

Language Program offers detailed Wasco alphabet lessons

WASCO ALPHABET SOUND CHART Introduction

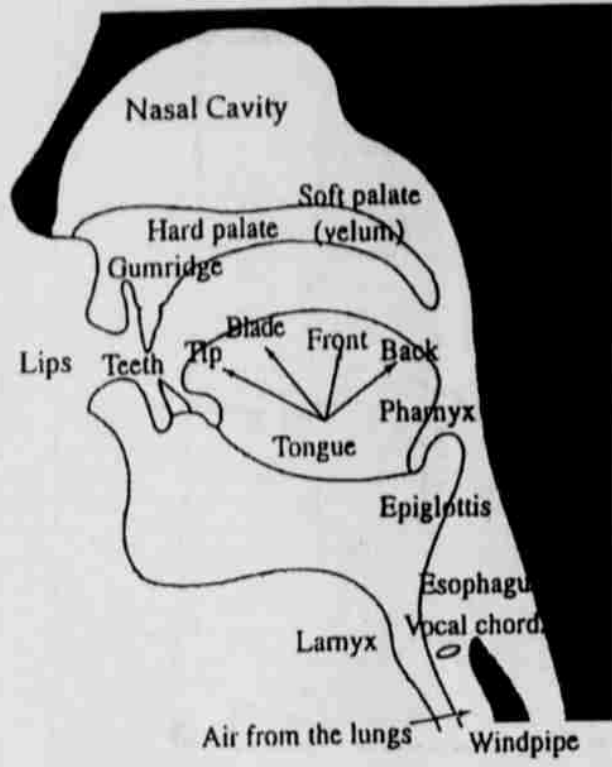
This sound chart is being introduced to be used as a reference by people just beginning to learn the Wasco language.

Learning to read and write the alphabet is just the beginning of actually speaking the language. Learning to speak the language will take time and dedication to become comfortable with knowing and understanding the language. In-depth language material will be available in class for those who want to continue the language learning process.

Much of the Wasco alphabet sounds the same as English. The following letters represent those similar sounds:

a, ä, b, ch, d, g, h, i, j, k, l, m, n, p, s, sh, t, u, w, y, and z

That's more than half of the Wasco alphabet, so you're about halfway there even before you start!



In the following, we will go through every letter of the alphabet and describe how to make the sound it represents. This side view will help you to identify the various parts of the sound tract that the sounds develop from.

l̄
The "barred l" is made when the tongue forms a groove, allowing air out of both sides of tongue, with a hushing sound. (It sounds somewhat similar to "l" in English word "clash" in rapid speech).
Examples: wafala lake
lun three
alágagwli spider

t
The "t" sound is made with the tongue touching the back of the teeth, stopping the air briefly then releasing it. (It sounds like the "t" in the English word "top").
Examples: tgm six
iyatúk his neck
ixt one

m
The "m" sound is made by pressing the lips together and having air come out through the nose. (It sounds like the "m" in the English word "mouth").
Examples: imulak elk
makwsh two
maika you

t'
The "hard t'" sound is made with the tongue touching the back of the teeth, stopping the air briefly then releasing it, with the throat tensed and the vocal chords closed and then popping open. (It sounds like the "t" made with a catch in the throat).
Examples: it'ukdi good
wit'ag again
it'isquau black fox

n
The "n" sound is produced when the tongue touches the back of teeth and the sound comes out through the nose. (It sounds like the "n" in the English word "nice").
Examples: naika i
winpu flea
inagun sturgeon

tl̄
The "tl̄" sound is made with the tongue touching the back of the teeth and forming a groove, allowing the air to flow out the sides of the tongue with a hissing sound. (It sounds like a combination of the "t" and "l" sounds).
Examples: patl̄ full
datá warm
yutnanan he's jumping around

p
The "soft p" sound is made by pressing the lips together and stopping the outgoing breath, then releasing it. (It sounds like the "p" in the English word "spoon").
Examples: kwapt then
wachpish blueback salmon
apips woodpecker

tl'
The "hard t'" sound is made with the tongue touching the back of teeth and forming a groove, allowing air out the sides of the tongue with a hushing sound, with the throat made tense and the vocal chords closed and then popping open. (It sounds like the "t" sound with a catch in the throat).
Examples: it'áik blacktail deer
nt'ala I'm foolish
at'ixtin slug

p'
The "hard p'" sound is made by pressing the lips together, stopping the outgoing breath and then releasing it, with the throat made tense and the vocal chords closed and then popping open. (It sounds like the "p" sound with a catch in the throat).
Examples: ip'úsh cat
ip'ishgash skunk
ap'únachikchik mosquito

u
The "u" sound is made with lips rounded with the tongue high and in the back of the mouth. (It sounds like "u" in the English word "pull").
Examples: igunat salmon
inanuksh otter
ichuxix my younger brother

q
The "q" sound is made as far back in the throat as the tongue can go, by stopping the air then releasing it. (There is no English sounds similar to this. The closest to it would be the "c" sound in "cold.")
Examples: aqábudit door
ichqwá water
ichagiqnan female teacher

w
The "w" sound is made with the lips rounded and vocal chords vibrating. (It sounds like the "w" as in the English word "wool").
Examples: wimat river
ikawa badger
awawat language

q'
The "hard q'" sound is made as far back in the throat as the tongue can go, by stopping the air and then releasing it, with the throat tensed and the vocal chords closed and then popping open. (It sounds like the "q" sound made with a catch in the throat.)
Examples: Galasq'ú Wasco people
wacq'un cup
aq'asnan lizard

x
The "x" sound is made when the middle of the tongue touches the roof of the mouth, making a friction noise. (There is no sound like this in English. The closest would be the "ch" in the name, "Bach").
Examples: yalixam ten
kadúx morning
ixt one

s
The "s" sound is made with the tongue touching the back of the teeth, allowing the air to pass through a narrow passage. (It sounds like the "s" in the English word "sing").
Examples: iskintwa black bear
isk'ulya coyote
ik'álaia raccoon

z
The "z" sound is made with the tongue touching the back of the teeth, allowing the air to pass through a narrow passage, with the vocal chords vibrating. (It sounds like the "z" in the English word "zoo").
Examples: jbniz Japanese

sh
The "sh" sound is made around the gum ridge and roof of the mouth with a hushing sound. (It sounds like the "sh" in the English word "show").
Examples: Kiksht Wasco language
ishtámx chief
ishgilksh wolf

y
The "y" sound is made by placing the mouth in the same position as for the vowel "i", then moving to the position needed for the complete sound of "y". (It sounds like "y" as in the English word "yesterday").
Examples: yalixam ten
isk'ulya coyote
yuit he's going

'
The "'" sound is known as the "glottal stop" and is used to modify sounds. It is made when the throat is made tense and the vocal chords are closed, by closing and opening the lid to the esophagus.
Examples: wi'ish
ikna'an

c'
The "hard c'" sound is made by placing the tip of the tongue against the back of the front teeth, then releasing the air, with the throat being tense and the vocal chords closed and then popping open. (It sounds like "c" with a catch in the throat).
Examples: c'unus few
ic'inun bird
ac'iudixax ant

h
The "h" sound is made by the friction of air passing through the vocal chords. (It sounds like the "h" in the English word "house").
Examples: ha'ái must
adúiha cow
idúiha buffalo, steer

ch
The "ch" sound is made by placing the tongue against the gum ridge and the roof of the mouth, then releasing the air softly. (It sounds like "ch" as in the English word "church").
Examples: ichagiqnan female teacher
ichalaki her key
wachpish blueback salmon

i
The "i" sound is made toward the front of the mouth with the tongue raised toward the roof of the mouth. (It sounds like the "i" in the English word "machine", but shorter).
Examples: ikala man
ixt one
kinwa in vain

ch'
The "hard ch'" sound is made like "ch", but with the throat made tense and the vocal chords closed and then popping open. (It sounds like the "ch" with a catch in the throat).
Examples: ich'inun eagle
ich'ánk deer
ich'ai rattlesnake

'
The "'" symbol is known as the "accent mark." Wasco words are normally stressed on the next-to-last syllable. When the stress is on a different syllable, the accent mark "'" is used. It indicates where a person will need to put more stress into the sound.

a
The "a" is made by the tongue being slightly arched between the middle and lowest part of the mouth. (It sounds like the sound "a" as in the English word "papa").
Examples: daba here
adúiha cow
ikawa badger

j
The "j" sound is made by placing the tongue against the gum ridge and the roof of the mouth, then releasing the air, with the vocal chords vibrating. (It sounds like "j" as in the English word "judge").
Example: jbniz Japanese

ch'
The "hard ch'" sound is made like "ch", but with the throat made tense and the vocal chords closed and then popping open. (It sounds like the "ch" with a catch in the throat).
Examples: ich'inun eagle
ich'ánk deer
ich'ai rattlesnake

j
The "j" sound is made by placing the tongue against the gum ridge and the roof of the mouth, then releasing the air, with the vocal chords vibrating. (It sounds like "j" as in the English word "judge").
Example: jbniz Japanese

q
The "q" sound is made as far back in the throat as the tongue can go, by stopping the air then releasing it. (There is no English sounds similar to this. The closest to it would be the "c" sound in "cold.")
Examples: aqábudit door
ichqwá water
ichagiqnan female teacher

ä
The "ä with two dots" is made by the tongue being slightly arched between the middle and lowest part of the mouth. It is always stressed. (It sounds like the sound "a" in the English word "can").
Examples: dagásh very yellow

d
The "d" sound is made with the tongue touching the back of the teeth, stopping the air briefly then releasing it, with the vocal chords vibrating. (It sounds like the "d" in the English word "dog").
Examples: dan what, thing
daminwa always
idúiha buffalo

k
The "soft k" sound is made towards the back of the mouth, by stopping the breath and releasing it. (It sounds like the "k" in the English word "key").
Examples: ikiutan horse, stallion
imulak elk
ikna'an magpie

q'
The "hard q'" sound is made as far back in the throat as the tongue can go, by stopping the air and then releasing it, with the throat tensed and the vocal chords closed and then popping open. (It sounds like the "q" sound made with a catch in the throat.)
Examples: Galasq'ú Wasco people
wacq'un cup
aq'asnan lizard

x
The "x" sound is made when the middle of the tongue touches the roof of the mouth, making a friction noise. (There is no sound like this in English. The closest would be the "ch" in the name, "Bach").
Examples: yalixam ten
kadúx morning
ixt one

b
The "b" sound is made by pressing the lips together and stopping the outgoing breath, then releasing it, with the vocal chords vibrating. (It sounds like the "b" in the English word "boy").
Examples: kwaba there
ibiagi bitterroot

g
The "front g" sound is made towards the back of the mouth, by stopping the breath and releasing it, with the vocal chords vibrating. (It sounds like the "g" in the English word "give").
Examples: gigwal down, below
igunat salmon
ishgilksh wolf

k'
The "hard k'" sound is made toward back of mouth, by stopping the breath and releasing it, with the throat tensed and the vocal chords closed and then popping open. (It sounds like the "k" with a catch in the throat).
Examples: k'aya no, not
ak'ashkash girl
isk'ulya coyote

s
The "s" sound is made with the tongue touching the back of the teeth, allowing the air to pass through a narrow passage. (It sounds like the "s" in the English word "sing").
Examples: iskintwa black bear
isk'ulya coyote
ik'álaia raccoon

z
The "z" sound is made with the tongue touching the back of the teeth, allowing the air to pass through a narrow passage, with the vocal chords vibrating. (It sounds like the "z" in the English word "zoo").
Examples: jbniz Japanese

c
The "c" sound is made by placing the tip of the tongue against the back of the front teeth then releasing the air softly. (It sounds like the "ts" in the English word "cats").
Examples: wacúiha silverside salmon
Wacáqws Lone Pine
Acáluclu snail

g
The "deep g" sound is made when the back of the tongue touches the the back part of the roof of the mouth, with the vocal chords vibrating. It is further back than the "front g" sound. (There is no sound like this in English).
Examples: gwnma five
agagilak woman
igugu chub, pike

l
The "l" sound is made when the tongue touches the back of the teeth and forms a groove, allowing air out both sides of the tongue, with the vocal chords vibrating. (It sounds like the "l" in the English word "like").
Examples: ikala man
lakt four
imulak elk

sh
The "sh" sound is made around the gum ridge and roof of the mouth with a hushing sound. (It sounds like the "sh" in the English word "show").
Examples: Kiksht Wasco language
ishtámx chief
ishgilksh wolf

y
The "y" sound is made by placing the mouth in the same position as for the vowel "i", then moving to the position needed for the complete sound of "y". (It sounds like "y" as in the English word "yesterday").
Examples: yalixam ten
isk'ulya coyote
yuit he's going

g
The "front g" sound is made towards the back of the mouth, by stopping the breath and releasing it, with the vocal chords vibrating. (It sounds like the "g" in the English word "give").
Examples: gigwal down, below
igunat salmon
ishgilksh wolf

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The "l" sound is made when the tongue touches the back of the teeth and forms a groove, allowing air out both sides of the tongue, with the vocal chords vibrating. (It sounds like the "l" in the English word "like").
Examples: ikala man
lakt four
imulak elk

sh
The "sh" sound is made around the gum ridge and roof of the mouth with a hushing sound. (It sounds like the "sh" in the English word "show").
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The "y" sound is made by placing the mouth in the same position as for the vowel "i", then moving to the position needed for the complete sound of "y". (It sounds like "y" as in the English word "yesterday").
Examples: yalixam ten
isk'ulya coyote
yuit he's going

z
The "z" sound is made with the tongue touching the back of the teeth, allowing the air to pass through a narrow passage, with the vocal chords vibrating. (It sounds like the "z" in the English word "zoo").
Examples: jbniz Japanese