

Pronunciation – L and R

L and R

There are three different ways to pronounce a consonantal R in German. It is often pronounced as the *Zungenspitzen R* (R on the tip of the tongue), the *Reibe R* (uvular trill) and *Zäpfchen R* (uvular fricative). All three consonantal R sounds are standard. It is spoken differently from the English R: more like a French strong trill or like the Spanish fricative.

In most regions in Germany, as well as on television or radio, most speakers will use the *Reibe R* (uvular trill) and the *Zäpfchen R* (uvular fricative).

The *Reibe R* (uvular trill) is easily derived from the [x] sound (Ach sound). The *Zäpfchen R* (uvular fricative) is pronounced like the sound you make when you gargle.

There is only one way to pronounce the L and *double L* in German. It sounds very much like the double L in the English words *million* or *billion*.

1. Write a story or fairy tale using as many of the words below as possible. Then read the story out loud. If you are learning German in a group, decide who wrote the best story.

Lampe	Land	lang	langsam	langweilig	Lastwagen	
laut	Leben	ledig	leer	Lehrer/-in	leicht	
leise	Licht	lieb	Lift	Linie	Löffel	
Lohn	Luft	lachen	landen	laufen	leben	
legen	lernen	lesen	lieben	liegen		
Radio	Raucher	Rechnung	Regal	Regen	reich	Reis
Reise	Restaurant	richtig	Richtung	Rock	rot	Rotwein
Rücken	ruhig	Rundfahrt	rasieren	rechnen	reden	reisen
reparieren	reservieren	rufen				

2. Can you write sentences or short stories using mainly L or R words?

Die langweilige Lehrerin liebt einen ledigen Lastwagenfahrer.

Rudi repariert einer reichen Restaurantbesitzerin ihr rotes Rotweinregal.