

## Sounds Guide – how we pronounce the sounds

<https://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/for-home/advice-for-parents/learning-at-home-videos/parent-how-to-videos/how-to-help-with-phonics-videos/>

### Stretchy Sounds

These first sounds should all be stretched slightly. Try to avoid saying **uh** after each one:  
e.g. /mm/ not muh, /ss/ not suh, /ff/ not fuh.

m – mmmmmmountain (keep lips pressed together hard)  
s – ssssnake (keep teeth together and hiss – unvoiced)  
n – nnnnnnet (keep tongue behind teeth)  
f – ffffflower (keep teeth on bottom lip and force air out sharply – unvoiced)  
l – lllllleg (keep pointed curled tongue behind teeth).  
r – rrrrrrobot (say rrr as if you are growling)  
v – vvvvvvulture (keep teeth on bottom lip and force air out gently)  
z – zzzzzzig zzzzzag (keep teeth together and make a buzzing sound)  
th – thhhhank you (stick out tongue and breathe out sharply)  
sh – shhhh (make a shhh noise as though you are telling somebody to be quiet!)  
ng – *thin*nnnngg on a *strin*nnngg (curl your tongue at the back of your throat)  
nk – I *think* I *stink* (make a piggy oink noise without the oi! nk nk nk)

### Bouncy Sounds

These next sounds cannot be stretched.

**Make the sound as short as possible, avoiding uh at the end of the sound:**

t – (tick tongue behind the teeth – unvoiced)  
p – (make distinctive p with lips – unvoiced)  
k – (make sharp click at back of throat)  
c – as above  
h – (say h as you breathe sharply out – unvoiced)  
ch – (make a short sneezing sound)  
x – (say a sharp c and add s – unvoiced)

**You will find it harder to avoid saying uh at the end of these sounds:**

d – (tap tongue behind the teeth)  
g – (make soft sound in throat)  
b – (make a short, strong b with lips)  
j – (push lips forward)  
y – (keep edges of tongue against teeth)  
w – (keep lips tightly pursed)  
qu – (keep lips pursed as you say cw – unvoiced)

**The short vowels should be kept short and sharp:**

a: a-a-a (open mouth wide as if to take a bite of an apple)  
e: e-e-e (release mouth slightly from a position)  
i: i-i-i (make a sharp sound at the back of the throat – smile)  
o: o-o-o (push out lips, make the mouth into o shape)  
u: u-u-u (make a sound in the throat)

**The long vowel sounds are all stretchy sounds:**

ay: ay may I play  
ee: ee what do you see  
igh: fly high  
ow: blow the snow  
oo: poo at the zoo  
oo: look at a book  
ar: start the car  
or: shut the door  
air: that's not fair  
ir: whirl and twirl  
ou: shout it out  
oy: toy for a boy

**Please do not use letter names at this early stage. We teach those later 😊**