

# Talk a Lot

## Learn the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA)

### Spelling and Sounds – The Magic “e” Rule

In one-syllable words that end with an “e”, the other vowel is almost always long and sounds the same as it does in the alphabet. For example:

“a” in “made” sounds like:	<b>A</b>	/eɪ/
“e” in “these” sounds like:	<b>E</b>	/i:/
“i” in “smile” sounds like:	<b>I</b>	/aɪ/
“o” in “phone” sounds like:	<b>O</b>	/əʊ/
“u” in “huge” sounds like:	<b>U</b>	/ju:/

This is known as the magic “e” rule. Note: the “e” is not pronounced – it is a silent letter. It applies to each of the five vowel letters in written English, although there are more words for “a”, “i”, and “o” than for “e” or “u”. With “u”, some of the words include the /j/ consonant sound, for example, “cute” /kju:t/ and “tube” /tju:b/, but some don’t, for example, “flume” /flu:m/ and “rule” /ru:l/.

Magic “e” words can be found in lots of different word groups, for example, there are nouns (e.g. “face” and “bike”), verbs (e.g. “close” and “came”), adjectives (e.g. “cute” or “wide”), and adverbs (e.g. “late”) in our list (see p.18.64). It is useful to know about the magic “e” rule when studying pronunciation, because many common words follow these spelling/pronunciation patterns.

There are some words that are exceptions to the rule (as we must expect in English), which are important to remember, because some of them are very common words, for example:

are  
awe  
blue  
bore  
cheese  
come  
core  
done

fore  
give  
gone  
have  
here  
live (verb)  
lose  
love

move  
none  
one  
please  
pore  
shone  
some  
sore

sure  
there  
vogue  
were  
wore

The magic “e” rule also applies in longer words that end with an “e”, for example “complete” and “suppose”, but not in *all* longer words that end with an “e”, for example, in two-syllable words that end with “-le”, like “little”, or that end with “-ce”, like “justice”.

Words with magic “e” are common in everyday English. If you read any short English text, such as a newspaper article, an email, or a reading text in an English coursebook, you will be sure to find some of them. Why not try it as an exercise and underline the ones that you find. See p.18.64 for a list of 250 common English words that obey the magic “e” rule (in alphabetical order), and the same list ordered by final consonant on p.18.65.

There are many word pairs which are fun to focus on, where the silent “e” changes a short vowel sound to a long vowel sound, and a new word is created, for example:

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When the other vowel is “a”, the magic “e” changes the short sound /æ/ to the long sound /eɪ/

bad	bade	hat	hate	nap	nape	stag	stage
can	cane	Jan	Jane	pan	pane	stat	state
Dan	Dane	mad	made	plan	plane	tat	Tate
fad	fade	man	mane	sag	sage	van	vane
gal	gale	mat	mate	sham	shame		

When the other vowel is “e”, the magic “e” changes the short sound /e/ to the long sound /i:/

met	mete	pet	Pete
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When the other vowel is “i”, the magic “e” changes the short sound /ɪ/ to the long sound /aɪ/

bid	bide	fin	fine	pin	pine	sit	site
bit	bite	hid	hide	pip	pipe	Tim	time
dim	dime	kit	kite	rid	ride	win	wine
din	dine	mit	mite	shin	shine	writ	write

When the other vowel is “o”, the magic “e” changes the short sound /ɒ/ to the long sound /əʊ/

cod	code	dot	dote	mod	mode	rob	robe
con	cone	hop	hope	mop	mope	rod	rode
cop	cope	lob	lobe	not	note	wok	woke

When the other vowel is “u”, the magic “e” changes the short sound /ʌ/ to the long sound /ju:/

cub	cube	hug	huge	tub	tube
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The rule for magic “e” words and suffixes is that if the suffix starts with a vowel letter, we lose the magic “e” from the spelling. For example:

#### Suffix:

- -ing (-ing forms)
- -ed (regular past forms)
- -er (comparative forms)
- -est (superlative forms)
- -en (verbs)

#### Examples:

hope > hope -ing > hoping  
race > race -ed > raced  
close > close -er > closer  
tame > tame -est > tamest  
wide > wide -en > widen

but, with suffixes that start with a consonant letter we keep the magic “e”, for example:

- -ly (adverbs) live > live -ly > lively
- -ful (adjectives) grate > grate -ful > grateful
- -ment (abstract nouns) amaze > amaze -ment > amazement

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## Learn the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA)

Spelling and Sounds – 250 Common Magic “e” Words (in Alphabetical Order)

*In one-syllable words that end with an “e”, the other vowel is almost always long and sounds the same as it does in the alphabet. This is known as the magic “e” rule. Note: the “e” is not pronounced – it is a silent letter.*

**a** /eɪ/

age  
ape  
bade  
bale  
behave  
brace  
brake  
cage  
cake  
came  
cane  
cave  
chase  
contemplate  
crate  
craze  
crusade  
Dane  
Dave  
engage  
escape  
exhale  
face  
fade  
fake  
fame  
fate  
faze  
forsake  
frame  
gale  
game  
gate  
gave  
gaze  
grace  
grate  
grave  
hale  
hate  
haze  
inhale  
Jane  
Kate  
knave  
lace  
lake  
lame  
lane  
late  
laze  
lemonade  
made

make  
male  
mane  
mate  
maze  
nape  
nave  
pace  
page  
pale  
pane  
pave  
plane  
plate  
race  
rake  
rave  
sage  
sale  
same  
sane  
shade  
shake  
shame  
Shane  
shave  
snake  
space  
stage  
stake  
stale  
state  
take  
tale  
tame  
tape  
Tate  
template  
trace  
trade  
vane  
wake  
whale

**e** /i:/

compete  
complete  
gene  
mete  
Pete  
these

**i** /aɪ/

abide  
arrive  
beside  
bide  
bike  
bite  
brine  
chide  
chime  
clime  
Clive  
compile  
dime  
dine  
file  
fine  
five  
hide  
hike  
hive  
ice  
ignite  
Ike  
jive  
kite  
knife  
lice  
life  
like  
lime  
line  
live  
mice  
Mike  
mile  
mine  
mite  
nice  
nine  
nite  
pike  
pile  
pine  
pipe  
polite  
pride  
prime  
prise  
prize  
provide  
quite  
ride  
rile

rise  
shine  
side  
site  
size  
smile  
strife  
sublime  
tide  
tile  
time  
trike  
trite  
twice  
vice  
while  
white  
wide  
wife  
wine  
wise  
write

**o** /əʊ/

atone  
bloke  
bone  
broke  
choke  
chose  
close  
code  
Coke  
coke  
cone  
cope  
dome  
dote  
drone  
elope  
explode  
globe  
hole  
home  
hone  
hope  
implode  
joke  
lobe  
lode  
mode  
mole  
mope

mote  
node  
nose  
note  
phone  
poke  
pole  
probe  
promote  
robe  
rode  
rope  
rose  
smoke  
sole  
stoke  
stole  
stone  
suppose  
those  
throne  
tone  
vote  
whole  
woke  
wrote

**u** /ju:/ or /u:/

abuse  
brute  
chute  
cube  
cute  
Danube  
flume  
fume  
huge  
legume  
Luke  
mule  
puke  
refuge  
rule  
tube  
use  
Yule

# Talk a Lot

## Learn the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA)

### Spelling and Sounds – 250 Common Magic “e” Words (Ordered by Final Consonant)

In one-syllable words that end with an “e”, the other vowel is almost always long and sounds the same as it does in the alphabet. This is known as the magic “e” rule. Note: the “e” is not pronounced – it is a silent letter.

<b>a</b> /eɪ/	Jane lane mane pane plane sane Shane vane  ape escape nape tape  chase  contemplate crate fate gate grate hate Kate late mate plate state Tate template  behave cave Dave gave grave knave nave pave rave shave  craze faze gaze haze laze maze	<b>i</b> /aɪ/	ice lice mice nice twice vice  abide beside bide chide hide pride provide ride side tide wide  knife life strife wife  bike hike like like Mike pike trike  compile file mile pile rile smile tile while  chime clime dime lime prime sublime	prise rise wise  bite ignite kite mite nite polite quite site trite white write  arrive Clive five hive jive live  prize size	atone bone cone drone hone phone stone throne tone  cope elope hope mope rope  chose close nose rose suppose those  dote mote note promote vote wrote
	<b>e</b> /i:/		<b>o</b> /əʊ/	<b>u</b> /ju:/ or /u:/	
brace face grace lace pace race space trace  bade crusade fade lemonade made shade trade  age cage engage page sage stage  brake cake fake forsake lake make rake shake snake stake take wake  bale exhale gale hale inhale male pale sale stale tale whale  came fame frame game lame same shame tame  cane Dane	gene  these  compete complete mete Pete	brine dine fine line mine nine pine shine time wine  pipe	globe lobe probe robe  code explode implode lode mode node rode  bloke broke choke Coke coke joke poke smoke stoke woke  hole mole pole sole stole whole  dome home	cube Danube tube  huge refuge  Luke puke  mule rule Yule  flume fume legume  abuse use  brute chute cute	