



The Schwa Sound

Schwa is an unstressed or unaccented syllable. It often sounds like a short u (/ʊ/), but any of the five vowels can make a schwa sound. It is the most common sound in the English language. The schwa sound can also sound like a short /ɪ/ ('ih') sound. The symbol for the schwa sound is /ə/. Study the chart below. Can you think of an additional word for each vowel that contains the schwa sound? Write it in the last box.

vowel	sound	examples	my example
a	short /ʊ/ ("uh")	account ago	
e	/u/	telephone angel	
e	short /ɪ/ ("ih")	ticket broken	
i	/u/	holiday president	
i	short /ɪ/ ('ih')	bikini possible	
o	/u/	London other	
u	/u/	cactus walrus	