

Finnish diphthongs

The possible diphthongs in Finnish (as traditionally described¹) are as follows. The Finnish vowel inventory consists of [i y u e ø o æ ɑ].

- ‘*’ indicates a combination that is ungrammatical as a diphthong
- ‘()’ indicates a combination that occurs, but is rare or marginal
- Note that combinations of two *identical* vowels will sound like a long vowel rather than a diphthong

¹ Some speakers apparently have the intuition that additional V₁V₂ sequences beyond those listed here can also be syllabified as diphthongs.

- State the possible diphthongs of Finnish as simply and insightfully as possible, using features and natural classes. Some of the patterns are easier than others!

(1) Diphthongs that end in [i]

ii	(yi)		ui
ei	(øi)		oi
æi		ai	

(2) Diphthongs that end in [u]

iu	*		uu
eu	*		ou
*		au	

(3) Diphthongs that end in [y]

(iy)	yy		*
(ey)	øy		*
æy		*	

(4) Other legal diphthongs

ie	yø		uo
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