

Schwa:

Teachers who understand schwa can explain better why a word is pronounced the way it is.

Schwa is a “lazy” or “reduced” vowel. It has no energy.

The sound of schwa is usually the same sound as a short u and occasionally it takes the sound of a short i.

Schwa only occurs in words with more than one syllable.

The schwa does not sound the way it is spelled.

wagon – the o is a schwa. It does not sound like a short o.

avoid – the a is a schwa. It does not sound like a short or long a.

surface – the a is a schwa. It sounds like a short i in some regions.

active – the i is a schwa. The final syllable is unaccented and does not follow the Vce pattern (Vowel – consonant- e)

Schwa is a problem for spelling

Schwa

The **schwa** is the vowel sound in many lightly pronounced unaccented syllables in words of more than one syllable. It is sometimes signified by the pronunciation "uh" or symbolized by an upside-down rotated **e**.

A **schwa** sound can be represented by any vowel. In most dialects, for example, the schwa sound is found in the following words.

The **a** is schwa in **adept**.

The **e** is schwa in **synthesis**.

The **i** is schwa in **decimal**.

The **o** is schwa in **harmony**.

The **u** is schwa in **medium**.

The **y** is schwa in **syringe**.

Authorities vary somewhat in the range of what is considered a schwa sound, but the above examples are generally accepted.

Some browser fonts will show the schwa symbol here: ə. Others may show either a box, a question mark, or capital Y.