

## B. The Phonemes of Vietnamese Language.

### I. Vowels

There are 12 vowel symbols in the Vietnamese alphabet but only 11 vowel phonemes.

Vietnamese spelling	Phoneme	Rough English Equivalent	Remarks	Examples (Sounds initial, middle & final positions)	Meaning
<b>a</b>	/a/	father	The open /a/	<b>anh</b>	elder brother
				<b>cam</b>	orange
				<b>ba</b>	three
<b>ã</b>	/ɒ/	hat	The fronted half-open /ɒ/ shorter and tenser than /ɔ/	<b>ăn</b>	to eat
				<b>năm</b>	five
<b>â</b>	/ʌ/	but	The retracted half-close /ʌ/ somewhat similar to /ʌ/ in but	<b>âm</b>	sound
				<b>hâm</b>	to heat
<b>e</b>	/ɛ/	bet	The half-open /ɛ/ somewhat similar to /ɛ/ in bet	<b>em</b>	younger brother/sister
				<b>đen</b>	black
				<b>xe</b>	vehicle
<b>ê</b>	/e/	may	The half-close /e/ somewhat similar to /e/ in may but without the y sound	<b>êm</b>	soft
				<b>đêm</b>	night
<b>i or y</b>	/i/	me	The close /i/, similar to /i/ in me but with tongue slightly retracted	<b>lê</b>	pear
				<b>im</b>	quiet
				<b>kim</b>	needle
				<b>đi</b>	to go
<b>o</b>	/ɔ/	law	The half-open /ɔ/ similar to /ɔ/ in law	<b>ong</b>	bee
				<b>bom</b>	bomb
				<b>lo</b>	to worry
<b>ô</b>	/o/	no	The half-close /o/ similar to /o/ in no, so; but without the v-like sound at the end	<b>ông</b>	Mr.
				<b>tôm</b>	shrimp
				<b>cô</b>	aunt
<b>ơ</b>	/ə/	fur	The half-close /ə/ similar to /ə/ in fur but without the r sound	<b>ơn</b>	favour
				<b>cơm</b>	cooked-rice
<b>u</b>	/u/	put	The close /u/ similar to /u/ in put with rounded lips.	<b>bơ</b>	butter
				<b>Úc</b>	Australia
				<b>cung</b>	bow
				<b>ngu</b>	stupid
<b>ư</b>	/ɯ/	uh-uh	The close /ɯ/, somewhat similar /ɯ/ but with lips pulled & not rounded.	<b>ưa</b>	to like
				<b>lưng</b>	back