

The Latin Alphabet

A B C D E F G H I K L M N O P Q R S T V X (Y Z)

I and V (i and v) serve as **both** vowels and consonants: consonants **before** a vowel; otherwise, they **are** vowels

J / j is unknown in Classical Latin—it was invented later to stand for consonantal I / i

K is only found in a few words—usually very old words—otherwise C is used

V is consonantal “u”, **not** a separate consonant (there is no English “v”-sound)

W does not exist (sounds the same as consonantal “u”)

Y and Z were only used to write words borrowed from Greek, e.g. Zeno

Classical Latin Pronunciation

Consonants

B is pronounced as in English (except **BS** and **BT**, pronounced *ps* and *pt*)

C is always pronounced hard - as in **cat** - never soft as in “cider”

G is always hard - as in **get** - never soft as in “gentle”

I as a consonant sounds like **Y** as in **yet**

N before C, G or QU is like **ng** in **sing**

R is always rolled

T is always hard - as in **ten** - never soft as in “potion”

V is consonantal ‘u’ and is pronounced **w** as in **wall**, not v in “very”

Double consonants are pronounced separately: **cc** (book-case), **ch** (ink-horn, not “chain”), **th** (hot-house, not “this”), **ph** (tap-house, not “philosophy”)

Diphthongs

** a diphthong is a “gliding vowel”, a vowel with two tones **

AE, AI - as in **aisle**

EU - pronounced “**e-oo**” in one breath

AU - as in **house**

OE - as in **toil**

EI - as in **rein**

UI - usually, like **we**