

VOICED AND VOICELESS CONSONANTS

What is a Voiced Consonant?

A simple explanation of voiced consonants is that they use the voice. This is easy to test by putting your finger on your throat. If you feel a vibration the consonant is voiced. Here is a list of some voiced consonants. Pronounce each consonant sound and feel the vibration of your vocal chords.

/b/

/d/

/g/ —

/ð/ (as in then)

/v/

/ʃ/

/r/

/z/

/dʒ/ (as in Jane)

/m/

/n/

What is Voiceless Consonant?

Voiceless consonants do not use the voice. They are percussive and use hard sounds. Once again, you can test if a consonant is voiceless by putting your finger on your throat. You will feel no vibration in your throat, just a short explosion of air as you pronounce. Pronounce each of these consonant sounds and feel NO vibration in your throat.

/p/

/t/

/k/

/f/ —

/s/

/ʃ/

/θ/

/θ/ (as in thing)

Are Vowels Voiced or Voiceless?

Vowel sounds and diphthongs (combination of two vowel sounds) are ALL voiced these include the twelve vowels, /j,w/ and all diphthongs and triphthongs in English.

For an audio with this explanation and the pronunciation of the past /t/ or /d/:

<http://esl.about.com/library/media/audio/voiced.mp3>

Taken from esl about: <http://esl.about.com/od/speakingenglish/a/voiced.htm>