Long & Short Vowel Summary

How do I know which vowel sound to pronounce?

Vowels

spelling rules of long & short vowels

1. A short vowel pronunciation such as the sounds /a/, /e/, /i/, /u/, /o/ are typically spelled with one vowel letter. Examples include: at, red, it, up, and hot. (short vowel = short movement of the mouth, not always short in its pronunciation)

2. A long vowel pronunciation such as the sounds /O/, /A/, /I/, /U/, /ow/, /Oy/, /ee/, /oo/, /ooh/ are typically spelled using two vowels. (long vowel = long movement of the mouth, not always longer in its pronunciation)

• “When 2 vowels go walking, the first one does the talking”. The first vowel says its full name while the second vowels is silent.

• The vowels might be written together in a Vowel Vowel Consonant, or VVC, pattern such as (boat, maid, cue) or they might be separated by 1 consonant in a VCV pattern (made, ride, tide).

• If the second vowel is separated from the first by two spaces, meaning there are two consonants between the two vowels, then the first vowel will get the short pronunciation. This is the VCCV pattern. The extra consonant “protects” the short vowel preventing another vowel to get close enough to change the sound from short to long.
  - Examples include: ‘paid’ and ‘paper’ (long vowels). These two have long vowels because the vowels are either next to each other or only have one consonant in between.
  - Once we put two consonants between the vowels it gets a short pronunciation such as ‘pepper’ (short vowel).

**There are many exceptions to these rules.

Long Vowel sounds require big movements in your mouth. If you do not move your mouth enough then the long vowel will sound like a short vowel.