



Pronunciation

Schwa is an unstressed or unaccented syllable. It often sounds like a short u (/ʊ/), but it can also sound like a short /ɪ/ ('ih') sound. The symbol for the schwa sound is /ə/. Any of the five vowels can make a schwa sound. It is the most common sound in the English language.

Study the chart below. Then match the words in the word box to the words in the chart that are pronounced in the same way.

president	amount	walrus	elegant
broken	stencil	Boston	

vowel	sound	example	pronounced the same
a	short /ʊ/ ("uh")	account	
e	short /ʊ/ ("uh")	elephant	
e	short /ɪ/ ("ih")	ticket	
i	short /ʊ/ ("uh")	resident	
i	short /ɪ/ ('ih')	pencil	
o	short /ʊ/ ("uh")	London	
u	/u/	cactus	