

Japanese Pronunciation Problems

The following sounds often cause problems for Japanese speakers. Make sure you can pronounce the difference in these pairs of words.

/i:/	/ɪ/
sheep	ship
feet	fit
cheap	chip
leek	lick

/b/	/v/
ban	van
best	vest
boat	vote
bet	vet

/æ/	/ʌ/
cat	cut
flash	flush
rash	rush
ankle	uncle

/r/	/l/
right	light
wrist	list
pirate	pilot
pray	play

/ɑ:/	/ɜ:/
farm	firm
hard	heard
fast	first
pass	purse

/ʃ/	/s/
shoe	sue
shoot	suit
shave	save
short	sort

/-t/	/-tʃ/
eat	each
cat	catch
wit	witch
art	arch

/-s/	/-z/
ice	eyes
niece	knees
rice	rise
spice	spies

/d/	/ð/
dare	their
day	they
doze	those
load	loathe

/θ/	/t/	/s/
thin	tin	sin
fourth	fought	force
thigh	tie	sigh
path	part	pass

/ɔ:/	/əʊ/
call	coal
walk	woke
law	low
caught	coat

/h/	/f/
horse	force
hair	fair
hire	fire
hall	fall

Information here is taken from a combination of my experience and Swan, M. & Smith, B. (1994). *Learner English*. Cambridge University Press.

