed when there is an accent mark over the final vowel. The Italian term for this type of syllabic stress is *parola tronca.* These words will have a diacritical mark in the Italian spelling, but the mark DOES NOT transcribe into IPA. For example, the word "pietà" is IPA'd [pje 'ta], without the grave accent over the [a].

ITALIAN VOWELS

As stated above, the stress on a syllable has a large impact on pronunciation of the vowels. In Italian, there are five vowels, but some of those vowels have more than one pronunciation, just like in English.

[a]- a is always bright in Italian, never the dark [ɑ]. "amore"→ [a 'mo ɾe] "affanno"→ [af:'fan:no].	
[e]- Closed e is very commonly found in open syllables (those that end in a vowel) and in unstressed syllables. Also "é" (acute accent). "misero"→ ['mi ze ɾo] "fedele"→ [fe 'de le]. [ɛ]- Open e is not AS common as closed in Italian, but it often appears before double consonants or consonant clusters and after glides. Also "è" (grave accent). Most importantly, [ɛ] is always stressed. "siete"→ ['sjɛ te] "bella"→ ['bɛl:la]. In monosyllabic words or short words, stressed open [ɛ] and closed [e] are both used. "lei"→ [lɛ:i] "bel"→ [bɛl] "che"→ [ke] "ben"→ [ben].	[o]- Closed o is very commonly found in open syllables (those that end in a vowel) and in unstressed syllables. Also, "é" (acute accent). "mesto"→ ['mɛ sto] "pietoso"→ [pje 'to zo]. [ɔ]- Open o is not AS common as closed in Italian, but it appears before double consonants, consonant clusters, and after glides or before other vowels. Also "è" (grave accent). Most importantly, [ɔ] is always stressed. "forza"→ ['fɔr tsa] "pioggia"→ ['pjɔd:dʒa]. In monosyllabic words, stressed open [ɔ] and closed [o] are both used. "poi"→ [pɔ:i] "coi"→ [ko:i].
[i]- i is never the open [I]. When "i" is between two consonants, it stays [i] whether it is stressed or not. "fine"→ ['fi ne] "anima"→ ['a ni ma]. [j]- If "i" is followed by another vowel, it will often become a j-glide. "bianco"→ ['bjaŋ ko], but sometimes "i" before another vowel, especially in the last syllable, will stay "i" and receive the stress. "biologia"→ [bi o lo 'dʒi:a] "suoneria"→ [swo ne 'ɾi:a]. "i" when following "c" or "g" and followed by another vowel will become silent and disappear completely. "ruggiadose"→ [rud:dʒa 'do ze] "cielo"→ ['tʃɛ lo] "gioia"→ ['dʒɔ ja]. In monosyllabic words or short words, "i" is stressed, unless followed by an accented vowel. "mio"→[mi:o] "più"→ [pju].	[u]- u is never the open [ʊ]. When "u" is between two consonants, it stays [u] whether it is stressed or not. "futura"→ [fu 'tu ɾa] "luna"→ ['lu na]. [w]- If "u" is followed by another vowel, it will often become a w-glide. "ruota"→ ['rwɔ ta], but sometimes "u" before another vowel will stay "u" and often stay unstressed. "visuale"→ [vi zu 'a le]. "qu" becomes [kw]. "quando"→ ['kwan do]. In monosyllabic words or short words, "u" is stressed unless followed by an accented vowel. "due"→ [du:e] "può"→ [pwɔ].

Diacritical Marks

Diacritical or "accent" marks can appear over any of the Italian vowels, but some affect the pronunciation while others do not. Several of these marks no longer appear in Italian print, but they are easily found in old sheet music and manuscripts so knowing how to approach them is important.

1. Grave Accent (à, è, ì, ò, ù,)- a line over the vowel that goes down to the right "toward the grave." When over "e" or "o," it opens the vowel.

2. Acute Accent (é, ó)- a line over the vowel that goes up to the right "at an acute angle." It makes "e" or "o" closed.

3. Circumflex (ê)- an upside down "v" shape over the vowel. Not used in modern Italian, but it might be seen in older songs and manuscripts. It does not change the pronunciation.

4. Diaresis (ë, ï)- two dots over the vowel. Most often used in foreign words borrowed by Italian. However, when it appears in Italian words, simply keep the vowel separated and not part of a diphthong or glide. For example, "Aïda"→ [a 'i da], not ['a:i da].

Diphthongs and Glides

Italian diphthongs, like English diphthongs, consist of two vowels in one syllable that function as one element. The first vowel is longer, followed by a coloni; the second is shorter and unstressed. The most common diphthongs are:

- [a:i], example "avrai"→ [a 'vra:i]
- [a:u], example "causa"→ ['ka:u za]
- [ɔ:i], example "poi"→ [pɔ:i]
- [ɛ:i], example "sei"→ [sɛ:i]

Unlike English diphthongs in which the second vowel is open, Italian vowels in diphthongs stay closed and/or bright. Though the [i] or [u] in the diphthongs is shorter, they are both still clear and pure [i] and [u]. In addition to the above dipthongs, in short Italian words, the first of two vowels is most often stressed. Examples include "due"→ [du:e], "io"→ [i:o], "idea"→ [i 'dɛ:a].

Italian glides [j] and [w] share a syllable with the vowel that follows. The glide is short and the vowel that follows is longer. A colon is not necessary after the longer vowel because the glide is clearly shorter and not a full-length vowel. Examples of glides include "siate"→ ['sja te], "quella"→ ['kwel:la].

Sometimes in Italian, there are exceptions to these consistent rules. There are many instances of an "i" or "u" followed by a vowel where the "i" or "u" stays stressed and does not become a glide. (ex. "altrui"→ [al 'tru:i] and "ironia"→ [i ɾo 'ni:a]. These exceptions must be taken on a case by case basis. Students of Italian will start to see patterns and memorize common spellings, but they can always check a dictionary or online resources.

Triphthongs

When three vowels occur in the same syllable and function as one element, these are called triphthongs. The first vowel is a glide ([w] or [j]), second is stressed, and the third is unstressed. For example,"miei"→ [mjɛ:i], "muoi"→ [mwɔ:i].

Other Vowel Groupings

Other groups of vowels do exist but don't function as one element in a syllable. For example, the word "gioia" is IPA'd ['ʤɔ ja]. The first "i" is silent; the "o" is stressed; the second "i" is a glide, and the "a" is unstressed. With a syllabic division after the "o," this word is a two-syllable word, with two vowels in the first syllable and two in the second.

Below is a "cheat sheet" for determining whether a stressed "e" or "o" is open or closed. The most important thing to remember is that there can only be one open "o" or "e" in an Italian word. If the stressed "e" or "o" is open, all other "e" and "o" in the word will be closed.

STRESSED "e"		STRESSED "o"	
Usually Open:		**Usually Open:**	
1. In the antepenultimate syllable		1. In the antepenultimate syllable	
gelida	['dʒɛ li da]	mobile	['mɔ bi le]
zefiro	['dzɛ fi ɾo]	anonimo	[a 'nɔ ni mo]
Exceptions: en+ em+		Exceptions: on+ om+	
cembalo vendere pentola		rondine compito ordine	
2. Following another vowel letter (usually a glide)		2. Following another vowel letter (usually a glide)	
guerra	['gwɛr:ra]	vuoi	['vwɔi]
maniera	[ma 'njɛ ɾa]	chioma	['kjɔ ma]
poeta	[poɛː'ta]	idiota	[i 'djɔ ta]
3. Immediately preceding another vowel letter		3. Immediately preceding another vowel letter	
idea	[i 'dɛ a]	eroico	[e 'rɔːi ko]
lei	['lɛ i]	boa	['bɔːa]
4. Immediately preceding cons. + two vowels		4. Immediately preceding cons. + two vowels	
serio	['sɛr jo]	gloria	['glɔr ja]
ingenua	[in 'dʒɛ nwa]	demonio	[de 'mɔ njɔ]
5. Preceding consonant cluster beginning with "s"		5. Preceding consonant cluster beginning with "s"	
tempesta	[tem 'pɛ sta]	nostro	['nɔ stro]
pesca	['pɛ ska]	angoscia	[aŋ 'gɔ ʃa]
Final stressed e: usually closed and short		**Final stressed o:** always open and short	
finchè	[fin 'ke]	avrò	[a 'vrɔ]
me	[me]	amerò	[a me 'rɔ]
In Open Syllables: more often closed		**In Open Syllables:** more often closed	
ricadere	[ri ka 'de re]	fumoso	[fu mo zo]
In Closed Syllables:		**In Closed Syllables:**	
Double Consonants – fifty/fifty		Double Consonants – fifty/fifty	
Before Lemoner Clusters:		Before Lemoner Clusters:	
• usually closed, excluding suffixes		• on+, om+ & ol+ usually closed	
		• or+ about equally divided	

"Stressed E and O Cheat Sheet," Dr. Fritz Robertson, Anderson University.

ITALIAN CONSONANTS

As with treatment of Italian vowels, the rules of pronunciation of Italian consonants is fairly consistent. The pronunciation of a consonant is affected by the vowels or consonants that precede and/or follow one another, but there are few exceptions to these rules.

A few specifics about consonants to highlight:

1. "h" is silent in Italian. Whether initial, medial, or final, it does not get transcribed into IPA.
2. The IPA symbols [ʎːʎ] and [ɲːɲ] are always doubled in transcription. "ciglio"→ ['tʃiʎːʎo]; "sdegno"→ ['zdeɲːɲo]. Some diction textbooks include medial [ʃːʃ] to this list. For example, "pesce"→ ['peʃːʃe].
3. When doubling consonants, place a colon between the two symbols in IPA ([dːd], [sːs], etc.).
4. The letter "J" appears in old Italian texts. It follows the same rules as "i."

5. K, W, X, and combinations Ph and Th only appear in words of foreign origin. Pronunciation is determined by original language.

6. Z can be transcribed as [ts] or [dz]. Rules are varied. It's best to check a dictionary when transcribing "z."

[b]- initial, medial, or final single "b"
    "bambino"→ [bam 'bi no]
[b:b]- initial, medial, or final double "bb"
    "babbo"→ ['bab:bo]
	[p]- initial, medial, or final single "p"
	    "più"→ [pju]
	[p:p]- initial, medial, or final double "pp"
	    "troppo"→ ['trɔp:po]

[k]- initial or medial single "c" when followed by
    a, o, u, or a consonant. "caro"→ ['ka ɾo]; "chiara"→
    ['kja ɾa]
[k:k]- initial or medial double "cc" when followed by
    a, o, u, or a consonant. "piccolo"→ ['pik:ko lo]
[tʃ]- initial, medial, or final single [c] when followed by i,
    e, or silent i. "cielo"→ ['tʃɛ lo]; "cello"→ ['tʃɛl:lo]
[t:tʃ]- initial or medial double "cc" when followed by i, e, or
    silent i. "Puccini"→ [put:'tʃi ni]
	[kw]- "qu" combination. "quando"→ ['kwan do]
	[k:kw]- "cqu" combination. "acqueo"→
	    ['ak:kwe o]

[d]- initial, medial, or final single "d"
    "donna"→ ['dɔn:na]
[d:d]- initial, medial, or final double "dd"
    "freddo"→ ['fred:do]
	[ɾ]- intervocalic single "r" is flipped.
	    "amore"→ [a 'mo ɾe]
	[r]- initial or final in a word or when following
	    or preceding a consonant is rolled. "resa"→
	    ['re za]; "crudele"→[kru 'dɛ le]
	[r:r]- double "rr" is rolled. "terrore"→ [ter:'ro re]
	    **the length of a rolled r can be affected
	    expression as well. In high-tension musical
	    moments, more rolled "r" is appropriate on
	    certain words.

[f]- initial, medial, or final single "f"
    "fiero"→ ['fjɛ ɾo]
[f:f]- initial, medial, or final double "ff"
    "caffè"→ [kaf:'fɛ]	

[g]- initial, medial, or final single "g" when followed by a,
    o, u, or a consonant. "gatto"→ ['gat:to]; "spaghetti"→
    [spa 'get:ti]
[g:g]- initial, medial, or final double "gg" when followed
    by a, o, u, or a consonant.
    "aggravare"→ [ag:gra 'va ɾe]
[dʒ]- initial, medial, or final "g" when followed by i or e
    "giorno"→ ['dʒɔr no]
[d:dʒ]- initial, medial, or final double "gg" when followed
    by i or e. "pioggia"→ ['pjɔddʒa]
[ʎ:ʎ]- "gli." "egli"→ [eʎ:ʎi]. When gli is followed by
    another vowel, the "i" of "gli" disappears.
    "cogliere"→ ['kɔʎ:ʎe ɾe]
[ɲ:ɲ]- "gn" "ignorare"→ [iɲ:ɲo 'ra ɾe]
	[s]- initial "s" when followed by a vowel or
	    unvoiced consonant. "sperto"→ ['spɛr to]
	    "sacca"→ ['sak:ka]
	[s:s]- initial, medial, or final double "ss"
	    "russare"→ [rus:'sa ɾe]
	[z]- intervocalic "s" and initial "s" preceding a
	    voiced consonant. "casa"→ ['ka za]
	    "sbranare"→ [zbra 'na ɾe]
	[sk]- "sc" when followed by a, o, u, or h.
	    "ascoltare"→ [a skol 'ta ɾe]
	    "scherzo"→ ['sker tso]
	[ʃ]- "sc" when followed by e or i.
	    "scena"→ ['ʃɛ na]

[l]- initial, medial, or final single "l"
    "ilarità"→ [i la ɾi 'ta]
[l:l]- initial, medial, or final double "ll"
    "bello"→ [bɛl:lo]
	[t]- initial, medial, or final single "t"
	    "tuoi"→ [twɔ:i]
	[tt]- initial, medial, or final double "tt"
	    "sottilmente"→ [sot:til 'men te]

[m]- initial, medial, or final single "m" "mio"→ [mi:o] [m:m]- initial, medial, or final double "mm" "fiamma"→ ['fjam:ma]	[v]- initial, medial, or final single "v" "viva"→ ['vi va] [v:v]- initial, medial, or final double "vv" "avvolgere"→ [av'vɔl ʤe ɾe]
[n]- initial, medial, or final single "n" "canto"→ ['kan to] [n:n]- initial, medial, or final double "nn" "donna"→ ['dɔn:na] [ŋ]- "ng" or nc" combination, when "g" or "c" becomes [g] or [k]. "lusinghiero"→ [lu ziŋ 'gjɛ ɾo] "bianca"→ ['bjaŋ ka]	[ts]- initial, medial, or final single "z" "zia"→ [tsi:a] * check dictionary [dz]- initial, medial, or final single "z" "zio"→ [dzi:o] *check dictionary [t:ts]- medial double "zz" most commonly in "-izza" and "-ezza." "pizza"→ ['pit:tsa] [d:dz]- medial double "zz" most commonly in "- ezzo" and "azzurro." "mezzo"→ ['mɛd:dzo] *check dictionary

LINKAGE

The inherent legato nature of the Italian language makes the journey from individual sounds to words, to phrases, and on to musical verses easier to navigate. The connection between words takes the following considerations:

1. Elision- When one word ends with a vowel and the word that follows starts with the same vowel, it is the elimination of the ending vowel of the first word and the carrying over of the preceding consonant to the beginning of the second word. For example, here are the words "fuggi il," from the opera aria, "Ah, fuggi il traditor" from Mozart's *Don Giovanni*. The first word, "fuggi" ends with an "i," and the second word, "il" begins with an "i." When singing this aria, the singer eliminates the ending "i" of "fuggi" and ELIDES the preceding consonants to the "i" of "il" making the phrase transcription ['fud:ʤil]. In a good deal of contemporary publications of sheet music, this elision is already shown in the music. In a lot of older publications, the words are merely squished together, and it is the singer's responsibility to know how to approach linkage.

2. Apocopation- When a final consonant or vowel is removed from a word. Sometimes, an apostrophe is used to show the removal. The shortened word is then connected to the next word. It must retain its correction pronunciation from its original form. For example, the word "morire" is transcribed in IPA as [mo 'ɾi ɾe]. When the word is shortened to "morir," the stress stays on the second syllable, even though that is also now the final syllable, and the "r" remains flipped even though it is now final.→ [mo 'ɾiɾ]. It takes time and experience with the Italian language to recognize these shortened words. Another example is the phrase "gli occhi." It is common for the "i" of "gli" to be removed, an apostrophe added, and the words combined to become "gl'occhi." The IPA transcription is [ʎ:'ʎɔk:ki]. Notice that the [ʎ:ʎ] from the "gli" combination is retained, even though the "i" is gone.

3. Phrasal diphthongs- Unlike the above examples when a vowel is eliminated, phrasal diphthongs are the occurrence of two vowels within a phrase when both must be pronounced and transcribed. In that case, the stressed vowel (no matter the word order) retains its stress if possible. When it's not possible, both vowels are unstressed. For example, "alma inflammata" contains a phrasal diphthong when transcribed into   ['al ma:in flam:'ma ta]. The ending "a" in "alma" is unstressed, and the beginning "i" in "inflammata" is unstressed, so the two vowels are treated as a phrasal diphthong and will often share one note in a song.

4. <u>Phrasal doublings</u>- It is common practice in Italian to double consonants of certain words when they are in the middle of a phrase. This will often be present in the IPA transcription and should definitely be honored in the performance. The word, "Dio" means "God" and is an example of phrasal doubling. The phrase "o Dio" arises in many arias and songs and is IPA'd [od:'di:o]. The stress still falls on the "i," but the double "dd" brings more emphasis to that syllable. Phrasal doublings can also occur when a word ends with a consonant and the next word starts with the same consonant. In that case, the consonant is doubled, and a colon is added between them in IPA.

5. <u>Performance practices</u>- In Italian, when a word ends with "n," and following word starts with an "m, p, b, f, v," or other alveolar, dental, or labial consonant, the "n" may be pronounced as an "m." Be aware of this change in performance practice. It may or may not be transcribed as such in IPA. That is up to the teacher and/or singer.

Examples:

"Tal m'ha in priggion"→ [tal ma:im prid:dʒon]

- The apostrophe after the "m" shows that a vowel was removed. Because the "h" is silent, the "m" is connected directly to the "a."
- "ma" and "in" are connected and create a phrasal diphthong.
- The "n" of "in" is followed by a "p" and becomes an "m" in pronunciation.

"e non m'uccide amor, e non mi sferra"→ [e nom:mut:tʃi dea mo ɾe non mi 'sfɛr:ra]

- The "i" of "mi" was removed and an apostrophe connected the "m" to "uccide," so "uccide must retain its original stressed syllable.
- Because the final "n" of "non" was followed by an "m," it was changed to an "m" creating a phrasal doubling.
- The original spelling of "amore" has been shorted to "amor," but the flipped "r" remains and connects to the "e" that follows it.

<u>Issues in Linkage</u>

One final point when dealing with linkage in Italian. When dealing with text in music, especially in older scores, syllables may not appear under the pitch on which they are meant to be sung. It is the responsibility of the singer and teacher to determine where each word and/or syllable falls. A good rule of thumb is: "You can always squish vowels together, but you can't always move consonants." For example, in the phrases below, notice that words are not divided into syllables that appear under pitches. The singer and teacher decide which syllable(s) accompanies which pitch(es). Because "Grembo" ends with a vowel and "al" starts with a vowel, the second syllable of "Grembo" and the word "al" can be sung on the same pitch. The singer MAY NOT divide the first pitch into two eighth-notes to sing "Grembo" for two reasons: 1. A stressed syllable (['grɛm]) should receive more length of a beat when possible. 2. Vowels can always be squished. "Grembo" contains consonants, not just vowels.

GERMAN DICTION

With similarities in articulation to English and similarities in pronunciation rules to Italian, German diction can be a delightful challenge for singers. The Germanic language is a building-blocks language with prefixes, suffixes, verb-endings, and root words that are often stacked together to create multi-syllable words. On the one hand, singing multi-syllable words while trying to remain legato can be difficult. On the other hand, determining pronunciation based on word elements can become straight forward for many singers.

WORD ELEMENTS

Throughout the discussion of German diction rules, there are references to placement of phonemes within elements. *Elements* refers to 1. root, 2. prefix, 3. suffix, and 4. verb and other endings. Words may contain one or more of these elements. Because it is necessary to define word elements to determine pronunciation, it is IMPERATIVE that a speaker/singer has a working knowledge of prefixes, suffixes, and endings, as well as access to a translation of the German text.

For example, the German word "Göttlichkeit" means "godliness."

Gött	lich	keit
Root derived from Gott, meaning "God"	*Suffix* that changes noun to adverb (God→ Godly)	*Suffix* that changes adverb back to noun (Godly→ Godliness)

Another example is the word "Volksschule," roughly meaning "folk school" (public education).

Volks	Schule
Root, meaning "people"	*Root*, meaning "school"

The above word does not contain any prefixes, suffixes, or endings. It is a word created by combining two root words. Pronunciation of consonants and vowels is often determined by where they fall within the element, not their position in the word. One must keep this on the forefront of their mind as they approach German sounds.

Prefixes

There are MANY prefixes in the German language. There are *separable* prefixes and *inseparable* prefixes. The difference is in the name. Prefixes that can stand alone as a separate word are *separable*. The prefixes that cannot function as a standalone word are *inseparable*. In general, inseparable prefixes are UNSTRESSED and separable prefixes are STRESSED. Critical thinking, memorization, and study help a singer learn a number of separable and inseparable prefixes, but a dictionary or German pronunciation guide should be consulted if the singer/speaker is not sure.

INSEPARABLE (unstressed)	SEPARABLE (stressed)
be-	ab-
da-	an-
emp-	auf-
ent-	aus-
er-	bei-
ge-	dar-
ver-	durch-
zer-	ein-
	fort-
INSEPARABLE (stressed)	her-
	hin-
	mit-
in-	nach-
miss-	um-
un-	vor-
ur-	weg-
	zu-

As the list above shows, separable prefixes are more common. When transcribing the German text into IPA and in articulation, every effort must be made to honor the stress rules of pronunciation, no matter what follows the prefix.

Suffixes

Suffixes are endings that change the function of a word. There are suffixes for nouns, adjectives, verbs, etc. For the purposes of this guide, all suffixes will be discussed together. For further study on suffixes and meaning of German words, one can use a German language guide or take a language-focused course. In general, suffixes are unstressed.

-bar	-ling
-chen	-los
-haft	-mut
-heit	-nis
-ig	-sal
-in	-sam
-isch	-schaft
-keit	-tum
-lein	-ung
-lich	

Verb Endings

As with many other languages, verbs tenses reflect the relationship between the speaker and the subject about which they are speaking. For example, in English, a speaker might say "I walk to the store every day." "Walk" is used because the subject is "I." But, when the speaker says, "She walks to the store every day," the verb changes to "walks" because the subject is now "she." German functions basically the same way.

For example, "Ich liebe dich" means "I love you." Below, see the changes to the verb based on the subject of the sentence. The verb "lieben" means "to love." To change the tense, the "en" ending of the root is dropped and the following endings are added.

Verb endings (present tense)		Verb endings (simple past tense)		Past participle
-e	-en	-te	-ten	-t
-st	-t	-test	-tet	
-t	-en	-te	-ten	

"Lieben"

(I) Ich lieb<u>e</u>	(We) Wir lieb<u>en</u>
(You) Du lieb<u>st</u>	(You all) Ihr lieb<u>t</u>
(He/She/It) Er lieb<u>t</u>	(They) Sie lieb<u>en</u>

These endings do not change the pronunciation of the stressed vowel of the root word, BUT the ending consonants might be pronounced differently. Again, with the example "Lieben," the IPA is ['li bən]. However, when the word changes to "liebst," the "b" becomes pronounced as a [p] because it is followed by consonants. The resulting IPA is ['lipst]. Further discussion of pronunciation rules will follow.

**A helpful note- German nouns are always capitalized. When working through a text and determining which parts of the words are prefixes, suffixes, and verb endings, it is helpful to note if the first letter is capitalized. If it is, then it is a noun and cannot have a verb ending. If it not capitalized and appears after a capital word, it might be a verb. As stated earlier, having a translation of the text is a must when working to transcribe the German into IPA. When transcribing into IPA, do not capitalize symbols to match the German letters. Keep the symbols as they originally are in IPA. For example, "Leid" is a noun meaning "sorrow." In IPA, the symbols are [laet] with no capital "L."
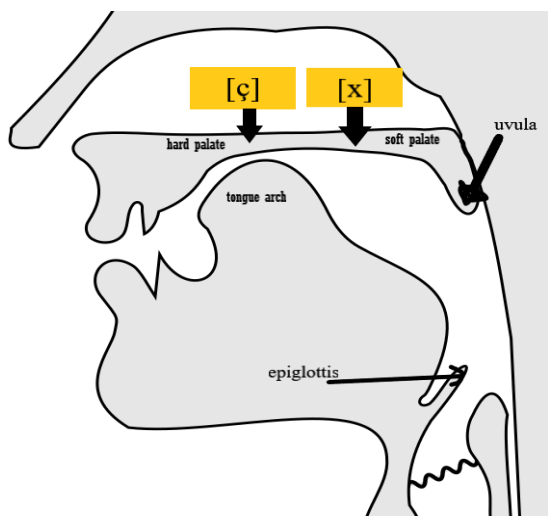
GERMAN CONSONANTS

[b]- initial or medial single or double "b" within a word element."aber"→ ['ɑ: bɚ] [p]- final "b" in a word element. "liebst" → ['lipst]; "ab" → [ap] * Pay attention to word elements. "Abbild" → ['ap bIlt]. The first "b" is final in a prefix and becomes [p]. The second "b" is initial in the root word and stays [b].	[m]- initial, medial, or final single or double "m" within a word element. "Mann" → [man].
	[n]- initial, medial, or final single or double "n" within a word element. "Name" → ['nɑ: mə]. [ŋ] -medial or final "ng" within a word element. "singen" → ['zI ŋən]. *When in separate elements, "ng" stay separate. "hingeben" → ['hIn ge bən].
Words that start with single "c" are often derived from non-Germanic words and are pronounced accordingly. [ts]- initial "c" followed by i, e, y, ü, ä [k]- initial "c" followed by a, o, u, ö. [ç]- medial, or final "ch" when FOLLOWING i, e, y, ä, ü, ö, or consonant in a word element. "Ich" → [Iç]; "Mädchen" → ['mɛ:t çən] [ç]- initial "ch" when followed by i, e, y, ä. [x]- medial or final "ch" when FOLLOWING a, o, u, in a word element. "Ach" → [ɑ:x] [k]- initial "ch" when followed by a, o, u, ö.	[p]- initial, medial, or final single or double "p" within a word element. "Pfand" → [pfant]; "Paar" → [pɑ:ɾ]. [p]- final "b" within a word element. "ab" → [ap].
	[kv]- initial or medial "qu" within a word element. "Quelle" → ['kvɛ lə].

[d]- initial or medial single or double "d" within a word element. "durch" → [dʊɚç] [t]- final "d" in a word element. "Tod" → [to:t] "Mädchen" → ['mɛt çən].	[ɾ]- initial, medial, intervocalic, and final "r" within a word element unless using [ɚ]. "Ring" → [ɾIŋ]; "ihre" → [i ɾə]; "Tor" → [to:ɾ]. [ɚ] or [ʁ]- medial or final "r" after a vowel within a word element. "der" → [deɚ]. *This is an "r-colored" vowel. The symbol [ʁ] is used in many German pronunciation guides. The symbol [ɚ] is a schwar (schwar with "r-color.") Either symbol may be used.
[f]- initial, medial, or final single or double "f" within a word element. "Finger" → [fI ŋɚ]. [f]- initial, medial, or final "v" within a word element. "Vater" → ['fɑ: tɚ]. [f]- initial, medial or final "ph" within a word element. *Only occurs in non-German words.	
[g]- initial or medial single or double "g" within a word element. "Grab" → ['gɾɑ:p]; "Gnade" → ['gna: də]. [k]- final "g" in a word element. "Tag" → [ta:k]. [Iç]- "Ig" ending. "selig" → ['ze lIç]; "Seligkeit" → ['ze lIç kaet].	[s]- medial or final single or double" within a word element. "das" → [das]; "Forst" → [fɔrst]. [ʃ]- initial, medial, or final "sch" within a word element. "schauen" → ['ʃa:o ən]. [ʃ]- initial "s" when followed by "t" or "p" within a word element. "springen" → ['ʃpɾI ŋən]; "gestaten" → [gə 'ʃtɑ: tən]. [z]- initial or intervocalic single "s" within a word element. "sagen" → ['zɑ: gən]; "rasen" → ['ɾɑ: zən].
[h]- initial "h" within a word element. "herbei" → [hɛɾ 'bae]; "Gehalt" → [gə 'halt]. silent- medial or final h within an element. "geh" → [ge]; sehnen" → ['ze nən].	[t]- initial, medial, or final single or double "t" within a word element. "Tisch" → [tIʃ]. [t]- final "d" within a word element. "Hand" → [hant]. [t]- initial, medial, or final "th" within a word element. "Thron" → [tɾo:n]. [ts]- "tion" in certain words. "Nation" → [na 'tsi on]
[j]- initial "j" within a word element. "Jahre" → [jɑ: ɾə].	[v]- intervocalic "v" within a word element. "Kavalier" → [ka va 'liɾ]. [v]- initial, medial, or final single "w" within a word element. "Wald" → [valt].
[k]- initial, medial, or final single or double "k" within a word element. "Knappe" → ['kna pə]. [k]- final "g" within a word element. "Tag" → [tɑ:k].	[ks]- initial, medial, or final "x" within a word element. *Only occurs in non-German words
[l]- initial, medial, or final single or double "l" within a word element. "Stille" → ['ʃtI lə].	[ts]- initial, medial, or final "z" within a word element. "zwei" → [tsvae].

German Consonant Issues

   Many of the symbols and sounds of German consonants also exist in English, French, and/or Italian. However, there are a few that are specific to German. Specifically, Ichlaut ([ç]) and Achlaut [x] are sounds that are not present in the other languages covered in this handbook. Both Ichlaut and Achlaut are fricative consonants formed through rapid airflow between two articulators placed close together. As the diagram below shows, Ichlaut is formed by rapid airflow between a high tongue arch close to the hard palate. Achlaut is formed by rapid airflow between a high tongue arch close to the soft palate.

Ichlaut must be created by keeping the tip of the tongue released and down behind the front bottom teeth and lifting the tongue arch toward the hard palate without touching the palate. Many teachers describe this sound as a "cat hiss." If the tongue arch touches the hard palate, a [k] is created. If the tongue arch is too far back, an Achlaut is created. Additionally, Ichlaut IS NOT the same as [ʃ]. The sounds of the tongue should NOT be between the molars on the sides of the mouth.

Achlaut must be created by keeping the tip of the tongue released and down behind the front bottom teeth and lifting the tongue arch toward the soft palate without touching the palate. Many teachers describe this sound as "preparing to spit." If the tongue arch is too far forward, it becomes an Ichlaut. If the tongue arch touches the soft palate, a [k] is created. Perhaps the most helpful aspect of the sound to remember is the rapid airflow. Ichlaut and Achlaut take a lot of fast-moving air. Students and singers must work with a coach or teacher who can listen and offer feedback.
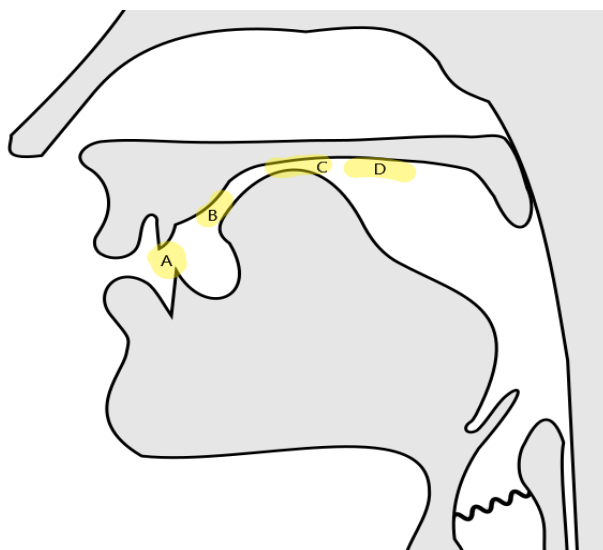
The German letter "ß" is called Eszett. This letter is much more common in older German texts, sheet music, and manuscripts. "ß" is equal to "ss" and is IPA'd as [s:s] but often functions as a single consonant when determining preceding vowel length.

Evolution of the "S"

Including [ç] and [x], there are six consonants in German are created through friction between the teeth, tongue, and palates. When grouped together, they form the Evolution of the S. Consider the following lines and refer to the illustration below:

Forward point of airflow---Back point of airflow

Front of mouth---------------------------------------Sides of mouth---Back of mouth

[z] [s]--[ʒ] [ʃ]---[ç]------------------[x]

A   **B**   **C**   **D**

Practicing going from one sound to another while bringing the correct articulators together and keeping the airflow consistent can help a speaker differentiate similar sounds and help with linkage between German sounds. The most forward articulation produces unvoiced [s] and voiced [z]. Mid-oral cavity articulation with the sides of the tongue between the molars results in unvoiced [ʃ] and voiced [ʒ]. Mid-to-back oral cavity articulation with the arch of the tongue close to the hard palate produces [ç]. Finally, back oral cavity articulation between a high tongue arch and the soft palate produces [x]. Because these are all fricatives, they can be connected without disconnecting articulators.

21

GERMAN VOWELS

Several German vowels are similar to those vowels in English, Italian and French. In addition is common symbols, the use of the colon (:) to denote length is still valid. As described in the chart below, there are a few open vowels that are long or closed vowels that are short. But as a general rule, long vowels are closed and long. German vowels can be divided into three groups:

1. Pure vowels- vowel sounds containing one phoneme.
2. Mixed vowels- vowel sounds created by combining a vowel tongue position with another vowel lip position.
3. Diphthongs- vowel sounds created by articulating two vowels in rapid succession in one syllable. The first vowel is stressed and longer than the second.

PURE VOWELS	
[a]- "a" when followed by two or more consonants within a word element. "harfen" → ['haɾ fən]. [ɑ:]- "a" when followed by an "h" or one consonant within a word element. "habe" → ['hɑ: bə]. [ɑ:]- "aa" within a word element. In monosyllables, most "a" are bright and short." "das" → [das].	[ɔ]- "o" when followed by two or more consonants within a word element. "Sonne" → ['zɔ nə]. *There are exceptions. "Mond" → [mont]. [o:]- "o" when followed by "h" or 1 consonant within a word element. "wohl" → [vo:l]. [o:]- "oo" within a word element. Monosyllables may align with the rules or be exceptions. "von" → [fɔn]; "hoch" → [ho:x].
[ɛ]- "e" when followed by two or more consonants within a word element. "trennen" → ['tɾɛ nən]. *There are exceptions. "Erde" → [eɾ də] [ɛ]- "ä" (the two dots are called *umlaut*) when followed by two or more consonants within a word element. "Hände" → ['hɛn də]. [ɛ:]- "ä" (the two dots are called *umlaut*) when followed by "h" or one consonant within a word element. "Mädchen" → ['mɛ:t çən]. ** "chen" is a common suffix. [e:]- "e" when followed by "h" or one consonant within a word element. "geben" → ['ge: bən] [e:]- "ee" within a word element. [ə]- "e" when unstressed. "eine" → ['a:e nə] Monosyllables may align with the rules or be exceptions. "der" and "den" are [deɚ] and [den], but "des" is [dɛs]. Dictionaries should be referenced with questions.	[ʊ]- "u" when followed by two or more consonants within a word element. "Hund" → [hʊnt]. [u:]- "u" when followed by "h" or one consonant within a word element. "Huhn" → [hu:n]. Monosyllables may align with the rules or be exceptions. "um" → [ʊm]; "Gruß" → [gɾu:ss]. **MIXED VOWELS** [Y]- "ü" (the two dots are called *umlaut*) when followed by two or more consonants within a word element. "füllen" → ['fY lən]. [y:]- "ü" (the two dots are called *umlaut*) when followed by "h" or one consonant within a word element. "über" → ['y: bɚ]. [œ]- "ö" (the two dots are called *umlaut*) when followed by two or more consonants within a word element. "öffne" → ['œf nə]. [ø:]- "ö" (the two dots are called *umlaut*) when followed by "h" or one consonant within a word element. "Vögel" → ['fø: gəl]. "ß" functions as a single consonant, so the preceding vowel is closed and long. "Blöße" → ['blø:ssə]; "süß" → [zy:ss].

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[I]- "i" when followed by two or more consonants within a word element. "Himmel" → ['hI məl].

[i:]- "i" when followed by an "h" or one consonant within a word element. "ihren" → ['i ɾən].

[i:]- "ie" combination within a word element. "sie" → [zi:]

[j]- "j" in any position. "i" followed by another vowel in non-German words can become [j].

Mononsyllables may align with the rules or be exceptions. "ihn" → [i:n]. "in" → [In]. Dictionaries should be referenced with questions.

</td><td>

DIPHTHONGS

[ɑ:o]- "au" combination within a word element. "Haus" → [hɑ:os].

[ɔ:ø]- "eu" combination within a word element. "Feuer" → [fɔ:øɚ].

[ɔ:ø]- "äu" combination within a word element. "Bäume" → ['bɔ:ø mə].

[a:e]- "ei" combination within a word element. "meine" → ['ma:e nə].

</td></tr>
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German Pure Vowels

[ɑ] is a dark "a" that is similar to the sound in the word "father." The back of the tongue is slightly lower, and the resonance is farther back compared to [a]. Refer to the diagram below as a reminder. As discussed in the English vowel section, [I] is the sound present in the English word "pig." It is also present in German words like "hin," and "ist." The symbol [ʊ] is found in the English word "could" and the German words "unt" and "Duft." Neither [I] or [ʊ] existed in Italian.
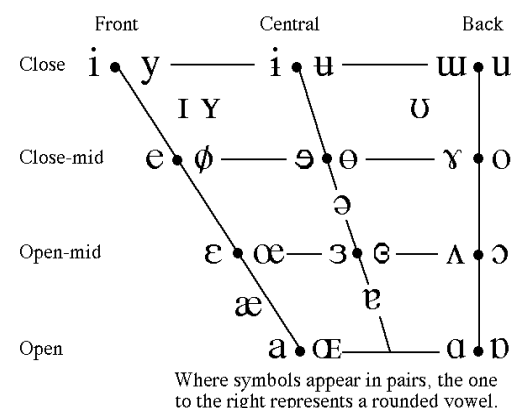
Schwa ([ə]) is the unstressed sound that occurs when "e" is in some prefixes, suffixes, and unstressed syllables. The German Schwa is not the same as the French or English Schwa. The German Schwa is similar to [ʊ]. Additionally, German Schwa can only be used when "e" is unstressed. In English, other letters could become [ə] when unstressed. For example, in the word "away," the "a" could become Schwa, making the IPA of the word, [ə 'wɛ:I]. In German, unstressed "a" is [a], unstressed "i" is [I], etc.

Where symbols appear in pairs, the one to the right represents a rounded vowel.

Unlike the legato, intoned lines of Romance languages like Spanish, French, and Italian, Germanic languages (German and English) utilize breaks, lifts, and aspirate sounds. To ensure clarity of text, words and/or word elements that begin with a vowel must be articulated by closing the vocal folds (glottis) and GENTLY blowing the vocal folds apart with the onset of the vowel. The glottal onset is also called the glottal stroke. The IPA symbol is [ʔ] and is placed directly before the vowel in IPA. ("eine" → ['ʔa:e nə]; "vereinen" → [fɛɚ 'ʔa:e nən]).

German Mixed Vowels

As described above in its definition, a mixed vowel is a speech sound created by combining a vowel tongue position with another vowel lip position. Here are the four German mixed vowels and their components:

Spelling	IPA symbol	Tongue Vowel	Lip vowel	
ü	[y:]	[i]	[u]	(closed)
	[Y]	[I]	[ʊ]	
ö	[ø:]	[e]	[o]	(closed)
	[œ]	[ɛ]	[ɔ]	

German mixed vowels can be quite challenging to create for non-German speakers. The following directions can help simplify articulator movement into individual steps. One must practice getting the series of steps to a smooth, confident motion.

1. Start with the tongue position. To create [y], keep the tip of the tongue released and down behind the bottom front teeth. Lift the arch of the tongue forward and high to create the [i] sound.

2. Add the lip position. While saying [i], slowly pull the lips forward into a rounded [u] position. The tongue should not move.

3. Move between the tongue position and the mixed vowel over and over again to practice. While intoning the [i] vowel, round the lips forward into the [u] position; then release them back to a neutral position; then round them forward again into the [u] position. Do this activity over and over again to ensure that the tongue does not move when the lips do.

4. Complete the same three steps with [Y], [ø], and [œ].

German diphthongs

To review diphthong creation, refer to pg. 9 in the English diction portion of this handbook. The three German diphthongs are [ɑːe], [ɑːo], and [ɔːø]. Two of the three are fairly straight forward. [ɑːo] is used for the combination "au" in German words. [ɑːe] is used for the combination "ei" in German words. These two combinations make fairly good sense to English speakers. [ɔːø] is used for the combinations "eu" and "äu." Non-German speakers should work to memorize these spellings to make transcribing texts into IPA and pronouncing the text easier and quicker.

Apocopation

When a final vowel is removed from the end of a word, an apostrophe is used to show the removal. It must retain its correct pronunciation from its original form. (ex. "habe" → ['hɑː bə] becomes "hab' " → [hɑb], not [hɑp].

SYLLABIFICATION

Division of German words into syllables is similar to division in English words. The following guidelines discuss how syllables are determined and marked:

1. When possible, divide syllables after vowels and before consonants. (ex. "Westen" → ['vɛ stən]).

2. Polysyllabic words with intervocalic consonants:
   a. Usually, divide after the first vowel and keep the consonant with the second syllable. This also applies to double consonants. (ex. "reiten" → ['rɑːe tən]; "heisse" → ['hɑːe sə]).
   b. In cases where a word element ending with a consonant is followed by a word element starting with a vowel, use a glottal stroke and keep the consonant with the first syllable. (ex. "herein" → [hɛɚ 'ʔaːen]).

3. When a consonant cluster is between two vowels, there are two options:
   a. If the consonants function as a combination, divide BEFORE the cluster. (ex. Köche → ['kœ çə]).
   b. If the consonants do not function as a combination, divide BETWEEN the consonants. Remember to divide after LeMoNeR consonants. (ex. "schmölzen" → ['ʃmœl tsən]; "jüngste" → ['jYŋ stə]).

4. When a vowel cluster is present, if the vowels function as a combination (diphthong) keep them together and divide after the vowels. (ex. "bereiten" → [bə ˈɾaːe tən]).

5. A syllable may contain only vowels, but a syllable MAY NOT contain only consonants. Every syllable must have at least one vowel.

6. Don't forget to indicate the primary stressed syllable by putting an **apostrophe** at the start of the syllable. Secondary stress is indicated with a **comma** before the syllable. (ex. "hinabzublicken" →
[hIn ˈʔap tsuː ˌblI kən]).

7. In general, stress will fall on the first syllable of the root word. However, when a stressed prefix is added to the root, the stress moves to the prefix.

LINKAGE

Once the German words of a song text are transcribed into IPA and divided into syllables, they must be grouped together in phrases and set to pitches or rhythms. Concerns/Issues in linkage and text setting are as follows:

o One open bracket is placed at the start of the poem, song, or phrase. One closed bracket is placed at the end of the poem, song, or phrase.

o Align (to the best of your ability) the syllable under the appropriate pitch or rhythm.

o When grace notes are present, there must be a vowel for the pitch.

o In addition to syllabic stress for each word, locate the stressed word or words in the larger phrase.

o Transcribe the diphthongs under the appropriate pitch or rhythm, BUT when singing diphthongs, delay the second vowel as long as possible.

o When possible, connect between words to ensure legato singing. HOWEVER, when connection would cause an unwanted word to form, put a small space between words. If the second word starts with a vowel, use a glottal stroke (gentle closure of vocal folds before an initial vowel) to clarify text. The IPA symbol is [ʔ].

o When a word ends with a consonant and the following word begins with a similar consonant, they must stay pure and not become one sound. For example, "und die Wolke" is IPA'd [ʊnt di ˈvɔl kə]. The [t] and [d] do not join to become one sound. Both must be heard.

One final point when dealing with linkage in German. When dealing with text in music, especially in older scores, syllables may not appear under the pitch on which they are meant to be sung. It is the responsibility of the singer and teacher to determine where each word and/or syllable falls. A good rule of thumb is: "You can always squish vowels together, but you can't always move consonants."
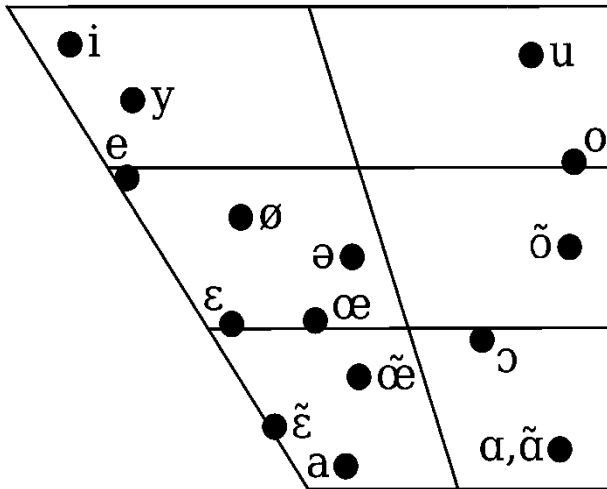
25

FRENCH DICTION

This Romantic language shares some sounds with Spanish and Italian, but French also has sounds not included in any other languages covered in this handbook. French pronunciation can be challenging because it is common for two, three, or even four vowels in a French word to result in a single IPA symbol. Though the combinations may be difficult to memorize at first, the rules of transcription are fairly consistent. Recognition and memorization of these combinations will make IPA transcription and correct pronunciation easier.

FRENCH VOWELS AND VOWEL ISSUES

- Pure vowels are speech sounds created with one mouth position and transcribed in one phoneme.
    - In general, final vowels are long and the others are short.
    - Diacritical marks affect some vowels but not all:
        - Accent grave [ak sɑ̃ ʹɡɾav] (grave accent)- points down "to the grave" (à, è, ù) and makes the "e" open but does not affect other vowels.
        - Accent aigu [ak sɑ̃ tɛ ʹgy] (acute accent)- points up at an "acute" angle (é) and makes the "e" closed.
        - Accent circonflexe [ak sɑ̃ siɾ kõ ʹflɛks] (circumflex accent)- a small upside down v over the vowel (â, ê, î, ô, û) that makes "e" open, "a" dark, and "o" closed.
        - Diérèse [dje ʹɾɛ zə] (tréma [ʹtɾe ma])- two dots over a vowel (ï, ë, ÿ) that follows another vowel, separating the two vowels into two syllables instead of functioning as a combination. For example, "naïf" is transcribed as [na ʹif]; the "a" and "ï" do not function as the combination "ai."
    - Mute "e"- In spoken French, final "e" is silent, but in singing, the mute "e" will often be pronounced and transcribed as [ə]. Look at musical setting and style to determine if a mute "e" or [ə] is more appropriate.
        - Remember that [ə] in French is not the same as [ə] in German or English. In fact, in older French diction textbooks, [ə] was often replaced with [ø] or [œ]. In French, the schwa is more rounded. Therefore, keep the lips rounded and pouty.
- Mixed vowels in French are created just as they are in German. As a reminder, a mixed vowel is a speech sound created by combining a vowel tongue position with another vowel lip position.
- Nasal vowels are speech sounds created with a pure or mixed vowel articulator position in the oral cavity but air flowing through the nasal cavity as well as the oral cavity.
    - Nasal vowels result when a vowel or vowel combination is followed by an "n" or "m" and another consonant or a final "n" or "m." The "n" or "m" is not pronounced nor transcribed in IPA. For example, the word "un" is transcribed as [œ̃] without an n. Another example is the word "lampe" which is transcribed as [ʹlɑ̃ pə] without an m.
    - Nasal vowels do not occur when "n" or "m" is doubled (except for a small number of exceptions) or when "n" or "m" is followed by a vowel. For example, "femme" → [ʹfa mə]

- Vocalic Harmonization refers to the closing of a normally-open vowel to match the closed vowel that follows in the next syllable. For example, "baiser" is transcribed as [bɛ 'ze] but is more often transcribed and pronounced with two closed "e" symbols [be 'ze] creating a more legato and intelligible line of text. Vocalic harmonization can affect [ɛ] followed by [e] and [œ] followed by [ø].

Mixed Vowels

Here are the four French mixed vowels and their components:

Spelling	IPA symbol	Tongue Vowel	Lip vowel	
u	[y]	[i]	[u]	(closed)
	[ɥ]	[i]	[u]	(closed glide)
eu, oeu, ueu, ue	[ø]	[e]	[o]	(closed)
	[œ]	[ɛ]	[ɔ]	

The following directions can help simplify articulator movement into individual steps. One must practice getting the series of steps to a smooth, confident motion.

1. Start with the tongue position. To create [y], keep the tip of the tongue released and down behind the bottom front teeth. Lift the arch of the tongue forward and high to create the [i] sound.
2. Add the lip position. While saying [i], slowly pull the lips forward into a rounded [u] position. The tongue should not move.
3. Move between the tongue position and the mixed vowel over and over again to practice. While intoning the [i] vowel, round the lips forward into the [u] position; then release them back to a neutral position; then round them forward again into the [u] position. Do this activity over and over again to ensure that the tongue does not move when the lips do.
4. Complete the same three steps with [ø] and [œ]. Practice moving lips forward and back to produce the [ɥ] into [i].

Nasal Vowels

Here are the four French nasal vowels and their approximate pure/mixed vowels.

IPA Symbol	Vowel foundation	Similar sound in English
[œ̃]	[œ]- [ɛ] tongue position and [ɔ] lip position	[ʌ] like a whiny "huh?"
[õ]	[o]- closed "o" position	[o] through the nose and with a lifted velum
[ɛ̃]	[ɛ]- open "e" position	[ae] like a whiny baby cry
[ɑ̃]	[ɑ]- dark "a" position	[ɑ] like a whiny "honk"

Pure Vowels	

Pure Vowels
 	
[a]- a single "a" except when followed by a
    pronounced final "s" or "z" or in "â."
    "chat" → [ʃa], "arrêt" → [a 'ʀɛ]
[ɑ]- a single "a" before a pronounced final "s" or "z,"
    also in "â." "hélas" → [e 'lɑs]; "âtre" → ['ɑ trə]
    in select words like "jadis" [ʒɑ 'dis]
	[o]- final "o"
	    "o" before final **silent** consonants;
	    "o" before [z] sound or "-tion" suffix;
	    "ô;"
	    combination "au" except when followed by "r;"
	    combination "eau;"
	    "aussi" → [o 'si]; "écho" → [e 'ko]
	[ɔ]- "o" before pronounced consonants except the [z] sound;
	    "o" before another vowel in the same word;
	    combination "au" when followed by "r"
	    "hors" → [ɔʀ]; "homme"→ ['ɔ mə]

[e]- "e" before final **silent** consonants, except "s" and "t;"
    "é"
    monosyllabic word "et"
    verb endings "-er," "-ez," and final "ai"
    noun and adjective ending "-er;"
    in initial "dess-," "desc-," "eff-," and "ess-;"
    in "ay" in "pays" and derivatives;
    in vocalic harmonization (see page 26)
    "oublier" → [u bli 'je]; "bézef" → [be 'zɛf]
[ɛ]- "e" before final **pronounced** consonants
    "è," "ê," and "ë;"
    "e" before a double consonant (usually)
    medial "e" when followed by a consonant in the
    same syllable;
    "ei" and "ai" when not nasal
    final "et"
    monosyllables ending in "-es" ("les," "ses," etc.)
    monosyllabic word "est"
    final "ayes"
    medial "ay" [ɛj]
    "soleil" → [sɔ 'lɛj]; "fermer" → [fɛʀ 'me]
    initial "des" in mult-syllabic words
[ə]- unaccented "e" when following by a consonant plus a
    vowel;
    final "es" (not monosyllables)
    final "e"
    verb ending "-ent."
    Final "e" in monosyllabic words ("le," "de," etc.)
    "regarder" → [ʀə gaʀ 'de]; "lampe" → ['lɑ̃ pə]

[u]- "ou" combination followed by a consonant.
    "bouquet" → [bu 'kɛ]; "amour" → [a 'muʀ]
[w]- "ou" combination followed by a vowel except [ə];
    "ou" combination followed by ill is [uj];
    "oi" is [wa] when not nasal;
    "oy" combination followed by another vowel is [waj]
    "voyant" → [vwa 'jɑ̃]; "miroir" → [mi 'ʀwaʀ]
silent- "u" after "g" or "q"
    "guerre" → ['gɛ ʀə]; "qui" → [ki]

Mixed Vowels

[œ]- "eu," "oeu," and "ueu" combinations when followed by
    a **pronounced** consonant or "-il" or "-ill"
    "oe" in "oeil"
    "ue" combination followed by "-il" or "-ille"
    "coeur" → [kœʀ]; "feuille" → ['fœ jə]
[ø]- "eu," "oeu," and "ueu" combinations when final in a
    word or followed by a final **silent** consonant;
    feminine ending "-euse"
    "-eute" and "eutre" endings
    "eû" in the word "jeûne"
    "veux" → [vø]; "berceuse" → [bɛʀ 'sø zə]
[y]- "u" or "û" when the only vowel in the syllable and
    not nasal;
    when "u" or "û" is followed by final unstressed "e," it
    may be [y] or [yə]
    "eu" and "eû" in verb forms of "avoir"
    "cruel" → [kʀy 'ɛl]; "nature" → [na 'ty ʀə]
[ɥ]- "u" when followed another vowel in the same syllable
    except the final syllable
    "nuit" → [nɥi]; "tuer" → [tɥe]

[i]- single "i," "î," or "y" when not nasal;
    "ï" when following another vowel;
    final "-ie"
    "ici" → [i 'si]; "lui" → [lɥi]
[j]- "i" when followed by a vowel other than [ə]
    intervocalic "ï" and "y"
    initial "y"
    combinations "-ill," "-ilh," and final "-il"
    *There are a few exceptions ("ville" is ['vi lə],
    "tranquille" is [tʀɑ̃ 'ki lə] and "mille" is [mi lə])

Nasal Vowels

[œ̃]- "un" or "um" when followed by a consonant or final in
    a word
    "quelqu'un" → [kɛl 'kœ̃]
[õ]- "on" or "om" when followed by a consonant or final in
    a word
    "bon" → [bõ]; "bombe" → ['bõ bə]
[ɛ̃]- "in," "im," "yn," "ym," "ein," "eim," "ain," "aim," or
    "ien" when followed by a consonant or final in word
    consonant or final in a word

combination "ti" may become [sj] or [tj] "travailler" → [tɾa va 'je]; "ciel" → [sjɛl]	"Sainte" → ['sɛ̃ tə]; "vin" → [vɛ̃] "oin" when followed by a consonant [wɛ̃] "lointain" → [lwɛ̃ 'tɛ̃] [ã]- "an," "am," "en," or "em" when followed by a consonant or final in a word; "ent" noun or adjective ending "quand" → [kã]; "amoureusement" → [a mu ɾø zə 'mã] *Practice the phrase "un bon vin blanc" (a good white wine) because it contains all the nasal vowels: [œ̃ bõ vɛ̃ blã]

FRENCH CONSONANTS AND CONSONANT ISSUES

- Just as combinations of vowels result in one symbol or phoneme, combinations of consonants and vowels exist that result in one or two symbols. For example, final "-il" is transcribed as [j], as in "soleil" [sɔ 'lɛj].

- Some consonants are silent when final in words.
    - "n" and "m" after a nasal vowel are silent
    - Final consonants are silent in French **except** "c," "r," "f, and "l." Remember to be "CAREFUL" to include these consonants when they are final in a word.
    - Sometimes final "s" is pronounced when it follows [ɑ]. For example, "hélas" is transcribed [e 'lɑs]

- The diacritical mark cédille [se 'di jə] is a curved symbol attached to the bottom of "c" when followed by "a," "o," or "u" making the letter transcribed as [s] instead of [k]. For example, "garçon" is transcribed [gaɾ 'sõ].

- For many years, lyric diction texts have prescribed the flipped "r" [ɾ] for pronunciation of all "r" in French. In spoken French, the uvular "r" [R] is far more common. When a uvular "r" can be used CLEARLY without the sound falling into the throat, it is appropriate to do so. If it is not possible due to physiological issues, difficult musical setting, or agreement in ensemble settings, flipped "r" [ɾ] is completely acceptable. Singers should work with their teachers to determine when [ɾ] or [R] is used.

- "H" is always silent in French. The aspirate [h] does not occur. However, some initial "h's" in French are permitted to be connected to the words that precede them. See the section on *liaison* (pg. 32) for more information.

Consonants	[n]- initial or medial "n" or "nn"
[b]- initial or medial "b" or "bb" Silent- final "b" "bouquet" → [bu 'kɛ]; troubler [tɾu 'ble]	"nuit" → [nɥi] Silent- final "n" or "n" after a nasal vowel "enfant" → [ã 'fã]
[s]- initial or medial single "c" when followed by "i," "e," or "y" "ç" "supplice" → [sy 'pli sə]; "garçon" → [gaɾ 'sõ] [k]- initial or medial single "c" when followed by "a,"	[p]- initial or medial "p" or "pp" "pleurez" → [plœ'ɾe] Silent- final "p" [f]- initial or medial "ph" "philosophie" → [fi lɔ zɔ 'fi ə]

"o," "u," or a consonant
  final "c"
    "avec" → [a 'vɛk]; "cruelle" → [kɾy 'ɛl]
[ks]- "cc"
    "succès" → [syk 'sɛ]
[ʃ]- initial or medial "ch"
    "chat" → [ʃa]; "changer" → [ʃɑ̃ 'ʒe]
	[k]- initial or medial "qu"
	    "quasi" → [ka 'zi]

	[ɾ]- initial, medial, or final "r" or "rr"
	    "roi" → [ɾwa]
	Silent- "r" in "-er" verb endings.
	    "fumer" → [fy 'me]

[d]- initial or medial "d" or "dd"
    Silent- final "d"
    "dans" → [dɑ̃]
[t]- final "d" when in liaison
    "quand il" → [kɑ̃ til]
	[s]- initial "s" or "ss"
	    medial "s" or "ss" when followed by another
	    consonant
	    intervocalic "ss"
	    "princesse" → [pɾɛ̃ 'sɛ sə]
	    final "s" in certain words, such as "hélas" [e 'lɑs]
	    and "lilas" [li 'lɑs]
	[z]- intervocalic single "s"
	    Final "s" in liaison
	    "tes yeux" → [tɛ 'zjø]

[f]- initial, medial, or final "f" or "ff"
    "enfant" → [ɑ̃ 'fɑ̃]
[v]- final "f" when linking to a word that begins with a
    vowel
    "neuf heures" → [nœ 'vœɾ]	

[g]- initial or medial "g" or "gg" when followed by "a,"
    "o," "u," or a consonant.
    "guerre" → [gɛɾ]; "grand" → [gɾɑ̃]
[ʒ]- initial or medial single "g" when followed by "i,"
    "e," or "y"
    "gentil" → [ʒɑ̃ 'tij]
[k]- final "g" in liaison
	[t]- initial or medial "t" or "tt"
	    "th"
	    "Thaïs" → [ta 'is]
	Silent- final "t"
	    "et" → [e]
	[sj]- "ti" in certain words, such as "nation" [na 'sjõ]

Silent- initial, medial, or final "h" * See *liaison* on page 32 for more information.	[v]- initial or medial "v" "développer" → [de vlɔ 'pe] Silent- final "v"

[ʒ]- initial, medial, or final "j"
    "jour" → [ʒuɾ]
	[w]- initial or medial "w" in words of non-French
	    origin

[k]- "k" in words of non-French origin	[ks]- medial "x" when followed by "i," "e," "y," or a
	    consonant
	    "extraordinaire" → [ɛk stɾa ɔɾ di 'nɛ ɾə]
	[gz]- medial "x" when followed by "a," "o," "u," or
	    "h"
	    "exhaustif" → [ɛg zos 'tif]
	Silent- final "x"
	    "yeux" → [jø]
	[z]- final "x" in liaison

[l]- initial, medial, or final "l" or "ll"
    "les" → [lɛ]
[j]- final "il," or medial "-ill" or "-ilh"
    "soleil" → [sɔ 'lɛj]
	[j]- initial or medial "y"
	    "pays" → [pe 'i]

[m]- initial or medial "m" or "mm"
    "mères" → ['mɛ ɾə]
 Silent- final "m" or "m" after a nasal vowel
    "flamber" → [flɑ̃ 'be]
	[z]- initial or medial "z"
	    "azure" [a 'zy ɾə]
	 Silent- final "z"
	    "avez" → [a 've]

SYLLABIFICATION

The rules of syllabification in French are quite similar to those in Italian. When possible, syllables should end with a vowel. Yet, French syllabification is also like German in that two adjacent letters will be pronounced one way if they are in the same syllable and another way if they are in separate syllables. The following are guidelines for dividing syllables:

- Vowel-Consonant-Vowel: divide before consonant.
    - amour [a 'muɾ]
- Vowel-Vowel
    - When they form one sound or the first is a glide, they should stay together.
        - deux [dø]; ciel [sjɛl]
    - Y between vowels becomes [ii], split down the middle and the second becomes a glide.
        - fuyez [fɥi 'je]
    - Watch out for ill, ille. There are some exceptions.
        - travailler [tɾa va 'je]; ville ['vi lə]
    - Some glides become vowels in singing. Look at musical setting for clues.
        - rouet [ɾwɛ] may become [ɾu ɛ] depending on text setting.
    - Sometimes io, ia, ue, or ua after a consonant and followed by L or R do not become a glide.
        - triomphe [tɾi 'õ fə]; cruel [kɾy 'ɛl]
    - Watch out for dieresis and other diacritical marks!
        - Thaïs [ta 'is]; poète [pɔ 'ɛ tə]
- Consonant-Consonant
    - Divide after nasal "m" or "n," usually.
    - If two consonants could start a word, keep them together.
        - pecheur [pɛ 'ʃœɾ]; partir [paɾ 'tiɾ]
    - If three consonants are adjacent, divide 1/2
        - chercher [ʃɛɾ 'ʃe]
    - Double consonants are not doubled in IPA.
        - Initial "emm-" and "enn-" **do** divide. First cons. is nasal, second is consonant.
        - CC and GG after e or i divide and result in two different consonants.
- Word Stress
    - The last syllable of the word (or next-to-last if last is schwa) gets a stress (l'accent d'intensité).
    - The last word of the phrase gets a stress.
    - The important words of the phrase get a stress (l'accent d'insistance).

LINKAGE

Three types of linkage between words occur in French and require different considerations.

1. *Normal linkage* refers to the connection of a pronounced final consonant to the word that follows it. For example, "L'amour est" is transcribed as [la mu ɾɛ]. The "r" is already pronounced and need only be moved the word that follows it. In simple terms, linkage is connection of sounds that are already present.

2. *Elision* refers to the removal of a final schwa and the connection of the preceding pronounced consonant to the word that follows it. For example, "garde à toi" is transcribed as [gaɾ da 'twa]. The "e" at the end of "garde"

would be silent in spoken French or schwa in sung French. With Elision, the "e" is dropped, and the "d" is connected to the word that follows it. In simple terms, elision is removal of vowels to allow linkage.

3. *Liaison* refers to the pronunciation of a normally-silent final consonant and connection to the word that follows it. For example, "tes yeux" is transcribed as [tɛ 'zjø]. The "s" at the end of "tes" is normally silent. In liaison, the "s" is pronounced as a [z] and connected to the word that follows it. In simple terms, liaison is the pronunciation of silent consonants to allow linkage. There are a few rules to follow when determining if liaison can be implemented.

   a. Liaison is forbidden after a singular noun or a proper name (with few exceptions).

   b. Liaison is forbidden through punctuation marks.

   c. Liaison is forbidden after the word "et."

   d. Liaison is forbidden with the word "un" when it functions as a number or pronoun. When it functions as an article, liaison is permitted. Use a translation to be sure.

   e. Liaison is forbidden before aspirate "h."

      i. "h" is always silent in French, but liaison is not permitted connecting into some words that begin with "h." In these cases, the "h" is called aspirate. "Les hommes" is transcribed as [lɛ zɔ mə] because "homme" contains an unaspirated "h." "Les haricots" is transcribed as [lɛ a ɾi ko] because the "h" is aspirate. The "s" in "les" is not permitted to be pronounced as a [z] and connected to "haricots."

   f. Liaison is ALLOWED after a plural noun.

   g. Liaison is ALLOWED between modifying words and the word to be modified (adjectives and their nouns)

   h. Liaison is ALLOWED between verb and object, preposition and object, inverted verb-subject combinations, and two-part verb forms

   i. Liaison may cause changes to occur to some pronunciation. Some nasal vowels will lose nasality when the connect to another word. Final "d" is pronounced as [t] in liaison; final "x" and "s" are pronounced as [z] in liaison; final "g" is pronounced as [k] in liaison; final "f" is pronounced as [v].

   j. Remember this helpful phrase: "un homme et une femme" (a man and a woman) is transcribed [œ̃ nɔ me y nə 'fa mə] with no liaison between "et" and "une." If the phrase is transcribed as [œ̃ nɔ me ty nə 'fa mə], it now says "un homme est une femme" (a man IS a woman).

TEXT SETTING

- One open bracket is placed at the start of the poem, song, or phrase. One closed bracket is placed at the end of the poem, song, or phrase.
- Align (to the best of your ability) the syllable under the appropriate pitch or rhythm.
- When grace notes are present, there must be a vowel for the pitch.

- When possible, connect between words to ensure legato singing. Firstly, look for opportunities for normal linkage between word. Secondly, look for elision and liaison without connecting through punctuation marks.
- When possible, divide syllables so they are open.
- Remember where stress marks go in French text.

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