

German Pronunciation

Languages

The letters that do not say what an English speaker expects.

Consistent rules with very few exceptions.

Vowels

a – father · e – bed · i – machine

o – or · u – flute

ä – bear · ö – like French eu · ü – French u

ei – 'eye' · ie – 'ee' · eu/äu – 'oy'

Consonants

w – like English v

v – usually like f

z – 'ts'

s before a vowel – z

sch – sh · sp/st at word start – shp/sht

ch – after a/o/u as in loch; otherwise softer

Endings

-b, -d, -g at the end harden to p, t, k

-er sounds like 'a'

ß – always a sharp s

ei and ie are opposites: say the SECOND letter's English name. Bier is 'beer'; Wein is 'vine'.