

Transcript for Vowel Video Demonstration

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There are five rules when practicing the vowels. One is: use a mirror. Two is: hold the **jaw** open. Three: glue – put the **tip** of the tongue to the back of the bottom teeth, the lower teeth, for all the vowel sounds. Four: use an 'h,' which is all air (and) forces us to use more air and forces the **throat** open to avoid a **glottal attack** before each vowel. The fifth rule is – and this is a little bit confusing in the beginning – but it clears up quickly: practice the vowels three by three.

So that's 1-2-3 and then 4-5-6, 7-8-9, 10-11-12, 13-14-15. You will see that there are, if you have the paper, 16 vowels. But the 16th we don't practice by itself. It's called the *schwa*, the "nothing sound." It's very short. OK, 1-2-3: /hi/, /hI/, /hɛ/. 4-5-6 – 4 and 5 are actually two vowel sounds joined together to make one sound. They're actually diphthongs – that's a diphthong, two vowels joined together to make one sound. But they're on the vowel chart because these are considered **crossover** vowels – the tongue changes position. Number 4, the tongue is humped, rounded and humps a little bit higher. Number 5, it transitions – the tongue is **humped**, rounded and then it drops flat. When it drops flat, the tip of the tongue should still remain touching the back of the bottom teeth.

So, 1-2-3 again /hi/, /hI/, /hɛ/. 4-5-6 /he/, /heI/, /hae/. 7-8-9 /hɒ/, /hɑ/, /hɑ/. Number 9 is where the lips begin to work – the corners of the lips come in. Again, 7-8-9, /hɒ/, /hɑ/, /hɑ/. 10-11-12 -- 10, the lips gently round /hɔ/, /hɜ:/, /hʌ/. 11 the lips are more **pursed** but the mouth is open and 12 the lips are totally relaxed. Again 10-11-12: /hɔ/, /hɜ:/, /hʌ/. 13-14-15 – the lips are very round for 13. 14— they're like 11 but it's a shorter sounds and 15 they are very, very round. 13-14-15 – /həʊ/, /hu/, /hu:/.

So let's go through those one more time: /hi/, /hI/, /hɛ/.../he/, /heI/, /hae/. 7-8-9 h[ɒ], h[ɑ], h[a]. 10-11-12 /hɔ/, /hɜ:/, /hʌ/. 13-14-15 /həʊ/, /hu/, /hu:/.

Those are the vowels. Practice them three by three, please. If, in the middle of a set of three, you forget where you are, go back, look and then look in the mirror and do all three as a set. That's very important for getting it **embedded** into the muscles so the muscles know what to do. You're training muscles. I hope you enjoy!

New Words

jaw – *n.* either one of the two bones of the face where teeth grow

tip – *n.* the end of something that is usually long and thin

throat – *n.* the tube inside the neck that leads to the stomach and lungs

glottal attack – *n.* excessive closing of the vocal chords in the throat that can make pronunciation more difficult

crossover – *adj.* describes a change from one style or type of activity to another

humped – *adj.* describes a rounded lump on the surface of something

pursed – *adj.* (lips) formed into a tight circle or line

embed – *v.* to place or set something firmly in something else