

Norwegian on the Web



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Norwegian speech sounds compared to **Thai**

Thai and Norwegian speech sounds compared

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

Thai 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	Thai	Overlap	Comments
/p/	på	พอ	+	
/b/	bind	บิลด์	+	The name "Bill" pronounced in Thai
/t/	ti	ที	+	
/d/	di	ดี	+	
/tʃ/	smart	-	–	
/dʒ/	ferdig	-	–	
/k/	kro	ครู	+	
/g/	gå	-	–	
/m/	mi	มี	+	
/n/	ni	นี่	+	
/ŋ/	barna	-	–	
/ŋ/	fang	ฟุ้ง	+	
/f/	fang	ฟุ้ง	+	
/v/	hva	ว่า	–	Thai: /w/ as in "what"
/s/	si	สี่	+	
/ʃ/	skje	-	-	
/ç/	tja	จะ	~	
/j/	jo	อยู่	+	
/h/	ha	หา	+	
/r/	rop	รูป	~	
/l/	la	ละ	+	
/ʎ/	jarl	-	–	

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

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

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

The speech sounds in black and grey cells are sounds that Thai-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 Thai (TH) 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 Thai one
- ~ The Norwegian vowel is **to a certain extent similar** to the Thai one
- The Norwegian vowel has **no counterpart** in Thai

Thai 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	Thai	Overlap	Comments
/i/	bind	บิลล์	+	
/i:/	di	ดี	+	
/y/	syn	-	–	
/y:/	synd	-	–	
/e/	enn	เอิน	+	
/e:/	en	เอน	+	
/ø/	søt	-	–	
/ø:/	søtt	-	–	
/æ/	herr		~	TH /ɛ/ is less open than NO /æ/
/æ:/	her	แฮง	~	TH /ɛ:/ is less open than NO /æ:/ (แฮง)
/ɑ/	fang	ฟั้ง	~	TH /ɑ/ is more /æ/-like
/ɑ:/	ja	ยา	~	TH /ɑ:/ is more /æ/-like
/ʉ/	lutt	-	–	
/ʉ:/	lut	-	–	
/u/	lukk	ลูก	+	
/u:/	do	ดู	+	
/o/	bånd	บน	+	

/o:/	på	พอ	+	
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In general the duration of Thai 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 Thai one
- Grey: The Norwegian vowel overlaps to some degree with the Thai one
- Black: The Norwegian vowel has no counterpart in Thai

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

The sounds in black and grey cells are speech sounds that Thai-speaking students should practice more in order to obtain a proper pronunciation of Norwegian. Observe that /æ/ and /ɑ/ are two different sounds in Norwegian. The Thai /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 Thai (TH) 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 Thai one
- ~ The Norwegian diphthong is *to a certain extent similar* to the Thai one
- The Norwegian diphthong has *no counterpart* in Thai

Thai 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	Thai	Overlap	Comments
/ai/	thai	ไท	~	More front /a/ in Thai
/æi/	hei		~	
/øɥ/	høy	-	–	
/æu/	sau	-	–	
/oy/	soya	ซอยซา	+	
/uy/	hoie	-	–	
/ɥy/	huie	-	–	

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

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

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