

How do I pronounce this?

The Official Trivia Mafia Pronunciation Guide for Words We Use a Lot

Thank you for caring about saying words right. This document contains words we use frequently (as opposed to one-off words) that we've heard hosts have a hard time with. Have an idea that should be added? [Email Senior Editor Ruby!](#)

Entries are in the following format:

word (link goes to an audio pronunciation): pronunciation guide /International Phonetic Alphabet guide/, (additional explanation of pronunciation) definition

Common words

[archipelago](#): ark-ih-PEL-ah-go /ˌɑrkɪˈpɛləˌɡoʊ/, a chain of islands

[archipelagic](#): ark-ih-puh-LAH-djik /ɑrkɪpəˈlædʒɪk/, of or relating to a chain of islands

[biopic](#): BY-oh-pik /ˈbaɪ.əθ.pɪk/, (like “bio” and “pic” put together), a biographical film

[Wiktionary](#) says by-AP-ik is “nonstandard” but listed in some places; you go ahead and say it that way if you want

[colonel](#): KER-nul /ˈkɜːnəl/, a military rank below a general

[couture](#): kuh-TOOR /kuˈtʊər/, fashion designers and the high-end clothes they make

[coxswain](#): KOK-sihn /ˈkɒk sən / (like “cocks sin” if you said it fast), the athlete who steers a racing shell

[titular](#): TICH-uh-ler /ˈtɪtʃələr/ or TIT-yuh-ler /ˈtɪtyələr/, of or relating to the title of something, usually the character after whom a work is named (“the titular character”)

posthumous: PAWS-chew-mus /'pɒs.tʃʊ.məs/, after death, usually referring to a work published after the author's death

Names

Janelle Monáe: juh-ENL moh-NAY, /dʒə'nɛl moʊ'neɪ/, singer songwriter of “The Electric Lady” and “Dirty Computer”

Kamala Harris: KAH-muh-luh, /kɑ:mələ/ (like “COMMA-lah” – her stepkids call her “mom-ala” if that helps you) the 49th Vice President of the United States

Kamala Khan: kuh-MAH-luh, /kə'mɑ:lə/ Ms. Marvel from the Marvel comics/MCU

Keanu Reeves: kee-AH-noo reevz, /keɪ'ɑ:nu: rɪvs/ Neo from “The Matrix,” John Wick from “John Wick,” et cetera

Madeleine L'Engle: LEHNG-gul, /'lɛŋɡəl/, author of “A Wrinkle in Time”

Marquis de Sade: mar-KEE duh SAHD, /marki də sad/, French writer famous for his libertine sexuality (see also Sade, the singer)

Megan Rapinoe: ruh-PEE-noh /rə'pi:nɒʃ/, Captain of the US National Women's Soccer Team

Nicki (Onika) Minaj: NIH-kee (oh-NEE-kah) min-AZH, /'nɪki: ɒʊ'ni:kə mɪ'nɑ:ʒ/, Rapper, songwriter, Queen Radio host

Nguyen: WIN /wɪn/ or NOO-yen /nu:'jɛn/ (you can read more about different pronunciations [here](#); please feel free to say it correctly if your Vietnamese is good!) The most common surname in Vietnam

Sade: SHAH-day [ʃɑ:'deɪ], a Nigerian-British singer, a smooth operator (see also Marquis de Sade)

Sia: SEE-uh [si:ə] an Australian singer songwriter

W.E.B. DuBois: double you ee bee doo-BOIS, /dju:'bɔɪs/ Sociologist, founder of the NAACP

Brands/Institutions

Atari: uh-TAR-ee, /ə'tɑ:ɹi/ (middle syllable rhymes with “star”), a video game company

Carnegie: kar-NEH-ghee, /kɑ:r'nɛgi/ is closer to the original Scots pronunciation and preferred by Carnegie Corporation and Carnegie Mellon; many English-speakers say KAR-nuh-ghee /'kɑ:rnɛgi/;

you can't really go wrong with either. (Carnegie Hall more frequently uses the second pronunciation, but seriously, either is fine.) The Carnegie family were industrialists, lots of things are named after them, Andrew is probably the most famous one.

Duquesne University: doo-KAIN /du:'keɪn/ a school in Pittsburgh

Dufresne (as in Andy Dufresne from "Shawshank Redemption" follows the same pattern; doo-FRAIN)

Jägermeister: YAY-ger-my-ster /'jeɪgərmaɪstər/, a German aperitif

Reuters: ROY-terz /'rɔɪtərz/, a news agency

Places

Côte d'Ivoire: KOHT dih VWAR, /,koʊt di'vwɑː/, the French name of the Ivory Coast

Mojave: moh-HAH-vee, /moʊ'hɑːvi/, a people from the Southwestern United States and the places named after them

Sioux City: SOO /suː/ A city in Iowa

Same pronunciation for Sioux Falls, South Dakota

All Caps – Do I Say The Letters??

ABBA: AB-uh, not ay bee bee ay, '70s Swedish pop band

A\$AP Rocky: AY-sap, not ay ess ay pee, rapper

H.E.R.: HER, not aitch ee ar, current guitarist

GZA: GIZ-uh, not gee zee ay

NAACP: en double-ay see pee, not NAK-puh

RZA: RIZ-uh, not ar zee ay

Sports Leagues: say the letters in general! MLB = em el bee, NBA = en bee ay, NCAA = en see double-ay or en see ay ay, etc