

The English Alphabetic Code

(alternative chart for USA, Canada and various regional accents)

simple code		complex code							
units of sound phoneme/s	graphemes in key word examples	graphemes, or spelling alternatives, which are code for the sounds							
/s/	s snake	-ss glass	-ce palace	-se house	ce cents	ci city	cy bicycle	sc scissors	-st- castle
/a/	a apple	-alf half	-alv calves				/s/	ps pseudonym	
/t/	t tent	-tt letter	-ed skipped	-bt debt	pt pterodactyl				
/i/	i insect	-y cymbals							

/p/	p pan	-pp puppet						
/n/	n net	-nn bonnet	kn knot	gn gnome	-ine engine			
/k/	k kit	c cat	-ck duck	ch chameleon	qu bouquet	que plaque		
/e/	e egg	-ea head	-ai said again					
/h/	h hat	wh who						

/r/	r rat	-rr arrow	wr write	rh rhinoceros				
/m/	m map	-mm hammer	-mb thumb	-mn column	-me welcome			
/d/	d dig	-dd puddle	-ed rained					
/g/	g girl	-gg juggle	gu guitar	gh ghost	-gue vogue			
/o/	o octopus	wa watch	qua qualify	alt salt				

/u/	u umbrella	-o son	-ou touch					
/l/	l ladder	-ll shell						
/ul/	-le kettle	-il pencil	-al hospital	-el camel				
/f/	f feathers	-ff cliff	ph photo	-gh laugh				
/b/	b bat	-bb rabbit	bu building					


/j/	j jug	-ge cabbage	g ^e gi gy gerbil giraffe gymnast	-dge fridge				
/y/	y yawn							
/ai/	ai aid	ay tray	a table	-ae sunda ^e	a-e cak ^e s	-ey prey	eigh eight	-ea break
/w/	w web	wh wheel	-u pengu ⁱⁿ			/ai/	-aigh straight	
/oa/	oa oak	ow bow	o yo-yo	-oe obo ^e	o-e rop ^e	-ough dough	-eau plateau	

/igh/	-igh night	-ie tie	i behind	-y shy	i-e bike	ei eider	eye eye	
/ee/	ee eel	ea eat	e emu	* -y * sunny	e-e concrete	-ey key *monkey	-ie chief *movie	-ine sardines
/or/	or fork	oar oars	-oor door	ore snore	-our four	war wardrobe	quar quarter	
/aw/	aw dawn	au sauce	-al chalk	augh caught	ough thought			
/z/	z zebra	-zz jazz	-s fries	-se cheese	-ze breeze			

/ng/	-ng gong	-n jung le			/ngk/	-nk in k	-nc un cle	
/v/	v v iolin	-ve do ve						
short /oo/	oo bo ok	-oul sh ou ld					long /oo/	-ough th rou gh
long /oo/	oo mo on	-ue bl ue	u-e fl u te	-ew cr ew	-ui fr ui t	-ou so u p	-o mo o ve	eu pne u matic
/ks/	-x fo x	-ks bo o ks	-cks du ck s	-kes ca ke s		/gz/	-x ex a m	-gs pe g s

/ch/	ch chairs	-tch patch					/cher/	-ture picture
/sh/	sh sheep	ch chef	-ti station	-ci magician	-ssi admission			
unvoiced /th/	th thistle							
voiced /th/	th there							
/kw/	qu queen							

/ou/	ou ouch	ow owl	-ough plough						
/oi/	oi ointment	oy toy							
/yoo/	-ue barbecue	u unicorn							
/er/	er mermaid	ir birthday	ur nurse	ear earth	wor world	Canada:	-our humour	-re theatre	
/ar/	ar artist					USA:	-or humor	-er theater	

/air/	air hair	-are hare	-ear bear	-ere where			This chart is not definitive. You may discover further code – add this to the chart and/or main display wall.
/eer/	eer deer	ear ears	-ere adhere	-ier cashier			Hollow letters alert the reader to various possible pronunciations.
/zh/	-si television	-s treasure	-z azure	-g courgette	-ge collage		 Phonics International by Debbie Hepplewhite

*-y, *-ey, *-ie as word endings are often pronounced between /i/ and /ee/. On this chart they appear in the /ee/ row.

The complexities of the English Alphabetic Code include:

1. one sound (phoneme) can be represented by one, two, three or four letters: e.g. /k/ **k**, /f/ **ph**, /igh/ **igh**, /ai/ **eigh**
2. one sound can be represented by different spellings (graphemes): e.g. /oa/ is represented by **o**, **oa**, **ow**, **oe**, **o-e**, **eau**, **ough**
3. one spelling can represent multiple sounds: e.g. 'ough': /oa/ **though**, /aw/ **thought**, /oo/ **through**, /ou/ **plough**

Key to the 12 units of Debbie Hepplewhite's Phonics International online synthetic phonics programme:

units 1-5	Simple code with some spelling alternatives	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th		
6-12	/air/, /eer/, /zh/, split digraphs, complex code	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th	12th

Debbie's programme introduces a simple code of at least one letter/s-sound correspondence for each of the 44+ sounds of speech of the English language. The programme then expands to teach further spelling and pronunciation variations of the complex Alphabetic Code (all within 12 units of resources).