

III

VOWELS

► Review of the 11 Vowels

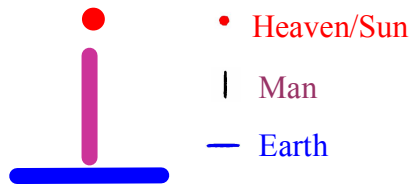
The eleven vowels • [ʌ] —[ɿ] | [i]; ʔ [a] ㄛ [o] ㄟ [ə] ㄨ [u], and ㄩ [ya] ㄩ [yo]

ㄩ [yɛ] ㄩ [yu] are designed based on the Yin-Yang cosmology of Neo-Confucianism.

Yin means dark and yang means bright in Chinese. This concept involves the three Great Powers: Heaven, Earth and Man in various combinations.

Of the eleven vowels the three cardinal vowels • [ʌ] —[ɿ] and | [i] are designed by depicting Heaven (•), Earth (—) and Man (|). The remaining eight vowels ʔ [a] ㄛ [o] ㄟ [ə] ㄨ [u], and ㄩ [ya] ㄩ [yo] ㄩ [yɛ] ㄩ [yu] are the derivatives.

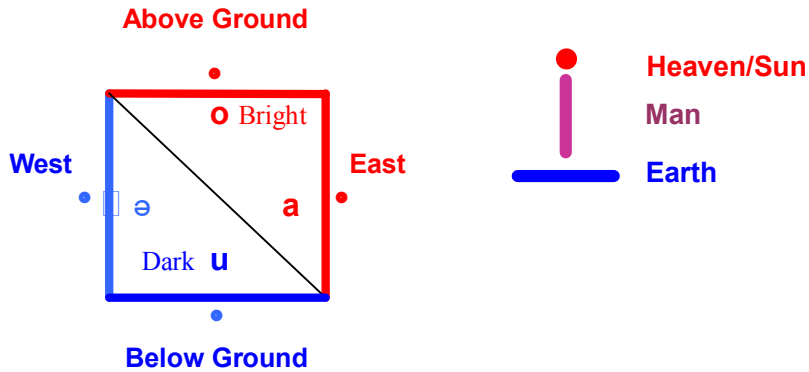
► The Three Cardinal Vowels: • [ʌ] —[ɿ] | [i]



- [ʌ] is a depiction of **Heaven** or the **Sun**. It is a **bright vowel**. The sound is as in ‘but’, ‘cut’, ‘love’, or ‘done’.
- [ɿ] is a depiction of **Earth**. It represents the Earth’s flat land and horizon. It is a **dark vowel**. The sound is formed by slight vertical opening and wide horizontal opening of the mouth. When you pronounce | [i] lips are spread. With the mouth shape of | [i] pronouncing [u] will make —[ɿ] sound.
- | [i] is a depiction of **Man** standing between Heaven and Earth. It is a **Neutral vowel**. The sound is as in ‘big’, ‘sing’, ‘king’ or ‘tea’.

► The Four Derived Vowels

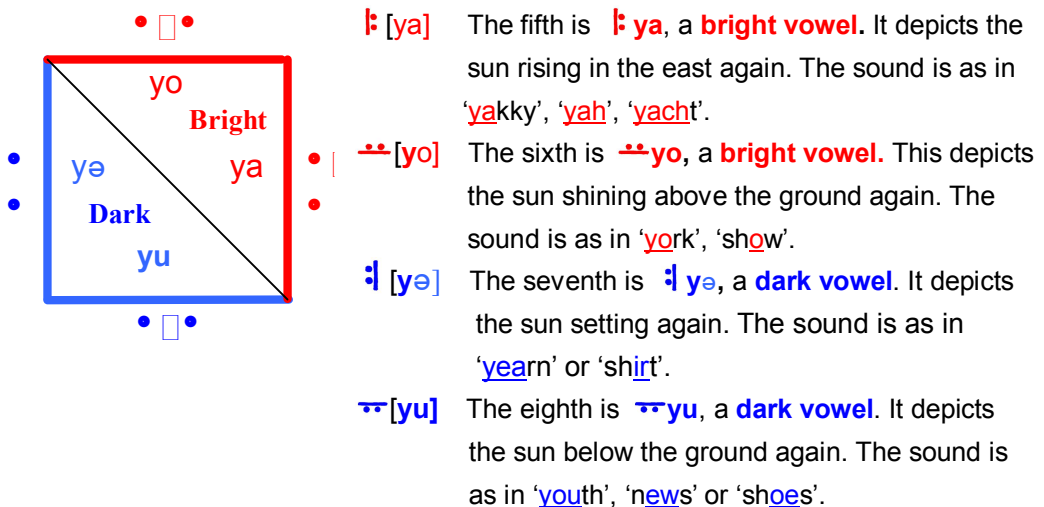
The four derived vowels are generated by conjugation of Heaven and Earth, Heaven and Man, as depicted in the diagram.



- ↳ [a] The first is ↳ [a], a **bright vowel**. It depicts the sun rising in the east. The sound is as in 'mama'.
- ↳ [o] The second is ↳ [o], a **bright vowel**. This depicts the sun shining above the ground. The sound is as in 'Ohio'.
- ↳ [ə] The third is ↳ [ə], a **dark vowel**. It is a depiction of the sun setting in the west. The sound is as in 'around' or 'Earth'.
- ↳ [u] and The fourth is ↳ [u], a **dark vowel**. It depicts the sun has sunk below the ground. The sound is as in 'moon', 'do' or 'soon'.

► The Four Yodized Vowels: ↳ ya ↳yo ↳ ye and ↳yu

Yodized vowels are pronounced with the vowel [y/I] first. The four yodized vowels are generated by the conjugation of Heaven and Earth, Heaven and Man, as depicted here.



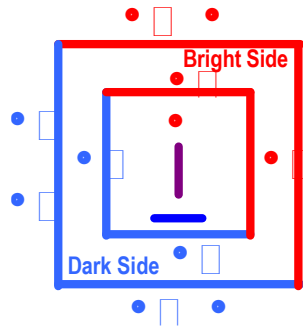
► Overview: Correlation between word's meaning and 11 Vowels

Group II

1. **돋다**- (sun) rises
2. **솟다**- rises high (into the sky)
3. **높다**- is high
4. **오르다**- goes up
5. **뽑다**- pulls out
6. **호호**- (warm air comes out)

Group III

1. **어둡다** is dark
2. **누렇다** is somewhat yellow
3. **퍼렇다** is somewhat blue
4. **뜨뜻하다** is lukewarm
5. **들쩍하다** is somewhat sweet
6. **흐리다** is cloudy
7. **흰하다** is somewhat bright



Group I

1. **밝다** is bright
2. **노랑다** is yellow
3. **파랑다** is blue
4. **따뜻하다** is warm
5. **달다** is sweet
6. **맑다** is clear /
7. **환하다** is really bright
8. **살다** lives

Group IV

1. **죽다**- dies
2. **눕다**- lies down
3. **묻다**- buries
4. **숨다**- hides
5. **춡다**- is cold
6. **후후** (cold air comes out)

► Explanation of the 11 vowels and their associated Yin-Yang features:

- This diagram shows the relationship between the vowel sound and the meaning of the words. Shown here are four groups of words. Groups I and II are on the bright side representing the position of the sun east and above the ground; Groups III and IV are on the dark side representing the position of the sun west and below the ground.

Note the contrast in meaning between No. 1 of Group I **밝다**-bright; and No. 1 of Group III **어둡다**-dark; between No. 2 of Group I **노랑다**-yellow and No. 2 of Group III **누렇다**-somewhat yellow; between No. 8 of Group I **살다**-lives and No. 1 of Group IV **죽다**-dies; between No. 6 of Group II **호호**-warm air comes out; and No. 6 of Group IV **후후**-cold air comes out.

According to the phonetic classification, **ㅏ**[a] and **ㅓ**[o] are strong vowels, **ㅑ**[e] and **ㅕ**[u] are weak vowels. Thus it can be said that **Bright Vowels** are strong and warm vowels whereas **Dark Vowels** are weak and cold vowels.

► Other Complex Vowels Combined with Neutral Vowel | [ɪ/y]

Now, we will take a look at other complex vowels that are combined with the neutral vowel | [ɪ]. The demonstration of labial shapes for the production of the complex vowels are shown along with the pronunciation of the complex vowels.

	Other vowels Combined with /y	IPA	Examples
(1)	ɪ + → ɨ	[æ]	as in 'pan'
(2)	ɪ + → ɩ	[e]	as in 'pen'
(3)	ɪ + → ɪ	[œ]	as in Goethe
(4)	ɪ + → ɪ	[ü]	as in über
(5)	ɪ + → ɪ	[Ø]	as in deux
(6)	ɪ + → ɨ	[yæ]	as in 'yet'
(7)	ɪ + → ɩ	[ye]	as in 'yes'
(8)	ɪ + ɪ → ɪ	[wa]	as in 'what'
(9)	ɪ + → ɪ	[wæ]	as in 'wait'
(10)	ɪ + ɪ → ɪ	[wə]	as in 'work'
(11)	ɪ + → ɪ	[we]	as in 'wet'

Read as follows:

- (1) ɪ plus | makes ɨ as in 'pan'
- (2) ɪ plus | makes ɩ as in 'pen'
- (3) ɪ plus | makes ɪ as in Goethe
- (4) ɪ plus | makes ɪ as in über
- (5) ɪ plus | makes ɪ as in deux
- (6) ɪ plus | makes ɨ as in 'yet'
- (7) ɪ plus | makes ɩ as in 'yes'
- (8) ɪ plus ɪ makes ɪ as in 'what'
- (9) ɪ plus | makes ɪ as in 'wait'
- (10) ɪ plus ɪ makes ɪ as in 'work'
- (11) ɪ plus | makes ɪ as in 'wet'

