Vowel Practice

Contrasting monophthongs (simple vowels)

Monophthongs

[iː], [i], [e], [æ], [aː], [oː], [o], [uː], [yʊː], [u], [ər], [ə]


Contrasting monophthongs in pairs

[iː] – [i]


[iː] – [i]: eat fish, be sick, feel ill, see him, meet Bill, deal with, read this, beat it; [i] – [iː]: kiss me, lip cream, till three;

[i] – [e]


[i] – [e]: Big Ben, six guests, live well, since ten; [e] – [i]: tell Tim, test him;

[e] – [æ]

bed – bad, said – sad, beg – bag, leg – lag, hell – Hal, hem – ham;

[e] – [æ]: red bag, fell back, met Alice, pen pal; [æ] – [e]: Ann said, bad pen, add ten, marry Mary;

[æ] – [ə]:

cat – cart, hat – heart, mat – mart, pat – part, cap – carp, back – bark, pack – park,

[æ] – [ə]: Dan's father, last part, fast cars; [ə] – [æ]: smart Alex, hard candy, Karl's cat;

[æ] – [ə]


[æ] – [ə]: bad cut, bad blood, bad luck, black gun, last month, Ann's mother; [ə] – [æ]: some tan, one man, a bag, a hat;

[aː] – [oː]

park – pork, Stark – stork, part – port, cart – court, Marty – Morty,

[aː] – [oː]: carport, Bart bought, hard core; [oː] – [aː]: four cars, ball park, small yard;

[aː] – [ə]

bark – buck, dark – duck, lark – luck, tar – tuck, stark – stuck, heart – hut,

[aː] – [ər]
hard – heard, card – curd, far – fur, farm – firm, barn – burn, large –

splurge, charge – church;

heart – hurt, cart – Curt, dark – dirt, lark – lurk, park – perk, carton –
curtain,

[o:] – [ər]

war – were, ward – word, warm – worm, reward – reword, walk – work,
wart – worth;

four – fir, sore – sir, store – stir, core – occur, pour – purr;

born – burn, torn – turn, form – firm, board – bird, cord – curd,
course – curse, caught – curt, short – shirt, talk – Turk;

[o:] – [ər]: warm words, four birds, call Kurt; [ər] – [o:]: first floor, third
door, learn all;

[o] – [ə]
bomb – bum, rob – rub, college – color, common – come, comma –
company, body – buddy, bother – brother;

gone – done, nonsense – none, honor – honey, monitor – money,
monument – Monday, fond – front, tongs – tongue, sponsor – sponge;

conference – confess, continent – contain, content (n.) – content (adj.),
contract (n.) – contract (v.), contrary – control, policy – police;

lock – luck, sock – suck, cop – cup, hot – hut, not – nut, cloth – nothing,
bottle – butter, bottom – button;

[u:] – [yu:]
food – feud, fool – fume, cool – cute, who – hue, ooze – use, moose – muse,
boot – beauty;

[u:] – [u]
took, shoot – should;
[u] – [o]

cook – cock, look – lock, rook – rock, took – stock, put – pot, good – god;

[u] – [ə]


The sounds [ə] (but) and [ər] (bird)

[ə] – [ər]

luck – lurk, shut – shirt, but – Bert, hut – hurt, such – search, bust – burst, sofa – suffer, quota – quarter;

stressed [ə] – unstressed [ə]

son – lesson, some – awesome, muss – famous, numb – venom, thud – method,

stressed [ər] – unstressed [ər]

fur – offer, refer – suffer, sir – answer, purr – helper, burn – stubborn, turn – lantern;

Contrasting monophthongs and diphthongs in pairs

[e] – [ei]


[e] – [ei]: next day, let’s stay, Ben met Kate, felt great, tell tales; [ei] – [e]: make friends, raise hell, say when;

[a:] – [ai]

par – pie, are – eye, bar – by, charm – chime, hard – hide,

park – pike, spark – spike, harp – hype, cart – kite, Bart – bite;
[a:] – [ai]: far cry, hard to find, barfly; [ai] – [a:]: die hard, my card, like art;

[a:] – [au]
hard – hound, darn – down, lard – loud,
art – out, part – pout; start – stout; shark – shout;

[a:] – [au]: start now, calm down, dark house, farther south; [au] – [a:] how hard, downhearted;

[æ] – [ai]
lack – like, tap – type, rap – ripe, mass – mice, rat – right, fat – fight;

[æ] – [au]
Al – owl, lad – loud, sand – sound, tan – town, Dan – down, Fran – frown,
mass – mouse, lass – louse;

[o:] – [au]
short – shout; port – pout, sport – spout;

[o:] – [ou]
saw – so, law – low, raw – row, lawn – lone, drawn – drone, clause – close,
pause – pose, cause – cozy, caught – coat, ought – oat;
more – mow, bore – bow, door – doe, sore – sew, tore – tow, lord – load,
born – bone, torn – tone, mourn – mown;

[o:] – [ou]: more roads, call Flo, lawn mower; [ou] – [o:] cold sore, old Ford, no laws, so tall, don't fall, close call;

[o] – [ou]

option – open, pot – potent, hot – hotel, lost – ghost, monster – most, positive – post, hostel – host;

[o] – [ou]: hot rolls, pot roast, hostile host; [ou] – [o]: role model, don't bother, most hospitals;

[a] – [ou]
mud – mode, nut – note, but – boat, must – most, bust – boast, bus – both, Russ – gross;
done – donor, done – don't, won – won't, one – only, mother – motor, does – dose, cover – clover;

[ə] – [ou]: a boat, a donor, the host, some notes; [ou] – [ə]: only one, both mothers, won't trust, most buses, no money;

**Contrasting diphthongs in pairs**

[ai] – [au]

high – how, nine – noun, bright – brow, find – found, hind – hound, signed – sound;

[ai] – [au]: nice town, try now, light-brown, night owl, five rounds; [au] – [ai]: how nice;

[ai] – [oi]


[au] – [ou]

now – no, how – owe, pow – mow, allow – low, cow – crow, thou – though;


couch – coach, pouch – poach;

[ai] – [ou]
die – doe, tie – toe, lie – low, my – Moe, sigh – so, guy – go;

[ai] – [ei]
buy – bay, pie – pay, die – day, lie – lay, sty – stay, high – hey, rye – ray;
rice – race, fight – fate, light – late, right – rate, height – hate;
[ai] – [ei]: my day, white paint, why wait, crime rate; [ei] – [ai]: take time, eight miles, late night, say hi;

**Diphthongs**

[ei], [ai], [au], [oi], [ou]
bay – buy – bough – boy – bone;
bait – bite – bout – boil – boat;
Dane – dine – down – Doyle – dough;
tame – time – town – toy – tone;
ale – I'll – owl – oil – old;
great – grind – ground – groin – grow;
paint – pint – pound – point – poll;

http://usefulenglish.ru/phonetics/practice-vowel-contrast