



Introduction

The language of America, like its people, is a blend of words from all over the world. Do you *nosh* on a *pita* or *pizza* or *sushi* while you write to your *Baba*? Do you have a *Shar-pei* named *Jasmine*? Go to the *powwow* or the *rodeo*? All of these words have been added into a language that was already a shopping bag full of old words collected from all around Europe.

Does your language have one letter for every sound? Then maybe you are discouraged with English. **Soup!** will try to help you with a clear outline of the sounds, the *usual* letters that represent the sound, and some of the *exceptions*. If you print off **Soup!** you can use it to look up confusing words, and to jot down new words as you learn them. Illustrations and directions will help show you how the mouth is shaped to make these sounds. A "v" on the throat in the illustration shows the sound is *voiced*, and the throat should vibrate.

There are only 5 vowels in American English, but they and their blends make up about 21 sounds. The remaining letters of the alphabet, the 21 consonants, have only 18 sounds singly, but in combinations they make dozens of blends. However, most of these are simple blends, and only 8 combinations make whole new sounds.

Of course, there are differences in the pronunciation of English around the world, and even regional differences in America. **SOUP!** uses just plain old American English, the kind you would hear on the evening news.

There will be lessons posted later at this site, to help you use this resource. You can learn how words are divided into syllables, since that changes the pronunciation of vowels, and why some groups of letters cause the vowels sounds to change.

For example, there really are rules about how vowels sounds become long or short In the word "ride," an **e** at the end makes the first vowel -**i** - a long vowel This is the pattern: a vowel, followed by a single consonant, then the silent vowel- CVCV. (More consonants at the front of the word, don't change the vowel sound, as in *thrive* - CCCVCE). In "boat," there is a vowel pair (CVVC) which works the same, as the **o** is long and the **a** is silent. When there are two consonants at the end of words, such as "bridge" or "dance" (VCCV) the **e** is only there to make the **g** and the **c** have the **j** and **s** sound. The **e** can't reach across both consonants to make the first vowel long.

Of course, there are exceptions to these rules, especially in unstressed syllables.

English has so many common words that are exceptions. To help you, those are listed first in **Soup!** If there are more examples than space allows, note the *etc*.

At the end, there is also a list of words with silent letters. These letters are good for nothing, and cause a lot of problems - sort of like a fly in your soup!