

Norwegian on the Web



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Norwegian speech sounds compared to **Portuguese**

Portuguese and Norwegian speech sounds compared

Below you will find a comparison between Norwegian (NO) and Portuguese (PO) 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 shows words of Norwegian (NO) and Portuguese (PO) 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 Portuguese one
- ~ The Norwegian consonant is **to a certain extent similar** to the Portuguese one
- The Norwegian consonant has **no counterpart** in Portuguese

Portuguese consonants of the two first categories may be used when speaking Norwegian.

Consonant	Norwegian	Portuguese	Overlap	Comments
/p/	på	pó	~	Unaspirated in PO
/b/	bank	banco	+	
/t/	tall	tal	~	Unaspirated in PO
/d/	da	da	~	
/t̥/	smart	–	–	
/d̥/	ferdig	–	–	
/k/	kar	caro	~	Unaspirated in PO
/g/	gate	gato	+	
/m/	mager	magro	+	
/n/	nå	no	+	
/ŋ/	barna	–	–	
/ŋ/	bank	banco	+	Only before /k/, /g/ i PO
/f/	fotball	futebol	+	
/v/	vi	vi	~	
/s/	så	só	+	
/ʃ/	ski	xixi	+	
/ç/	kjapp	–	–	
/j/	major	maior	–	
/h/	har	–	–	
/r/	rir	rir	~	
/l/	ler	ler	~	// may be velarized i PO
/ʎ/	jarl	–	–	

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

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

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

The speech sounds in black and grey cells are speech sounds that Portuguese-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 shows words of Norwegian (NO) and Portuguese (PO) 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 Portuguese one
- ~ The Norwegian vowel is **to a certain extent similar** to the Portuguese one
- The Norwegian vowel has **no counterpart** in Portuguese

Portuguese vowel of the two first categories may be used when speaking Norwegian.

Vowel	Norwegian	Portuguese	Overlap	Comments
/i/	trist	triste	+	
/i:/	mi	–	–	
/y/	synd	–	–	
/y:/	lys	–	–	
/e/	fest	festa	+	
/e:/	det	–	–	
/ø/	søtt	–	–	
/ø:/	møt	–	–	
/æ/	vært		–	NO /æ/ is more front than PO /a/
/æ:/	nær	–	–	
/ɑ/	arr	ar	~	NO /ɑ/ is more back than PO /a/
/ɑ:/	ta	–	–	
/ʉ/	full	–	–	
/ʉ:/	tur	–	–	
/u/	fotball	futebol	+	
/u:/	sol	–	–	
/o/	ånde	onde	+	
/o:/	må	–	–	

There are no nasalized vowels in Norwegian.

In general the duration of Portuguese vowels can be compared to short vowels in Norwegian. In stressed open syllables in Portuguese the duration of vowels is somewhat longer. Thus Portuguese words like "si, se, lá, tu, nó" may sound close to Norwegian "si, se, la, to, nå". There are no nasalised vowels in Norwegian.

i	e	æ	ɑ	y	ʉ	ø	u	o
i:	e:	æ:	ɑ:	y:	ʉ:	ø:	u:	o:

Note that /æ/ and /ɑ/ are two different sounds in Norwegian. The Portuguese /ɑ/ is somewhere in between, maybe a little closer to Norwegian /ɑ/.

Diphthongs

The column **Diphthong** in the table below demonstrates Norwegian diphthongs of Central East Norwegian. Column 2 and 3 shows words of Norwegian (NO) and Portuguese (PO) 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 Portuguese one
- ~ The Norwegian diphthong is **to a certain extent similar** to the Portuguese one
- The Norwegian diphthong has **no counterpart** in Portuguese

Portuguese diphthongs of the two first categories may be used when speaking Norwegian.

Diphthong	Norwegian	Portuguese	Overlap	Comments
/ai/	pai	pai	+	NO /a/ is more back than PO /a/
/æi/	hei	–	–	
/øy/	høy	–	–	
/æu/	sau	–	–	
/oy/	soya	lições	~	
/uy/	hoie	–	–	Rare in NO
/ɥy/	huie	–	–	Rare in NO

There are no nasalized diphthongs in Norwegian.

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

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

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