

NEW YORK – General Characteristics
(Adapted from David Alan Stern’s Acting With An Accent: New York)

For more in-depth study, see Stern’s CD and booklet

Listen to the following example from the International Dialects of English Archive web site:

<http://web.ku.edu/~idea/northamerica/usa/newyork/newyork6.mp3>

GENERAL FOCUS OF TONE: Low front part of the mouth.

VOWEL SUBSTITUTIONS:

ɑ becomes ʌ as in: *stop, pocket, orange*

(It may help you to remember this change when you consider that most of these substitutions are spelled with a “short o.”)

ɑɪ becomes ɒɪ when preceding a voiced consonant, as in: *I, whine, five*

ɑɪ becomes ɑɪ when preceding a voiceless consonant, as in: *life, night, strife*

ɔ becomes ɔwə as in: *coffee, talk, wrong*

æ becomes ẽæ (nasalized) as in: *jazz, bag, hassle*

When followed by:

- d
- f
- g
- dʒ
- m
- n
- s
- ʃ
- θ
- z

ɝ in a heavy, street version, becomes ɔɪ as in: *heard, bird, thirsty*

CONSONANTS:

r is dropped when in the final position, as in: *here, over, there*

Strong rhoticity when r is in-between vowels; the r is then attached to the following vowel, as in: *“I’m very sore at you!”*

t in the medial position becomes d as in: *butter, better, little*

In some cases, the medial t becomes glottalized tʔ as in: *butter, better, little*

ŋ endings are dropped to n as in: *drinking, running, hunting*

In heavy, street versions, θ and ð become t and d as in: *these, them, those*