

Hungarian Place Name Pronunciation for English-speakers:

The Hungarian language is part of the Uralic language family, which also includes Finnish and Estonian. The name Uralic derives from the hypothesized homeland of the languages in the vicinity of the Ural Mountains. More specifically, Hungarian is an Ugric language, with its closest relatives believed to be Khanty and Mansi – two obscure languages each spoken by around 10,000 people in western Siberia. The Hungarian language contains several sounds that don't exist in English, so this pronunciation guide for map locations is approximate. Organized by Chip Saltsman, Hungarian pronunciation kindly provided by Scott Moore.

A QUICK GUIDE TO PRONOUNCING HUNGARIAN

There are a few things you need to know before even trying to pronounce any Hungarian words:

- 1) All Hungarian words are stressed on the first syllable – in the list below, the stressed syllable will be shown in **bold**. This can be tricky to do if you aren't used to it. Try it with the words 'American Express' in English. Normally these words are both stressed on the second syllable i.e. uh-**mair**-uh-kuhn ek-**spres** (US pronunciation) or uh-**me**-ri-kuhn ik-**spres** (UK pronunciation). Try to say it like this: **Uh**-mair-uh-kuhn **Ik**-spres. Difficult isn't it?
- 2) Hungarian is highly phonetic. That means that any given written letter is always pronounced the same way. English is not very phonetic, especially with names. For example, Worcestershire is pronounced: **wuh**-stuh-shu.
- 3) The Hungarian alphabet has 40 letters (or 44 in the extended version)! As there aren't enough symbols in the Latin alphabet, they've had to be creative in the use of:
 - a. diacritics – these are the little marks above letters. So, for example, each of these is a different letter in the Hungarian alphabet with a different pronunciation: o, ó, ö, ő
 - b. clusters or digraphs (letters composed of multiple symbols) – for example, each of these is a different letter, again with a different pronunciation: s, sz, z, zs
- 4) The Hungarian letter 'a' is not pronounced anything like the English letter 'a'. It is closest to the letter 'o' in 'hot' when pronounced in Received Pronunciation (standard British English). Note that 'á' is a separate letter in Hungarian, and is pronounced something like the 'a' in American English 'hat'. Below, the pronunciation of 'a' is shown by 'ô' to remind you that it is a very short 'o' sound.

Place	Pronunciation	Hex
Arad	A- rad (Romanian)	B48.08
Baja	Boy -yô	A53.20
Balaton	Bôl -lô-ton	A45.07
Banská Bystrica	Bahn -skah Biss -trit-sah (Slovakian)	A13.16

Banska Štiavnica	Bahn -skah Shtiav -knit-sah (Slovakian)	A18.14
Békés	Bey -kesh	B40.04
Békéscsaba	Bey -kesh-chô-bô	B41.05
Beregszász	Be -reg-sahss	B15.15
Bicske	Bitch -ke.	A34.14
Budapest	Bud -ô-pesht.	A33.18
Cegléd	Tseg -laid Chôp . Pronounce this just like ‘chop’ in your best English accent and a Hungarian will probably understand what you are talking about.	A36.25
Csap	The name of this former Hungarian town, now in Ukraine, means faucet (US)/tap (UK). Don’t confuse it with csáp (pronounced: chap), meaning ‘antenna’ or ‘tentacle’.	B12.10
Csongrád	Chon -grahd [Danube is the English name. I don’t see Duna – the Hungarian name for the river – on the map, but then I have an older version]	A43.30
Danube / Duna	Deb -ret-sen. Remember that all three of the ‘e’s are pronounced in exactly the same way. If you’re not doing that, then you are pronouncing it wrong.	A29.12
Debrecen		B27.08
Dés	Daysh (Dej in Romania) Dom -boar-vahr. The Hungarian ‘o’ is a short, open vowel, whereas the ‘ó’ is slightly more closed and longer. The ‘ó’ is not exactly like the diphthong ‘oa’ in ‘boar’ (or the ‘ore’ in ‘bore’ or the ‘aw’ in ‘jaw’) but that’s about the closest in English.	B28.30
Dombóvár		A52.12
Eger	Egg -er. Here the ‘er’ is like the ‘er’ in ‘jerry’.	A24.29
Esztergom	Est -er-gom	A29.15
Gödöllő	Ger -der-lerr. The ‘ö’ is like the same letter in German. The ‘ő’ is an elongated version of ‘ö’.	A30.20
Gyöngyös	Jern -jersh. The ‘gy’ is a little like the ‘j’ or ‘dge’ in judge.	A27.25
Győr	Jerr . This is like the ‘jour’ in ‘journal’ and very different from the ‘jerr’ in ‘jerry’.	A32.04
Gyula	Ju -lô Hoi -doo-ber-ser-main. The ‘ny’ is like the ‘ni’ in ‘onion’.	B42.06
Hajdúböszörmény		B25.06
Hatvan	Hôt -vôn	A29.24
Heves	Hev -esh	A29.29
Hódmezővásárhely	Hoard -mez-err-varsh-ar-hey.	A47.33
Huszt	Hust (Unwillingly present day Khust, Ukraine)	B13.21

Ipoly	Ipp-oy	A23.18
Jászárokszállás	Jahss-ar-ock-sarl-larsh	A29.26
Jászberény	Jahss-be-rain	A31.26
Kaposvár	Kôp-osh-var	A53.09
Karcag	Kôrt-sôg	B32.01
Kassa	Kôsh-shô (Present day Košice in Slovakia)	A9.35
Kecskemét	Kaitch-ke-mate. The ‘kécs’ is a little like the ‘ketch’ in ‘ketchup’, but you need a longer vowel sound.	A41.25
Kikinda	Kick-kin-dah (Serbian)	B56.01
Kiskunfélegyháza	Kish-kun-fail-edge-harz-ô	A43.27
Kiskunmajsa	Kish-kun-moy-sô	A47.27
Kolozsvár	Ko-lozh-vahr. The ‘zs’ is like the ‘ge’ in the French word ‘bocage’. (Present day Cluj-Napoca or just Cluj, the fourth-largest city in Romania)	B34.27
Komárom	Ko-mahr-om	A30.09
Lugoj	Lou-gozh (Romanian)	B55.15
Makó	Mô-koar	A50.34
Máramarossziget	Mô-rô-mô-ross-igget (Present day Sighetu Marmătiei, Romania)	B16.27
Mezőkövesd	Meh-zerr-ker-veshd	A25.31
Mezőtúr	Meh-zerr-tour	A37.34
Miskolc	Mish-kolts	A20.32
Mohács	Mo-hatch	A57.18
Mohol	Mo-holl	A58.32
Munkács	Mun-katch	B11.15
Nagykanizsa	Nodge-kôn-i-zhô. The sound of the ‘agy’ is like the ‘odge’ in ‘dodge’ pronounced in your best English accent. The ‘kan’ is similar to ‘con’ in an English accent.	A52.01
Nagykőrös	Nodge-kerr-ersh	A39.26
Nagyvárad	Nodge-vahr-ôd	B34.11
Nyíregyháza	Nyeer-edge-harz-ô	B20.07
Nyitra	Nyit-rô (part of present-day Slovakia)	A21.07
Óbecse	Oh-betch-e (Present day Bečej in Serbia)	A60.31
Orosháza	Or-osh-harz-ô	B44.01
Pápa	Par-pô	A38.03
Pécs	Paitch	A56.13
Pilisszentkereszt	Pill-ish-sent-ke-rest.	A30.16
Prešov	Presh-ow (Slovakian)	A5.34
Reșița	Resh-it-sah (Romanian)	B60.16

Ružomberok	Rouge -om-be-rock (Slovakian)	A7.17
Salgótarján	Shôl -got-tore-jahn	A22.23
Sarkad	Shore -kôd	B40.04
Sátoraljaújhely	Shah -tore-oy-ô-uy-hey.	B14.05
Sibiu	Sib- you (Romanian)	B49.34
Szabadka	Sob -odd-kô	A53.27
Szamos	Somme -osh	B20.17
Szarvas	Saw -vosh	A40.33
Szatmárnémeti	Sott -marr-name-et-i (present day Satu Mare, Romania)	B20.18
Szeged	Seg -ed	A50.31
Székesfehérvár	Say -kesh-fe-hair-vahr	A39.13
Szentes	Sen -tesh	A44.31
Szolnok	Sol -knock	A36.28
Timișoara	Timmy- shwar -ah (Romanian)	B55.09
Tisza	Ti -sô. The ‘tisz’ is just like the ‘tis’ in ‘gratis’ or ‘praying mantis’.	A52.31
Tiszafüred	Ti -sô-foo-red	A28.33
Törökszentmiklós	Tuhr -ruhk-sent-mik-loash.	A35.32
Trnava	Trun-ah- vah (Slovakian). Try saying ‘trun’ without a vowel – instead, you roll the ‘r’.	A21.02
Turda	Tour -dah (Romanian)	B37.30
Ungvár	Ung -vahr	B9.11
Vát	Vat	A28.18
Veszprém	Ve -spraym	A41.09
Zagyva	Zodge -vô	A31.23
Zakopane	Zak -oh-pan-ey (Polish) (part of present-day Poland, a winter resort town)	A3.22
Zenta	Zen -tô (present-day Senta, Serbia)	A55.32
Žilina	Zhill -i-nah (Slovakian)	A6.11
Zlín	Zlean (Czech)	A8.01
Zombor	Zom -boar	A59.23