

CZECH PRONUNCIATION

VOWELS - short and long (the difference is expressed by a sign called *čárka* '):

SHORT VOWELS			LONG VOWELS		
Czech letter	it sounds in English like	Czech example	Czech letter	it sounds in English like	Czech example
a	cup	mapa map, hala hall	á	father	dávám I give
e	get	Helena , ven outside	é	care	lék drug, mléko milk
i, y	it	vila villa, byt flat	í, ý	seat	víla fay, bít beat, být be
o	hot	oko eye, noha leg	ó	hall	móda fashion
u	put	ruka hand, puma	ú, ů	stool	ústa mouth, dům house

CONSONANTS

1) THE SAME SOUND AS IN ENGLISH

Czech letter	it sounds in English like	Czech example
b	baby	brada chin, bota shoe, obloha sky, bedna box
d	day	doba period, dar gift, dlaha splint, den day, dva two, deset ten
f	foot	fotbal football, fotka photo, forma form, figura figure
g	gum (never like „ginger“)	guma rubber, logika logic, gesto gesture, gorila gorilla
h	hall	stehno thigh, noha leg, nehet nail, hlava head
l	like	sval muscle, list leaf, Labe (Czech river), les forest, koleno knee
m	my	maso meat, mobil mobile, miska bowl, minuta minute
n	name	nebo or, nos nose, nosit carry, nota note, nese he carries
s	sun	soda soda, sova owl, sama alone, slon elephant, nese he carries
v	victory	voda water, vana bath, pivo beer, vlasy hair
z	zero	zip zip, jazyk tongue, mozek brain, zlato gold, zvuk sound

2) DIFFERENT SOUNDS OF KNOWN LETTERS

Czech letter	it sounds in English like	Czech example
c	oats (never like „clock“)	co what, cesta way, palec thumb, moc much, cihla brick
ch	Scottish Loch Ness	ucho ear, chyba mistake, mícha spinal cord, dech breath
j	yes (never like „jacket“)	jeho his, jeden one, jazyk tongue, Jan John, jet go, jizva scar
k	car (but without aspiration)	kolo circle, oko eye, bok side, kus piece, ruka hand
p	paper (without aspiration)	postel bed, pas waist, mapa map, tepna artery, papír paper
r	„r“ in Scottish English	ret lip, ruka hand, dar gift, ryba fish, Praha Prague, strana page
t	tick (without aspiration)	teta aunt, pata heel, ret lip, bota shoe, kost bone

3) DIFFERENT LETTERS AND SIGNS (a sign *háček* ˇ makes a letter soft)

Czech letter	it sounds in English like	Czech example
č	cheap	čelo forehead, kyčel hip, horečka fever, moč urine, čočka lentil
d'	duty	hrud' chest, d'ábel devil
ň	new	síň atrium, holeň shin, dřeň marrow, buňka cell, dlaň palm
ř	← <i>whispered long Czech „r“</i>	břicho belly, páteř spine, Řím Rome, kuře chicken, tři three
š	ship	uši ears, kašel cough, myš mouse, škola school, šála scarf, šest six
t'	Tuesday	chuť taste, řit' anus, paměť memory, závrat' dizziness, t'ukat tap
ž	vision	žila vein, paže arm, žláza gland, žaludek stomach, kůže skin

NOTES:

1) Letters **q, w, x** appear only in words of non-Czech origin:

- **q** is usually replaced by **kv** both in written and oral way (quinta → **kvinta**)
- **w** is pronounced like **v** (**workoholik**)
- **x** sounds like **ks** (**extra, reflex**)

2) The sound **r, l, m** **form a syllable** if standing between two consonants or at the end of a word after a consonant:

- pronounced as one syllable: **krk** neck, **prst** finger, **vlk** wolf
- pronounced as two syllables: **prso** [pr-so] breast, **slza** [sl-za] tear, **vedl** [ve-dl] he led, **sedm** [se-dm/se-dum] seven, **osm** [o-sm/o-sum] eight

3) Letters **d, t, n**

- if followed by **i** or **ě**, are pronounced softly like **d', t', ň**:
 - **dě, tě, ně**: **děloha** [d'eloha] uterus, **tělo** [t'elo] body, **zánět** [záňet] inflammation
 - **di, ti, ni**: **chodit** [chod'it] go, **tekutina** [tekut'ina] liquid, **bránice** [bráňice] diaphragm
- if followed by any other vowel (a, e, o, u, y), they are pronounced regularly like **d, t, n**:
(**rada** advice, **nemoc** disease, **nos** nose, **duna** dune, **dotyk** touch)

4) Some of the **voiced** speech-sounds change to the **voiceless** ones (or opposite):

voiced	b	v	d	d'	z	ž	g	h	r	l	m	n	ň	j	ř	
	❖	❖	❖	❖	❖	❖	❖	❖								
voiceless	p	f	t	t'	s	š	k	ch	-	-	-	-	-	-	c	č

- at the end of a word:

zub [zup] tooth, **krev** [kref] blood, **porod** [porot] birth, **hrud'** [hruť'] chest, **kaz** [kas] caries, **muž** [muš] man, **ekolog** [ekolok] ecologist, **steh** [stech] stitch

- in the group of consonants

lebka [lepka] skull, **sladký** [slatký] sweet, **vteřina** [fteřina] second, **zkouška** [skouška] exam

- another examples:

obklad [opklat] compress, **kdo** [gdo] who, **obchod** [opchot] shop, **čtyři** [coll. štyři] four

- prepositions before voiceless or vowel:

v Praze [f praze] in Prague, **y oku** [f oku] in the eye, **z parku** [s parku] from park

5) Sounds in groups **bě, pě, vě, mě** are pronounced like:

- **bě, pě, vě** [bje, pje, vje] – **oběh** [objech] circulation, **oběd** [objet] lunch, **pěst** [pjest] wrist, **pět** [pjet] five, **věnc** [vjenc] wreath, **dvě** [dvje] two, **devět** [devjet] nine
- **mě** [mňe] – **paměť** [pamňet'] memory, **měsíc** [mňesíc] month, **umělý** [umňelý] artificial, **rozuměl** [rozumňel] he understood

MEETING PEOPLE

společensky styk

Simple things you should know....

Hello/Hi	Ahoj
Goodbye	Na
Shledanou	
	Yes
No	Ne
Excuse me	Promiňte
Please	Prosím
Thank you (very much) (mnohokrát)	Děkuji

Greetings....

Good morning	Dobré ráno
Good day	Dobry den
Good afternoon odpoledne	Dobré
Good evening	Dobry večer
Good night noc	Dobrou

First Encounters

Setkání

How are you? máš?/máte?	Jak se
Fine.And You?	Dobře. A tý/vý?
What's your name? jmenuješ?/jmenujete?	Jak se
My name is...	Jmenuji se.....
I'm pleased to meet you	Těší mě
Do you speak english? anglicky?	Mluvíte
Yes,I do	ano,mluvím
No,I don't	Ne,nemluvím

Do you understand?
I don't understand?

Rozumiš?
Nerozumím

Emergencies

První Pomoc

Help!
Stop!

Pomoc!
Zastav!

Thief!

Fire!
Watch out!
It's an emergency!
případ

Hoří!
Pozor!
To je naléhavý

Could you help us please?
prosím pomoci?
Could I please use the telephone?
telefon?

Můžete nám
Mohu použít

Call the police!
policii!

Zavolejte

Where's the police station?
policejní stanice?

Kde je

My..... was/were stolen.

Ukradli mi...

Backpack

batoh

Bags

zavazadla

Handbag

kabelku

Money

peníze

Passport

pas

Wallet

peněženku