



A guide to pronunciation

The Welsh alphabet is a bit different to the English with some extra letters and a few which are missing. Most significantly you will see several double-character letters. These take up one space in a crossword or wordsearch square, and you'll need to take care when looking them up in the dictionary too.

The language is phonetic, which means that once you have practiced the sounds, you can be confident of how to pronounce individual letters and combinations when you read a new word. Use the guide below to help.

| | |
|----|--|
| a | as in <i>mam</i> rather than <i>ate</i> |
| b | as in <i>ball</i> |
| c | always hard – never as in <i>cypher</i> |
| ch | like <i>bach</i> or <i>loch</i> , never as in <i>challenge</i> |
| d | as in <i>den</i> |
| dd | like <i>these</i> , <i>those</i> , <i>that</i> not as in <i>thanks</i> |
| e | open, like <i>air</i> |
| f | pronounced as v as in <i>vehicle</i> |
| ff | hard f as in <i>fabulous</i> |
| g | always hard as in <i>garden</i> , never soft as in <i>gentle</i> |
| ng | a sound like the ng in <i>singing</i> |
| h | as in <i>handle</i> |
| i | as in <i>pig</i> and <i>peek</i> , not as in <i>crime</i> |
| j | as in <i>jam</i> |
| l | as in <i>lamb</i> |
| ll | place tip of tongue behind the front top teeth, keep it there, and blow softly out! |
| m | as in <i>mam</i> |
| n | as in <i>night</i> |
| o | as in <i>orange</i> not as in <i>blow</i> |
| p | as in <i>pin</i> |
| ph | as in <i>elephant</i> |
| r | rolled if possible |
| rh | as r, but instead of sound behind made by the vocal chords, it is made by the breath |
| s | as in <i>sound</i> |
| t | as in <i>tiger</i> |
| th | as in <i>thanks</i> not as in <i>these</i> |
| u | as in <i>pin</i> or <i>teen</i> |
| w | as in <i>blue</i> |
| y | as in <i>cut</i> , <i>kit</i> or <i>keen</i> |



Here are the vowels by themselves

| | |
|---|---|
| A | as in <i>mam</i> rather than <i>ate</i> |
| E | open, like <i>air</i> |
| I | as in <i>pig</i> and <i>peek</i> , not as in <i>crime</i> |
| O | as in <i>orange</i> not as in <i>blow</i> |
| U | as in <i>pin</i> or <i>teen</i> |
| W | as in <i>blue</i> |
| Y | as in <i>cut</i> , <i>kit</i> or <i>keen</i> |

Sometimes we find two vowels next to each other – a diphthong. The best way to try to pronounce these is to take the individual letters and say them clearly but seamlessly moving into each other. See below for a guide

| | |
|------------|---|
| ai, ae, au | as in <i>cry</i> |
| aw | as in <i>proud</i> |
| eu, ei, ey | as in <i>pay</i> |
| ew | as in <i>oh no!</i> with a Scouse accent. |
| oe, oi, ou | as in <i>toy</i> |
| ow | as in <i>own</i> |
| uw | as in <i>you</i> |
| wy | as in <i>oi!</i> said by a Cockney |
| yw | as in <i>you</i> or <i>ew!</i> |

Don't let uncertainty about pronunciation put you off having a go at saying something in Welsh to another person. The best way to get used to the sounds is by practicing saying them and listening to lots of spoken Welsh on radio, television or your daily life.

Pob lwc!