

## 7. Vietnamese and English consonants and letters

Vietnamese and English have many of the same letters in the alphabet, but they do not always sound the same when they are spoken in words.

- The Vietnamese letter ‘x’ sounds like the English letter ‘s’
- The Vietnamese letter ‘đ’ sounds like the English letter ‘d’
- The Vietnamese letter combination ‘ch’ does not sound like the English ‘ch’.

This table compares the sounds written in the [International Phonetic Alphabet](#) with the Vietnamese and English letters.

	IPA consonant	Vietnamese letter	English letter
Plosives	/p/	p	p
	/b/	b	b
	/t/	t	t
	/tʰ/	th	-
	/t̚/	tr	-
	/d/	đ	d
	/c/	ch	-
	/k/	c, k, q	c, k
	/g/	-	g
	/ʔ/	-	-
Nasals	/m/	m	m
	/n/	n	n
	/ɲ/	nh	-
	/ŋ/	ng, ngh	ng
Trills	/r/	r	-
Fricatives	/f/	ph	f
	/v/	v	v
	/θ/	-	th
	/s/	x	s
	/z/	d, gi	z
	/ʃ/	-	sh
	/ʂ/	s	-
	/z̥/	r	-
	/x/	kh	-
	/y/	gh, g	-
	/h/	h	h
Affricates	/tʃ/	-	ch
	/dʒ/	-	j
Approximants (semivowels)	/w/	w, u, o	w
	/ɹ/	-	r
	/j/	i	y
Lateral approximant	/l/	l	l

Each of the links below takes you to a children’s cartoon to teach how to pronounce and write each Vietnamese letter. There may be some dialectal variations if you come from the North, Central, or Southern parts of Vietnam. The cartoons were produced by the Vietnamese Children's Television VTV7 on Youtube. Our VietSpeech consultant, Dr Ben Phạm was an advisor during development of these TV programs.

<b>A</b>	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mk6HhmS3SEg">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mk6HhmS3SEg</a>	<b>NG</b>	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=84ff7ouDD7A">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=84ff7ouDD7A</a>
<b>Ă</b>	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4JnsXzxiE3k">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4JnsXzxiE3k</a>	<b>NGH</b>	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TsTKCTr9YVE">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TsTKCTr9YVE</a>
<b>Â</b>	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wNL8V_MlmTA">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wNL8V_MlmTA</a>	<b>NH</b>	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xt4IQb-pW5Q">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xt4IQb-pW5Q</a>
<b>B</b>	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a9kTaQY72MU">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a9kTaQY72MU</a>	<b>O</b>	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iBX6RT_xrg0">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iBX6RT_xrg0</a>
<b>C</b>	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pRDN0XbGof8">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pRDN0XbGof8</a>	<b>Ô</b>	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IYpWGqbGbkw">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IYpWGqbGbkw</a>
<b>CH</b>	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pg8cSpM-B-E">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pg8cSpM-B-E</a>	<b>Ơ</b>	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KPzCvB3890o">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KPzCvB3890o</a>
<b>D</b>	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g6gAxkT5FuI">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g6gAxkT5FuI</a>	<b>P</b>	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fCZw8HoD1Zw">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fCZw8HoD1Zw</a>
<b>Đ</b>	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xs2mbWmhdFM">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xs2mbWmhdFM</a>	<b>PH</b>	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KWEIEhpaAZ0">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KWEIEhpaAZ0</a>
<b>E</b>	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5riu4_DkLug">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5riu4_DkLug</a>	<b>Q</b>	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gjdzJilXxxA">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gjdzJilXxxA</a>
<b>Ê</b>	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_r_NziSb7yc">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_r_NziSb7yc</a>	<b>QU</b>	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=td_bP6TBJnw">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=td_bP6TBJnw</a>
<b>G</b>	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3K8PMrXr0eA">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3K8PMrXr0eA</a>	<b>R</b>	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F9CIy7Oz2wU">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F9CIy7Oz2wU</a>
<b>GH</b>	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yeTaJ5GgTw8">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yeTaJ5GgTw8</a>	<b>S</b>	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R5B8ptsr_C8">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R5B8ptsr_C8</a>
<b>GI</b>	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZqvUrLjG81s">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZqvUrLjG81s</a>	<b>T</b>	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TNueOtABCZw">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TNueOtABCZw</a>
<b>H</b>	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EttYKHP9fs0">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EttYKHP9fs0</a>	<b>TH</b>	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lmT85DwjSV8">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lmT85DwjSV8</a>
<b>I</b>	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wIYIDuxp044">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wIYIDuxp044</a>	<b>TR</b>	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5F8ZX9rFfXw">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5F8ZX9rFfXw</a>
<b>K</b>	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vreqb67TDnk">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vreqb67TDnk</a>	<b>U</b>	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X14_q49I9O0">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X14_q49I9O0</a>
<b>KH</b>	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c2kAm44gAS8">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c2kAm44gAS8</a>	<b>Ư</b>	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vZLCRG3uZg8">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vZLCRG3uZg8</a>
<b>L</b>	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v-rlC5tJ2Z8">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v-rlC5tJ2Z8</a>	<b>V</b>	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4c5qA8p41Qc">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4c5qA8p41Qc</a>
<b>M</b>	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5bc-9BauXFc">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5bc-9BauXFc</a>	<b>X</b>	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vbRyqv1Piek">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vbRyqv1Piek</a>
<b>N</b>	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2mIReKX3qc8">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2mIReKX3qc8</a>	<b>Y</b>	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SvGr-tUeqRY">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SvGr-tUeqRY</a>
<b>Review</b>	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J_TUD3sMODw">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J_TUD3sMODw</a>	<b>Review</b>	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l249L0F01K0">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l249L0F01K0</a>

Vietnamese and English share many consonant sounds. Here is a table comparing the sounds using the International Phonetic Alphabet.

		Bilabial	Labio dental	Dental	Alveolar	Post alveolar	Retroflex	Palatal	Velar	Glottal
Plosive	English	p b			t d				k ɣ	
	Vietnamese	(p) b			t t <sup>h</sup> d		t̚	c	k (k <sup>p</sup> )	(ʔ)
Nasal	English	m			n				ŋ	
	Vietnamese	m			n			ɲ	ŋ (ŋ <sup>m</sup> )	
Trill	English									
	Vietnamese				(r)					
Fricative	English		f v	θ ð	s z	ʃ ʒ				h
	Vietnamese		f v		s z		s̺ z̺		x ɣ	h
Affricate	English							tʃ dʒ		
	Vietnamese							(tʃ)		
Approximant/ semivowel	English	w			ɹ			j		
	Vietnamese	w						j		
Lateral approximant	English		l							
	Vietnamese		l							

Note. In Vietnamese /p, ʔ, r/ are contested. ( ) dialectal variants

### More information

- International Phonetic Alphabet: <https://www.internationalphoneticassociation.org/content/ipa-chart>
- Phạm, B., & McLeod, S. (2016). Consonants, vowels and tones across Vietnamese dialects. *International Journal of Speech-Language Pathology*, 18(2), 122-134. <https://doi.org/10.3109/17549507.2015.1101162>
- Phạm, B., & McLeod, S. (2019). Vietnamese-speaking children's acquisition of consonants, semivowels, vowels, and tones in Northern Viet Nam. *Journal of Speech, Language, and Hearing Research*, 62(8), 2645-2670. [https://doi.org/10.1044/2019\\_JSLHR-S-17-0405](https://doi.org/10.1044/2019_JSLHR-S-17-0405)
- Phạm, B. & McLeod, S. (2019). Tone languages and communication disorders. In J. S. Damico & M. J. Ball (Eds.), *The SAGE encyclopedia of human communication sciences and disorders* (pp. 1977-1980). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.