

Norwegian on the Web



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Norwegian speech sounds compared to **Czech**

Czech and Norwegian speech sounds compared

Below you will find a comparison between Norwegian (NO) and Czech (CZ) speech sounds, that is consonants, vowels and diphthongs.

Consonants

The column **Consonant** in the table below demonstrates Norwegian consonant sounds of Central East Norwegian. Column 2 and 3 show words of Norwegian (NO) and Czech (CZ) that sound similar or quite similar. The words may have different meanings. In these words the consonants in question are used. The degree of similarity is indicated by +, ~ or – in the column **Overlap**:

- + The Norwegian consonant is **quite similar** to the Czech one
- ~ The Norwegian consonant is **to a certain extent similar** to the Czech one
- The Norwegian consonant has **no counterpart** in Czech

Czech consonants of the two first categories may be used when speaking Norwegian. Use of the second category implies stronger degree of foreign accent.

Consonant	Norwegian	Czech	Overlap	Comments
/p/	park	park	~	Not aspirated in CZ
/b/	bank	banka	+	
/t/	taxi	taxi	~	Not aspirated in CZ
/d/	doktor	doktor	+	
/t̥/			–	
/d̥/			–	
/k/	katedral	katedrála	~	Not aspirated in CZ
/g/	galleriet	galerie	+	
/m/	metro	metro	+	
/n/	den	den	+	
/n̥/			–	
/ŋ/			–	Variant of /n/ in front of /k/, /g/ (“banka”)
/f/	film	film	+	
/v/	vest	vest	+	
/s/	stå	sto	+	
/ʃ/	skjell	šel	+	
/ç/			–	
/j/	ja	ja	+	
/h/	hotell	hotel	~	Can be voiced initially in words
/r/	rokk	rok	+	
/l/	lett	let	~	CZ /l/ may be more or less velarized
/l̥/			–	

Below you will find the same data in a shorter version using colour codes:

- White: The Norwegian consonant is quite close to the Czech one
- Grey: The Norwegian consonant overlaps to some degree with the Czech one
- Black: The Norwegian consonant has no counterpart in Czech

p	b	t	d	t̥	d̥	k	g	l	l̥	r
m	n	ŋ	ŋ	f	u	s	ʃ	ç	j	h

The speech sounds in black and grey cells are sounds that Czech-speaking students should practice more in order to obtain a proper pronunciation of Norwegian.

Vowels

The column **Vowel** in the table below demonstrates Norwegian vowel sounds of Central East Norwegian. Column 2 and 3 show words of Norwegian (NO) and Czech (CZ) that sound similar or quite similar. The words may have different meanings. In these words the vowels in question are used. The degree of similarity is indicated by +, ~ or – in the column **Overlap**:

- + The Norwegian vowel is **quite similar** to the Czech one
- ~ The Norwegian vowel is **to a certain extent similar** to the Czech one
- The Norwegian vowel has **no counterpart** in Czech

Czech vowel of the two first categories may be used when speaking Norwegian. Use of the second category implies stronger degree of foreign accent.

Vowel	Norwegian	Czech	Overlap	Comments
/i/	sinn	syn	+	
/i:/	vin	víno	+	
/y/			–	
/y:/			–	
/e/	den	den	+	
/e:/	migrene	migréna	+	
/ø/			–	
/ø:/			–	
/æ/			–	
/æ:/			–	
/a/	pass	pas	+	
/a:/	ja	ja	~	NO /a/ is more back than CZ /a/
/ɥ/			–	
/ɥ:/			–	
/u/	lukk	luk	+	
/u:/	stol	stůl	+	
/o/	moll	moll	+	
/o:/	dâm	dóm	+	

In general the duration of Czech vowels can be compared to short and long vowels in Norwegian.

The table above is presented below in a shorter version using colour codes:

- White: The Norwegian vowel is quite close to the Czech one
- Grey: The Norwegian vowel overlaps to some degree with the Czech one
- Black: The Norwegian vowel has no counterpart in Czech

i	e	æ	a	y	ɥ	ø	u	o
i:	e:	æ:	a:	y:	ɥ:	ø:	u:	o:

The sounds in black and grey cells are speech sounds that Czech-speaking students should practice more in order to obtain a proper pronunciation of Norwegian. Observe that /æ/ and /a/ are two different sounds in Norwegian. The Czech /a/ is somewhere in between, maybe a little closer to Norwegian /a/.

Diphthongs

The column **Diphthong** in the table below demonstrates Norwegian diphthongs of Central East Norwegian. Column 2 and 3 show words of Norwegian (NO) and Czech (CZ) that sound similar or quite similar. The words may have different meanings. In these words the diphthongs in question are used. The degree of similarity is indicated by +, ~ or – in the column **Overlap**:

- + The Norwegian diphthong is *quite similar* to the Czech one
- ~ The Norwegian diphthong is *to a certain extent similar* to the Czech one
- The Norwegian diphthong has *no counterpart* in Czech

Czech diphthongs of the two first categories may be used when speaking Norwegian. Use of the second category implies stronger degree of foreign accent.

Diphthong	Norwegian	Czech	Overlap	Comments
/ɑi/	kai		–	
/æi/	vei		–	
/øy/	øy		–	
/æu/	sau		–	
/oy/	koye		–	
/uy/	hoie		–	Rare in NO
/ɥy/	huie		–	Rare in NO

The table above is presented below in a shorter version using colour codes:

- White: The Norwegian diphthong is quite close to the Czech one
- Grey: The Norwegian diphthong overlaps to some degree with the Czech one
- Black: The Norwegian diphthong has no counterpart in Czech

/ɑi/	/æi/	/øy/	/æu/	/oy/	/uy/	/ɥy/
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The sounds in black and grey cells are speech sounds that Czech-speaking students should practice more in order to obtain a proper pronunciation of Norwegian.