



How to Pronounce Swedish Vowels

Swedish Lesson

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Video transcript

Hey there and welcome to Ablas! Today we're going to cover the 9 vowels in Swedish, how to pronounce them, and look at a few examples with an example conversation towards the end of the video. Be sure to download the PDF of today's lesson from the link in the description!

Vowels with examples

So let's dive right in and take each vowel one at a time.

The letter A is an easy one to get right. The short pronunciation sounds like the A in "cat", and the long pronunciation sounds like the A in "father".

- Let's practice the short pronunciation with the Swedish word for "thank you": tack.
- And now for the long pronunciation with the Swedish word for "good": bra.
- Let's put it all into a sentence: "Thank you for the good food." Tack för den bra maten. Notice that maten uses the long pronunciation.

The next one is the letter E. The short pronunciation is like the E in "bed", and the long pronunciation is more like the E in "year".

- The short pronunciation can be heard in the Swedish word for "after": efter.
- And here's the long pronunciation with the Swedish word for "journey" or "trip": resa.
- Here's an example sentence: "After the trip, I felt calm." Efter resan kände jag mig lugn. Notice that kände uses the short pronunciation as well.

We'll look at the letter I next. This one always sounds like the "ee" in "week".

- Let's listen to the Swedish word for "car": bil.
- And now for the example sentence: "I walked quickly to the car." Jag gick snabbt till bilen. Notice that till is another example with a slightly shorter "I" sound.

Now we'll move onto the letter O. The short pronunciation sounds like the O in "shop", and the long pronunciation is more like the "ooh" sound in "moon".

- The verb "to hope" in Swedish contains the short O pronunciation: hoppas.
- The Swedish word for "oyster" starts with the long pronunciation: ostron.
- Here's a slightly longer sentence this time: "I hope there are no oysters." Jag hoppas att det inte finns några ostron.

The next vowel is the letter U, which sounds like the end of the English word "stew".

- The word for "bus" is a good example: buss.
- Let's see an example sentence: "The bus whizzed past." Bussen susade förbi. Notice that susade is another example here.

The letter Y is pronounced like the "ee" in "week", but with rounded lips.

- Have a go at saying the Swedish word for "new": ny.
- Let's try that in a sentence: "I bought a new book today." Jag köpte en ny bok idag.

The letter A with a ring is pronounced like the O in "or", and the end of the word "law".

- A good example is the Swedish phrase for "goodbye": hej då.
- Let's put that into a sentence now: "She waved and said goodbye before leaving." Hon vinkade och sa hej då innan hon gick.

The letter A with an umlaut, or two dots, is pronounced like the start of the word "air".

- Try pronouncing the Swedish verb "to eat": äta.
- Let's put that into a sentence now: "I'm going to eat lunch with my friends today." Jag ska äta lunch med mina vänner idag. Notice that vänner is another example of a word that contains this letter.

And the last one is the letter O with an umlaut, which is pronounced like the "er" sound in the word "her".

- This letter can be found in the Swedish word for "beer": öl.
- And now for the final example sentence: "We ordered cold beer and enjoyed the sun." Vi beställde kall öl och njöt av solen.

Conversation

Now you've seen all the Swedish vowels, let's put it all into practice with an everyday conversation.

	English	Swedish
	Astrid and Elin sit at a small table in a busy café in Stockholm. They both have cups of tea in front of them.	Astrid och Elin sitter vid ett litet bord på ett livligt kafé i Stockholm. De har båda koppar te framför sig.
Astrid:	This tea is lovely, Elin. I really needed this break from work.	Det här teet är gott, Elin. Jag behövde verkligen den här pausen från jobbet.
Elin:	I know what you mean, Astrid. My boss has been driving me mad all week. How's your new job going?	Jag förstår vad du menar, Astrid. Min chef har gjort mig galen hela veckan. Hur går det med ditt nya jobb?
Astrid:	It's not bad actually. The people are nice and the office is quite modern. But I have to get up at half past six every morning!	Det är inte så illa, faktiskt. Personalen är trevlig och kontoret är ganska modernt. Men jag måste stiga upp halv sju varje morgon!
Elin:	That's terrible! I don't start until nine o'clock. I couldn't cope with getting up that early.	Det är hemskt! Jag börjar inte förrän nio. Jag skulle inte klara av att stiga upp så tidigt.
Astrid:	You get used to it, I suppose. At least I finish at four in the afternoon, so I have more time in the evenings.	Man vänjer sig, antar jag. Åtminstone slutar jag fyra på eftermiddagen, så jag har mer tid på kvällarna.
Elin:	That's true. Oh, look who's here! Erik is coming over.	Det är sant. Åh, titta vem som kommer! Erik kommer hit.

	English	Swedish
Erik:	Hello, girls! Mind if I join you? I've just finished my lecture and I'm absolutely knackered.	Hej, tjejer! Får jag slå mig ner? Jag har precis avslutat min föreläsning och jag är helt slut.
Astrid:	Of course, sit down. How was university today?	Naturligtvis, sätt dig ner. Hur var universitetet idag?
Erik:	Boring as usual. We had three hours of economics and I nearly fell asleep. The professor talks so slowly!	Tråkigt som vanligt. Vi hade tre timmar ekonomi och jag höll nästan på att somna. Professorn pratar så långsamt!
Elin:	At least it's Friday. What are you doing this weekend?	Åtminstone är det fredag. Vad ska du göra i helgen?
Erik:	I'm going to see my parents tomorrow. Mum's making Sunday roast and I can't miss that. What about you two?	Jag ska hälsa på mina föräldrar imorgon. Mamma lagar söndagsstek och jag kan inte missa det. Vad ska ni två göra?
Astrid:	I might go shopping in Gamla Stan. I need some new clothes for work.	Jag kanske går och handlar i Gamla Stan. Jag behöver nya kläder till jobbet.
Elin:	Sounds good. Can I come with you? I love shopping, but I hate going alone.	Det låter bra. Får jag följa med? Jag älskar att handla, men jag hatar att gå ensam.
Astrid:	Absolutely! We could meet at eleven and have lunch somewhere nice afterwards.	Absolut! Vi kan träffas elva och äta lunch någonstans trevligt efteråt.
Erik:	You two and your shopping! I'll never understand it.	Ni två och er shopping! Jag kommer aldrig att förstå det.
Elin:	That's because you're a bloke, Erik. You just don't get it!	Det är för att du är en kille, Erik. Du förstår bara inte!

Your task

Well done for getting this far!

Now your task is to extend the conversation earlier with the three friends at the café. Try pronouncing some of the vowel sounds out loud. And here they are one last time... A, E, I, O, U, Y, Å, Ä, Ö

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