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English Diphthongs

A diphthong is a combination of two vowel sounds pronounced together, for example, /eɪ/ as in *play* /pleɪ/ and /əʊ/ as in *cold* /kəʊld/.
The first vowel sound is always longer than the second. There are eight diphthongs in English, but one of them is hardly ever used. Many native speakers use /ɔ:/ instead of /ʊə/. For example, *poor* is usually pronounced /pɔ:/instead of /pʊə/.

Here you have the 8 English diphthongs and two examples of each so that you can recognize and remember how they sound:

/ ɪə / real, clear
/ eɪ / say , table
/ ʊə / tour , cure
/ ɔɪ / boy , noise
/ əʊ / coat , zero
/ eə / where , bear
/ aɪ / five , ride
/ aʊ / how , sound

1. Match the word with the same pronunciation

1 / / crowd	a grey
2 / / phone	b hair
3 / / try	c here
4 / / day	d high
5 / / noise	e loud
6 / / wear	f shown
7 / / year	g toys

2. Choose the phonetic symbol for each word

1 overweight /eɪ/ /aɪ/

2 emotional /aʊ/ /əʊ/

3 here /ɪə/ /eə/

4 noisy /ɔɪ/ /əʊ/

5 blonde-haired /ɪə/ /eə/

6 foreground /aʊ/ /əʊ/

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7 stylish /eɪ/ /aɪ/

8 tour /əʊ/ /ʊə/

3. Classify each word according to the phonetic symbol

jury	brown	beer	cloud	flow
client	there	lawyer	nearly	noise
where	high	window	wait	radio
poor	chair	trainers	take	flour
height	severe	deny	ghost	smoke
appear	coin	scary	visual	only
my	taste	doubt	medium	oyster
during	employ	towel	really	range

eɪ	əʊ	aɪ	aʊ	ɔɪ	ɪə	eə	ʊə
late /leɪt/	go /gəʊ/	light /laɪt/	cow /kaʊ/	boy /bɔɪ/	dear /dɪə/	fair /feə/	tour /tʊə/

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4. Which of the following words include these diphthongs?

/eɪ/ feed – bed – food – fight – say

/aɪ/ said – read – high – food – says

/ɔɪ/ should – boy – though – blood – so

/əʊ/ through – there – here – so – hot

/aʊ/ now – hair – face – tour – lower

/ɪə/ there – seed – hair – late – here

5. **Odd One Out. Circle the word with a different sound. Use a dictionary to check.**

1.	dead	(mean)	bread	head
2.	fruit	suit	juice	built
3.	half	have	has	ham
4.	horse	history	story	cord
5.	look	good	foot	blood
6.	country	young	youth	couple
7.	oven	colour	son	gone
8.	talk	chalk	calm	fall



nice job!

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