

GERMAN



Summary of Vowel and Consonant Shifts

CONSONANTS

/ɪ/ → /r/ /ʊ/ → / / /ʒ/ → /ɛr/

d → t

b → p

g → k

z → s

v → f

*dʒ → tʃ *only shift to occur also in the initial position

/ð/ → /d/

/θ/ → /t/

/w/ → /v/

/s/ → “SH” /ʃ/

/k/ → /q/

VOWELS

“and” → “oont”

Bath Split /æ/ → /ɑ/

/æ/ → /ɛ/

/ʌ/ → /ɒ/

/oʊ/ → /o/

/eɪ/ → /e/

GERMAN

Rhythm and Intonation Pattern

A bright, forward, slightly hollow placement. Think of raising the soft palate. It is a crisp, clear accent, characterized by defined consonants and short vowel sounds. It is similar to American stressing and intonation patterns. Since English is a heavily Germanic language, they share these patterns as well as the rate of speech, roughly 90 words per minute.

*Most Germans learn British English, so it makes sense to employ the “Bath List.”

“R” Issues

Again, most Germans will learn British English, so they will most likely drop “Rs” that come after vowels. Dropping the /ɹ/ is appropriate. Replacing the dropped /ɹ/ with a uvular “r” /R/ to close off the vowel is also appropriate. A uvular “r” can also be used in the consonant position to start a word or syllable.

/ɹ/ → /R/ /r/ → / / /ʒ/ → /ɛR/

Phrases

rough rider, around, ringer, roaring, warrior, render, trainer, arranger, rarity
round rubber tires, after the first world war, remarkable memory, registered voter

Sentences

- Another author published under this cover.
- Mother would wander over the water.
- She earned her first wages from the work.
- Hermann was the first person to circle the world.

W → V

Replace the /w/ at the beginning and in the middle of a word with a /v/.

waterwheel → vaterveel /'vɒ.tə.vil/

werewolf → verevolf /'vɛə.volf/

Words

why, when, wherewithal, warmest winter, wait and wonder, will or won't, worry,
aware, always, one on one

Sentences

- a. We were in the wagon when it moved forward.
- b. The witch's whistle will always keep you awake.

Devoicing Consonants

The German dialect will devoice consonants in the middle and at the ends of words. Most consonants come in voiced/voiceless pairings. The list below demonstrates the voiced sound first and then the unvoiced or voiceless sound that is its pairing, as well as which sound it should convert to in German.

d → t	end of the world, bend in the wind, carved hardwood, good God
b → p	describe the problem, rubber club, amber emblem, tub of blubber
g → k	bigger hogs, beg for eggs, snug as a bug in a rug, haggle and argue
z → s	cats and dogs, dozens of roses, soldier's wounds, he was my husband
v → f	hover over, velvet glove, dive for cover, five of everything, love doves
*dʒ → tʃ	judge and jury, jump for joy, Jack and Jill, adjust wages, manage agents

*This is the only sound that can also be devoiced at the beginning of words as well. So "German" becomes "Cherman".

1. He arrived at one of the five curves.
2. The violin music was very vivid.
3. Bob fibbed about the job.
4. Rub the carbon above the third verb.
5. Bud was mad because she hid the deed in the sand.
6. Dad redid Andy's old room in stained wood.
7. The stag and the pig got lost in the fog.
8. Big bags of figs rotted in the bog.
9. Jim jumped to the jive jamming of the jazz band.
10. The agent brought charges against Jane and George.

"TH" Sound Substitutions

"TH" sounds are like the other consonant pairings above. There is a voiced and voiceless version. The substitutions follow the voicing rules.

A voiced "th" (they, them, those, there) shifts to a /d/.

A voiceless "th" (think, thought, thirty, thrifty) shifts to a /t/.

Words

/ð/ → /d/ rather, mother, than, weather, this, other, mother and father,
/θ/ → /t/ thick and thin, pith, cloth, thumb, through the thesaurus

Sentences

- a. They would rather gather feathers.
- b. The other mothers and fathers were there.

“S” → “SH” /ʃ/

“S” shift to a “sh” /ʃ/ sound when in initial consonant clusters of “sp” and “st”.

stiff → shtiff /ʃtɪf/

spell → shpell /ʃpɛl/

Words

stomach, stomp, spaniel, sprinkle, strong, spool, stolen, stupid spoof, sprung steel, steamed spinach, spick and span, stammered speech

Sentences

- a. The spinster made the room spick and span.
- b. The Spaniard spent his spare change on a stick of strawberry ice cream.

“Light” vs. “Dark” L

“L” functions in two ways. A “light l” or /l/ comes before a vowel and is made by flicking the tip of the tongue on the alveolar ridge. A “dark l” or /ɫ/ comes after a vowel, as in “full” or “cold” and is made by the middle of the tongue pressing against the roof of the mouth and soft palate, depending on how “dark” your “l” is. Every “l” in German is a light “l”!

Words

pill, tonal, logical, possible, literal, fill, falafel, wool, call, lamentable, tall, cool, amiable

Phrases

full bill, call of the wild, little tool, bottle of cold milk, old school, Belgian waffle

Sentences

- a. Phil swallowed the Belgian waffle in a single gulp.
- b. The old pelican's bill was filled full of mussels.
- c. The hobbled camel gobbled a gulp of hay and wriggled his middle.
- d. The cattle grazed in the hills and dales near the tall baronial castle.

“And” to “Oont” /ʊnt/

This is a completely optional change. It is definitely suitable for comedies, perhaps not as much for more serious pieces. Instead of saying “and”, say /ʊnt/. The vowel is like the vowel found in “foot”, followed by “nt”.

The “Bath” List

As noted before, most Germans learn British English, therefore they follow the British “Bath” list rules. This means that for any word that has the vowel sound found in “trap” /æ/, one must determine whether or not it changes to the sound in “father” /ɑ/.

Example words that shift from “trap” to “ah” or /æ/ → /ɑ/

Bath → B-ah-th /bɑ:θ/

After → Ah-ftuh /ɑ:ftə/

Last → L-ah-st /lɑ:st/

Words

can't, after, last, past/passed, chance, ask, answer, path, laugh, nasty, cast, demand, master, fast, advance, class, dance, castle, plant, vast, wrath, mask

For a complete list, try the following link:

<http://www.lachsa.net/ourpages/auto/2016/9/19/50757706/Ask%20List%20for%20Brit%20Dialect.pdf> Or search “the ask list dialect”

**This is a sound Americans already make (Father), yet these words are frequently missed when doing a British dialect. It is a simple, but important, matter of memorization.*

“Trap” /æ/ → “Dress” /ɛ/

If a word that has the vowel sound found in “trap” does not go to the “ah” sound, in other words, it does not fall on the “Bath” list, it shifts to the sound in “dress” /ɛ/.

back → beck that → thet

bat, flap, rat trap, pattern, flattened, cat, sacks of cash, cannon, catalogue, hassle, manhandle can’t stand that man, passionate glances, wrapped packages, dastardly campaign tactics

- a. A cask of salmon, stands with half a ham on the plank.
- b. If you’re the lad who has Matt’s hat, give it back.
- c. Hand the man another egg-salad sandwich.

“Strut” /ʌ/ → /ɒ/

The sound found in “strut” shifts to a short sound found by saying “ah” and rounding the lips halfway /ɒ/.

Strut /stɹʌt/ → /stɹɒt/

Words

cup, bubble, love, unutterable, tough, buzz, pub, glove, smother with butter, rough and tumble

Sentences

- a. Chuck hadn’t much luck cutting his ugly brother’s hair.
- b. Russell suffered through another of mother’s tough muffins.
- c. First, cut the nuts, then smother them in a tub of butter.
- d. The supper club offered a brunch of crunchy mussels.

The “Goat” Vowel /oʊ/ → /o/

Any word or syllable that has a “long o” sound or rhymes with “goat” is going to shift to a pure /o/ sound. It becomes a monophthong rather than a diphthong, like in General American. Americans might associate this sound with Minnesotan accents, as a point of local reference.

Words

know, Folio, rodeo, slowpoke, rodent, reproach, zone, elope, notice, atone, explode, roses, host

Phrases

old jokes, kosher roast, coal stove, roll over, so and so, cold nose

Sentences

- a. The old boat was sold - though it won't float.
- b. A coal black crow had flown slowly overhead.
- c. The bowl lay broken on the cold stone floor.
- d. Old Joe is only going to load the stones.

The “Face” Vowel /eɪ/ → /e/

Words that have the vowel sound in “face” shift to /e/. /e/ is the most similar to the vowel in “dress”, but the tongue is a bit higher and further forward in the mouth.

Words

essay, unstable, breakaway, daisy, nay-sayer, paste, playful, Canadian, lazy, fragrant, place

Phrases

change your ways, say you'll stay, paper chase, makes waste, layer cake, rain in Spain

Sentences

- a. The overweight maid ate her daily layer cake.
- b. Amos waited for the late train to Spain.
- c. The stranger waited in the doorway, safe from the rain.
- d. A day in jail made Dave evaluate his daily intake of Red Label.

Frau Blucher:

I'll never forget the first time I met Victor. It was on the village green, at the annual bock beer festival, where every beer costs a bock. I was an innocent young lamb and he was a dirty old goat. We were made for each other. All of a sudden, he took out his paraphernalia and shouted, "Let's play croquet!," and off to the fields we went. He carried his hoops and mallets and I carried his balls. What a festival! Fun and games all day long. Archery, badminton, potato sack. Victor won the three-legged race... all by himself. It was love at first sight.

Lawrence Jameson:

Good evening Sergeant Benson. As I told Miss Colgate, I am 'ere on vacation from my clinic. Small world, ya? Now let's have a look at those legs, shall we? I understand you are completely numb from the waist down is that correct? No feeling whatsoever?... let's see.. Hosen. Shoe. (removes FREDDY'S sock) Zocka. (sniffs it) Shrnutzig. (takes out feather) Mein fedder ... See if you feel this -(tickles FREDDY'S foot) tickle..tickle..tickle.. (no reaction) I See.... It looks like we'll have to try something a little more stringent. (turning to Christine) Trust me, Fraulein. I'm a doctor.

The Professor:

So it seems there is only one option, Mr. Hannay. (Removes a gun from his jacket pocket and points it at HANNAY) Unless of course you decide to join us. You're just the kind of man we need. Sharp. Intelligent. Cold-blooded. Ruthless. When the war comes, these will be the exact qualities we need. We will give you love, Hannay. And in return? You will love us!! The master race. On our great unstoppable march. Commanded eternally by destiny itself!! Well old sport? What do you say?? Will you join us? Hannay??