

Hawaiian Pronunciation simple tips.

Visitors to Hawaii are commonly amazed at the long Hawaiian place names and long strings of vowels in Hawaiian words. Names such as Kalanianaʻole Highway, a stretch of the Kamehameha Highway, and Aiea, a community west of Honolulu, leave visitors at a loss to pronounce them. The pronunciation of such words, however, is quite easy to figure out, since every vowel is pronounced. Just take your time, pronounce every vowel as you go, and you've got it. Well.... almost.

It's not quite as simple as that. A number of the vowels are pronounced differently than in English. But what helps a little is the fact that each vowel is always pronounced the same way. There is no "o," for example, pronounced one way in a word like "come," another way in "comrade," and another way in "moon" as is the case with the "o" in the English language. The prominent differences in pronunciation are roughly these:

- a** Pronounced "ah" and never "ay." "Kamehameha," for example, starts off "kah...," not "Kam..." as in the word "camera."
- e** Pronounced "ay" as in the long "a" in the English language. "Kamehameha," for example, is roughly pronounced "kah may hah may hah."
- i** Pronounced "ee" as in the long "e" in the English language. "Waikiki," for example, is pronounced "wah ee kee kee." "Wah" and "ee" are slurred to sound like "wee." Try it. Likewise, "kai," as in "Hawaii Kai," is pronounced "kah ee." When slurred, it sounds like "kwee."
- o** Pronounced "oh," never differently.
- u** Pronounced "oo" as in "goo," never differently.

So can you now pronounce the name of that community Aiea? "Aiea" is pronounced "ah ee ay ah." Slur the first two syllables and you've got it -- roughly "eye ay ah." "Kapiolani" is pronounced "kah pee oh lah nee." "Hale" is pronounced "hah lay," not like the English word "hail."

Glottal stop or 'okina

A modern Hawaiian name for the symbol (a letter) which represents the glottal stop is 'okina ('oki 'cut' + -na ').

For examples of the 'okina, consider the Hawaiian words Hawai'i and O'ahu (often simply Hawaii and Oahu in English orthography). In Hawaiian, these words can be pronounced [ha'vi i] and [o'ah hu], and can be written with an 'okina where the glottal stop is pronounced. ('w' is pronounced 've' in the word Hawai'i)

So with this in your pocket happy singing!

My Little Grass Shack

Bill Cogswell, Tommy Harrison & Johnny Noble 1933

Watch on YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1z9ozRVqg5A>

Watch the YouTube!

Time: 4/4 Key of: C Vamp: D7 // G7 // C // // (twice)

(<----- NC ----->) C 1 D7
I want to go back to my little grass shack in Keala-kekua, Hawaii

I want to be with all the kanes and wahines

That I used to know.... (so long ago)

I can hear the old guitars a-playing.... on the beach at Ho'onaunau

I can hear the old Hawaiians saying....

"Komo mai no Kaua i ka hale wela-ka-hao"

It won't be long till my ship will be sailing... back to Kona

A grand old place that always fair to see.... (your're telling me)

I'm just a little Hawaiian and homesick island boy...

I want to go back to my fish and poi...

I want to go back to my little grass shack in Keala-kekua, Hawaii....

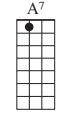
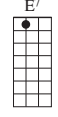
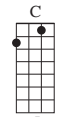
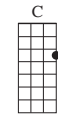
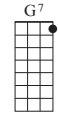
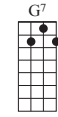
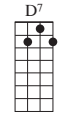
where the humu-humu nuku-nuku a pua'a go swimming by....

where the humu-humu nuku-nuku a pua'a go swimming by....

(turnaround G7)

Ending vamp: D7 // G7 // C // // (once)

Soprano Baritone



Optional Hawaiian D7 chord



Phonic Translation

- Kay-ah-lah kay-koo-ah
- kah-neys
- wah-hee-neys
- Hoh-oh nah-oo nah-oo
- koh-moh may-ee
noh kah-oo-ah
ee kah hah-ley
way-lah kah-hah-oh
- Koh-nah
- hoo-moo hoo-moo
noo-koo noo-koo
ah poo-ah ah

How do I find the vamp for a particular key? Remember this progression: II7, V7, I

C D E F G A B C
I II III IV V VI VII VIII (Octave higher)

F G A B^b C D E F
G A B C D E F[#] G



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