

Common Allophones of American English

Consonants

1. Syllable-initial /p t k/ are aspirated: Pit
2. Voiced obstruents are partially devoiced word-finally or before a voiceless sound: saD
3. /w r y l/ are voiceless after initial /p t k/: pLay
4. Stops, including nasals, are nonreleased before other stops in the same word and, optionally, at the ends of words: siT
5. Syllable final /p t k/ may be preceded by a glottal stop: peT
6. /t/ may become a glottal stop before /n/ in the same word: buTTon
7. Word-final nasals following an obstruent are syllabic: hasteN
8. Word-final /l r/ are syllabic after a consonant: butteR
9. /t/ and /d/ become taps between a stressed and unstressed vowel: ciTy
10. Alveolar consonants become dentals before (inter-)dental consonants: wiDth
11. Alveolar stops are omitted between consonants: fastTen (cf. fastT)
12. Velar stops become palatals before front vowels: Kit
13. /l/ is velarized at the end of a word or before a syllable-final consonant: baLL

Vowels

14. Vowels are long before voiced consonants: pIn (cf. pIt)
15. [ə] may be voiceless between voiceless stops or, for some people, after a voiceless fricative: sUppose
16. Vowels are nasal before syllable-final nasal consonant: mAn
17. Vowels are backed before syllable-final velarized [ɫ]: bAll
18. Tense vowels /i e u o/ may be accompanied by glides, [iy ey uw ow]: sAte, bOAt

Based on P. Ladefoged, A Course in Phonetics. 2001.