SPEECHSKRIPT

How to Read and Write in Speechskript

WHAT IS SPEECHSKRIPT?
Speechskript is a system for phonetically spelling words in the English language. It is simple and intuitive. It can be learned in one easy lesson.

WHAT MAKES SPEECHSKRIPT DIFFERENT?
Speechskript is different from conventional spelling in two big ways:
1. **Speechskript is consistent**. For every speech sound there is one and only one symbol. For every symbol there is one and only one speech sound. There's no ambiguity, no need to puzzle over how to pronounce a word or how to spell it, no need to memorize words, and no need to consult dictionaries or spell-checkers. Speechskript is a WYSIWYH system (What You See Is What You Hear).
2. **Speechskript is relative, not absolute**. It comes from the spoken language. As the spoken language changes, so does the Speechskript. This means there is no 'right' or 'wrong' way to spell words. Different people sometimes pronounce words differently, and so their Speechskript would be expected to reflect these differences.

HOW DO I LEARN SPEECKSKRIPT?
Learning Speechskript just entails learning the sound symbols. There aren't that many symbols to learn because Speechskript is not concerned with fine gradations of speech sound. Speechskript is only concerned with 'communication'. It only deals with *meaningful* speech sounds – sounds that can change the meaning of words.
In the following lesson we'll first learn the vowels, then the consonants, and finally end with a few helpful pointers. And that's it – there's nothing more to learn. The rest is just practice.

VOWELS

The following table introduces five easy vowels. The symbols are quite predictable. In fact each word looks no different in Speechskript than it does in conventional spelling. These vowel sounds are often referred to as the "short" vowels.

Speechskript Symbol	Sounds Like This	Spelled Like This
A	hat	HAT
E	bed	BED
I	big	BIG
O	top	TOP
U	sun	SUN

Speechskript recognizes 36 meaningful English speech sounds. Unfortunately the English alphabet only has 26 letters in it. So there's a "supply and-demand" problem. In order resolve this problem without having to invent strange symbols, Speechskript uses a number of "two-letter symbols" (digraphs).

The following table shows the five digraphs used to represent the "long" vowel sounds. Each of these symbols contain two letters – the first being a simple vowel and the second being an "E". The Speechskript spellings are different from the conventional spellings, but similar. The conventional spellings all have a "silent E" at the end of the word. The Speechskript spelling simply moves that "silent E" and puts it behind the vowel. So even though the spellings are different, they are nonetheless clear, unambiguous, and immediately identifiable.

Speechskript Symbol	Sounds Like This	Spelled Like This
AE	bake	BAEK
EE	hear	HERE
IE	bike	BIEK
OE	mole	MOEL
UE	flute	FLUET

There are only three more vowels to learn, but they're a bit trickier:

Speechskript Symbol	Sounds Like This	Spelled Like This
OO	book, look	BOOK, LOOK
R	bird, heard, early	BRD, HRD, RLEE
AW	lawn, ought, taught	LAWN, AWT, TAWT

Watch-out for words beginning with an "**R**". We're used to pronouncing them as consonants (red, rat). But in Speechskript they might be vowels (RNEST, RJ, RLEE, RB, R3 – earnest, urge, early, herb, earth).

Diphthongs (two vowel sounds joined together) can also be tricky. Even though they're just combinations of other sounds, you should probably learn them as individual, unique sounds:

Speechskript Symbol	Sounds Like This	Spelled Like This
OEY	toy	TOEY
OW	brown cow	BROWN KOW
AWR	star	STAWR

Don't get spooked by "Triple-E" words. They're rather common. Following our "left-to-right grouping convention", the "**EEE**" is almost always pronounced as: "**EE-E**".
Here are some examples:
    EKSPEEREEENS (experience)
    REESIPEEENT (resipient)
    AWDEEENS (audience)
    INGREEDEEENTS (ingredients)
    DISOEREEENT (disorient)
    PREEEMPTIV (preemptive)
Oops, here's an exception: KOEEEFISHUNT (coefficient)

CONSONANTS

Of the 24 consonant symbols that Speechskript uses, most of them are used exactly as they are used in conventional spellings. These familiar ones are listed here, needing no explanation:

B - D - F - H - J - K - L - M - N - P - R - S - T - V - W - Z

There are only 8 more symbols to learn. A few of these (3, NG and ZH) are less obvious and may require some explanation.

Speechskript Symbol	Sounds Like This	Spelled Like This
CH	church	CHRCH
G	go	GOE
SH	sugar	SHOOGR
TH	this, that	THIS, THAT
3	three thoughts	3REE 3AWTS
Y	yo-yo	YOE-YOE
NG	thanks king	THANGKS KING
ZH	pleasure	PLEZHR

"**CH**" in Speechskript is used just as it is in conventional spellings. But "C" is never found alone in Speechskript. It's always followed by an "H".
(NOTE: The symbols "C", "Q" and "X" do not exist in Speechskript.)

"**G**" in Speechskript always represents a "hard G" (Go Get Gertrude!). The "soft G" sound (George the German Gerbil) would be represented in Speechskript by the "**J**" symbol (Joerj thu Jrmun Jrbl).

"**3**" represents the *un*voiced "th" sound, as in 3REE (three). It may seem a bit strange, but it's necessary. The *voiced* "th" sound (this, that, these, those) uses the common "**TH**" symbol. It's important to have both the "**3**" and "**TH**" symbols because there's a

meaningful difference between the voiced and the unvoiced sounds (for example, "teeth" and "teethe").

"**NG**" is obvious in words such as "king" or "bring", but it is easy to overlook in g-less words such as "plank" and "thank", which in Speechskript would most likely be spelled as "plangk" and "3angk".

"**Y**" in Speechskript is always used as a consonant – never as a vowel. For example, the word "yearly" would probably be written in Speechskript as "yeerlee".

"**ZH**" isn't a very common sound in English. It appears in words such as "pleasure" and "treasure"

HELPFUL POINTERS

Double consonants are not used in Speechskript. [RR] and [GG] are sometimes seen, but they're not really double consonants. Here's why:
- "**R**" can function as both a consonant and a vowel. So in the word "JRREE" (jury) the first "R" could be thought of as a vowel and the second "R" as a consonant. They're both necessary. Without the extra "R", the reader might pronounce it as a one-syllable word.
- When the digraph "**NG**" is followed by the consonant "**G**" as in the word "KONGGRES" (congress), it *appears* that there are two G's. But of course "**NG**" and "**G**" are completely different symbols.

Reading long strings of vowels can seem confusing. Always follow a left-to-right grouping convention, allowing each letter "**E**" to form a digraph with the preceding vowel whenever possible. Here are some tough ones to practice with:
- JANYUEAEREE (January),
- SUEPEERREEOERITEE (superiority),
- OEAESIS (oasis).

Use vowel separators (such as a dot or a dash within a word) if necessary to avoid ambiguity. Here are some examples:
- KUN•GRAJUELAESHNZ (congratulations): The separator clarifies that the "**N**" and the "**G**" are separate symbols, not part of the digraph "**NG**".
- EKS•HAEL (exhale): The separator clarifies that the "**S**" and "**H**" are separate symbols, not part of the digraph "**SH**".
- KOERT•HOWS (courthouse): The separator clarifies that the "**T**" and the "**H**" are separate symbols, not part of the digraph "**TH**".
- GOE•R (goer, as in movie-goer): The separator clarifies that this is a 2-syllable word, not the 1-syllable word GOER (gore).

Avoid clutter. Because of its digraphs, Speechskript tends to take-up slightly more space than conventional spelling, so we should try to avoid making it worse with unnecessary

letters. People who overanalyze tongue positions sometimes use unnecessary letters. Take for example the word "church". Most people would probably write it as "CHRCH" in Speechskript. But if one overanalyzes the tongue position, one might write "CHRTCH" or even "TCHRTCH". This is unnecessary because there's no way to NOT make a "T" sound when pronouncing "CH".

Be aware that when reading we hear sounds in our heads differently than when we're listening to the spoken language. Sometimes it's hard to know which is which. Speechskript follows the spoken language.

Speechskript is not set in stone. If you don't like something about it, then experiment with it and change it if need be. This version of Speechskript has undergone many changes over the years. It's evolved into a logical system, but there's always room for improvement.

END OF LESSON

If you've understood everything up to here, you probably know as much about Speechskript as anybody on the planet. Practice with friends. One gift of Speechskript is that it sharpens-up our ears and teaches us to listen. Reading with the ear rather than with just the eye is a different sensation – and a pleasurable one. But the greatest gift of Speechskript is that it is nonjudgmental. There's no right or wrong way to pronounce words. It allows us to truly hear the unique beauty of everybody's tongue.

AZ YUE KAN SEE, SPEECHSKRIPT IZ NOT VAEREE DIFIKULT TUE LRN. UV KOERS IT WIL REEKWIER SUM PRAKTIS. SPEECHSKRIPT KAN INDEED MAEK AWR WRLD U BETR PLAES BIE BRINGING LITRRUSEE TUE AWL PEEPUL.

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Speechskript was invented by Secretary Michael during the time when computers were being taught to "hear" and "speak". His book "Ethics of Luck" was once available in Speechskript under the title "E3iks uv Luk". In everyday life he used Speechskript for his digital passwords so that he could easily remember them.

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