

From Wanda E. Brunstetter

A Guide to Pronunciation of PA-Dutch Words

Vowels

A vowel is long when doubled. A vowel is long when followed by an *h*. Almost always a vowel is short when followed by two consonants.

Vowel	Pennsylvania Dutch	English Approximation
a (short)	sache (things)	a as in what
aa(long)	aag (eye)	aw as in saw
ae(long)	baer (bear)	ea as in bear
	gaes (gas)	a as in gas
ae (short)	paesching (peach)	a as in match
a (r) (long)	darf (may)	a as in father
e (long)	geht (goes)	a as in gate
	weech (soft)	
e (short)	fett (fat)	e as in get
i (long)	ihn (him)	ee as in see
	Biewel (Bible)	
i (short)	bin (am)	i as in pin
o (long)	rot (red)	oa as in boat
u (long)	blut (blood)	oo as in moon
u (short)	dumm (stupid)	oo as in cook

Diphthongs

Diphthong	Pennsylvania Dutch	English Approximation
au	laut (loud)	ow as in cow
ei	leicht (light)	i as in pine
oi	roi (row)	oy as in boy

Consonants

Most of the consonants of Pennsylvania Dutch are pronounced much like they are in American English (b, p, d, t, k, ck, f, h, l, m, n, s and w). Some of them are associated with letters that occur in English but with different sounds.

Consonant	Pennsylvania Dutch	English Approximation
b	bank (bench)	b as in bank
	ab (off, away)	p as in bump
ch (always follows a vowel)	ich (I)	(Sound not in English)
	mache (to make)	(Sound not in English)

ck	packe (to pack) pack (pack)	ck	as in	picky pack
d	daal (valley) dodder (egg yolk) dog (death)	d	as in	dog
f	finne (to find) hoffe (to hope) schof (sheep)	dd	as in	buddy
g	geld (money) Grischt (Christian) regischder (register)	d	as in	dot
g (between vowels only)	aage (eyes)	f	as in	find
g (in final position)	aag (eye)	f	as in	huffy
h	hut (hat)	f	as in	hoof
h (silent)	uhr (clock)	g	as in	gold
k	keenich (king)	g	as in	ground
l	leicht (funeral) millich (milk) schlingel (rogue)	g	as in	regulate
m	mann (man) besem (broom)	(Sound not in English)		
n	not (need) menner (men) in (in)	k	as in	kick
ng	ring (ring)	h	as in	hat
nk	genunk (enough)	k	as in	king
p	parre (pastor) lumbe (rag)	l	as in	light
pp	kopp (head) roppe (to pick, pluck)	ll	as in	silly
s, ss	sadde (sort of) kissi (cushion) boss (kiss)	l	as in	single
sch	schul (school)	m	as in	man
t	tee (tea) text (text) dot (dead)	m	as in	broom
v	verrickt (crazy)	n	as in	not
w	wasser (water)	nn	as in	banner
x	hex (witch)	n	as in	in
x (sometimes ch)	waxe, wachse (to grow)	ng	as in	ring
y	yung (young)	nk	as in	sink
z	zucker (sugar)	p	as in	pastor
		b	as in	number
		p	as in	hep
		bb	as in	robber
		s	as in	sort
		ss	as in	sissy
		ss	as in	boss
		sh	as in	shop
		t	as in	tea
		t	as in	next
		t	as in	debt
		f	as in	for
		w	as in	water
		x	as in	ax
		x	as in	ax
		y	as in	yard
		ts	as in	hats