



**Working In English**  
**by Doing Business In English™**

**EFFECTIVE BUSINESS ENGLISH**  
**PRONUNCIATION AND ACCENTS BY**  
**DOING BUSINESS IN ENGLISH**

Date August 2025 No 1  
Doing Business In English  
[www.doingbusinessinenglish.com](http://www.doingbusinessinenglish.com)

## Pronunciation and Accent

The term 'accent' is defined as a characteristic manner of speaking a language, particularly linked to a specific nation, region, or socioeconomic class. The term 'accent' denotes the manner in which an individual articulates a language. All individuals possess an accent in the language they utilize. The essential difference is that pronunciation is the way of saying a word whereas accent is a mark used to show either the stress on a syllable or to pronounce with emphasis.

Pronunciation explains how each word is articulated, this includes how the mouth is shaped, where the tongue is placed and how different parts of the word are expressed. It is a way a word is specified. This includes both a correct and direct rise / fall of the voice in speech. In addition, pronunciation depends on the factors such as where people live, education and nature of society.

Accent and pronunciation are two crucial elements when developing use of a new language. Accent denotes the manner in which an individual speaks a language, this is shaped by their native tongue and area dialect. It encompasses the distinct phonemes, intonation patterns, and cadence employed in spoken communication. Pronunciation, conversely, emphasizes the accurate enunciation of discrete sounds, stress patterns, and word delimitations. Accent pertains to the overall tone and intonation of speech, whereas pronunciation focuses on the precision and clarity of specific sounds and words. Accent and pronunciation are essential for efficient communication, as they influence the clarity of understanding between individuals.

[Accent vs. Pronunciation - What's the Difference? | This vs. That](#)

[The difference between 'accent' and 'pronunciation'. - Speech Active](#)

[Difference Between Accent and Pronunciation](#)

## Pronunciation

Achieving fluency in English is a significant challenge, particularly when pronunciation hinders efficient communication. Prior to addressing specific errors, it is crucial to comprehend the reasons behind the challenges of English pronunciation. Sadly, English does not consistently adhere to established conventions. Phonetically similar words may exhibit divergent pronunciations, for example there are 3 ways of saying 'oo', and individual letters can produce various sounds contingent upon contextual factors.

Professionals articulation of words influences others' perceptions of them, mispronouncing words may result in misunderstandings and, in certain instances, undermine your credibility in professional environments.

Non-native English speakers frequently encounter difficulties with phonemes absent in their home languages, as well as with the distinctive rhythm and stress patterns inherent to English, for example Spanish native speakers often have a problem with 'j' in English. Effective learning of pronunciation involves not only acquiring new vocabulary but also restructuring the utilization of your mouth, tongue, and voice to articulate sounds. Pronunciation can be enhanced, akin to any other talent, through practice, exposure, and feedback.

### 7 Ways To Improve Your English Pronunciation

#### English Pronunciation Training | Improve Your Accent & Speak Clearly

#### British English Pronunciation in 50 Minutes - ALL 150 words you need (+ free Pronunciation Ebook)

#### BRITISH ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION/ACCENT - The Advanced Guide for English Learners (RP and Modern RP)

#### 15 Minute Morning Pronunciation Practice for English Learners

## Accents

Accents are different ways of pronouncing words that can show where a speaker is from, their social status and/or their ethnicity. There is a difference between accents and dialects, that include special words and forms of grammar from a region. Types of pronunciation can differ but the actual meaning of the same word normally is the same in most countries in the English speaking world.

Within most English-speaking countries there is significant variation in how English is spoken and how it sounds. This is particularly true in Britain due to its history and influences from the French, German, Nordic and Celtic languages.

Pronunciation can be improved, but learners must accept that accents are a normal part of the language. It is common for non-native speakers to worry that they will completely lose their accents, but this is not the desired goal. Rather learners should focus on how easy it is to understand them, there is very little value in developing a completely native accent

[How to get a Better English accent 🗨️ Pronunciation Practice Every Day!](#)

[How to SOUND Better in English! | Pronunciation Lesson](#)

[The English Language in 67 Accents & Random Voices](#)

[British Accents Ranked from Easiest to Hardest \(+ Free PDF & Quiz\)](#)

[How to Speak with Different AMERICAN ACCENTS](#)

## Phonetics

Phonetics is the study of how speech sounds are produced, combined, and represented by symbols. It covers the sounds of speech and how they are produced and combined, then described and represented with written symbols.

In English, as other languages, there are a small number of commonly used sounds, both vowels and consonants, these are called phonemes. The vowels, for example, in the words 'bin' and 'Ben' are different phonemes, in addition so are the consonants at the start of the words 'let' and 'met.'

English spelling is both inconsistent and can be very confusing, this is often due to the vocabulary in English originating from French, Celtic, Old English and many other languages. This is why it is important to think of English pronunciation in terms of phonemes rather than letters of the alphabet. This is difficult, for example, the word 'euro' begins with the same consonant sound as 'your'.

Phonetics focuses on the study of the sounds used in speech, focused on the meaning of sounds and their order. The discipline is closely related to the discipline of phonology, that focuses on how sounds are understood in a specific language, and in addition semiotics, that observes the actual symbols.

In order to start understanding how the different phonemes sound the British Council have a great app that is free of charge that can be accessed through the following.

[LearnEnglish Sounds Right | LearnEnglish](#)

Understanding the different mouth positions can be done by watching.

### 44 Phonemes

A complete course from the BBC can be seen at the following.

[!\[\]\(47734e4656765d20df4fdbd5b7aff048\_img.jpg\) Short vowel /ɪ/ in 'bid', 'tip & 'minute' - English Pronunciation Tips](#)

## Pronunciation Errors

### Mispronouncing 'R' and 'L' Sounds

Mixing up 'r' and 'l' is one of the most frequent errors, for example "The lion roared" becomes "The rion loared."

This mistake is most common for East Asian language speakers because in their languages these sounds are not distinct.

- With the 'l' sounds, the tip of the tongue does touch the back of the speaker's front teeth.
- With the 'r' sounds, the tip of the tongue does not touch the back of the speaker's front teeth.

The English "r" is different from what is called the rolled "r" in some other languages which creates mispronunciations. The English "r" is pronounced with the tongue pulled back slightly without touching the roof of the mouth, try practicing words such as "row," "rip" and "right."

There are differences in the pronunciation of the "R" sound in English speaking countries. In American English, the "r" is pronounced strongly, whereas in British English, it is sometimes dropped, particularly at the end of words. The Cambridge dictionary, link below, can be used to listen to the difference between the American and British pronunciation of words.

### Pronunciation on Cambridge Dictionary

### Adding additional vowel sounds in consonant clusters

Many non-native English speakers, often native Arabic and Japanese speakers, add extra vowels where consonant clusters are either used differently or nonexistent. Some speakers have a habit to add extra vowel sounds to make it easier, without realizing making words such as 'start' into 'sat-art' or 'blue' into 'bu-lue.'

### The 22 Most Common Consonant Clusters in English | BoldVoice

Speakers making this mistake should focus on being aware of and eliminating the extra vowels.

### English Pronunciation Practice: CONSONANT CLUSTERS

### English Pronunciation Practice | CONSONANT CLUSTERS | British English

### Consonant Clusters - Pronunciation | What are consonant clusters?

### Pronouncing V as W (or Vice Versa)

This is very difficult for non-native speakers whose own languages do not differentiate between 'v' and 'w' sounds in the clear way English does. This is often a problem for German, Hindi and Mandarin speakers who often say 'walley' instead of 'valley.'

In order to make a clear 'v' it requires the speaker to place their upper teeth lightly on their lower lip and create a vibration.

In order to make a 'w', it requires the speaker to round their lips without letting them touch and push air out, their tongue and teeth must not make contact with anything inside their mouth.

Many speakers create both sounds correctly when in different sentences, but in the same sentence they can be difficult often made worse if the speaker speaks too quickly. Slowing down instantly helps and conscious practice with tongue twisters really helps, this article can help.

### Tongue-Twisters with "W" and "V"

In addition, creating pairs of 'v' and 'w' words and then reading them out loud helps create focus and differentiation.

### Minimal Pair initial /v/ and /w/ | Learn English

### Adding additional vowel sounds in consonant clusters

Many non-native English speakers, often native Arabic and Japanese speakers, add extra vowels where consonant clusters are either used differently or nonexistent. Some speakers have a habit to add extra vowel sounds to make it easier, without realizing making words such as 'start' into 'sat-art' or 'blue' into 'bu-lue.'

### The 22 Most Common Consonant Clusters in English | BoldVoice

Speakers making this mistake should focus on being aware of and eliminating the extra vowels.

### English Pronunciation Practice: CONSONANT CLUSTERS

### English Pronunciation Practice | CONSONANT CLUSTERS | British English

### Consonant Clusters - Pronunciation | What are consonant clusters?

## Confusing “th” Sounds

The English ‘th’ sound has 2 variants: the voiceless  $\theta$  and the voiced  $\eth$ , creating confusion.

The voiceless  $\theta$  is pronounced by placing the tip of the tongue lightly between the upper and lower teeth, then, exhaling air gently through the gap created without using your vocal cords. Some words with this sound include:

- Path, bathroom and thoughtful

The voiced version requires the vocal cords to vibrate when it is made. The tongue placement is the same as  $\theta$ , but the vocal cords are activated as air is gently pushed through the teeth. Some words with this include:

- Breathe, this and mother

The key difference between the sounds is that the voiceless  $\theta$  has no vibration whereas the voiced  $\eth$  activates the vocal cords.

## Making ‘th’ sound as ‘s’ or ‘z’ sounds

The “th” sound does not exist in many languages so non-native speakers use ‘s’ or ‘z’ instead, so ‘think’ becomes ‘zink’ or ‘Thursday’ becomes ‘sursday’. Some learners replace ‘th’ it with “d” or “t,” this means words such as “three” becomes “tree” and “this” becoming “dis.”

If speakers keep their tongue behind their teeth entirely, they will create a ‘s’ or ‘z’ sounds, whereas when it touches the roof of the mouth, the speaker creates a ‘t’ or ‘d’.

In order to create a ‘the’ sound, the tongue must be between the teeth, the ‘th’ sound requires placing the tongue between the teeth and blowing air out gently, practice with ‘th’ words.

## TH Words (100+ Words in English) • 7ESL

[Pronunciation - TH - through, weather, lethal, breath, breathe](#)

[Pronunciation of 'th' - English In A Minute](#)

[The TH Sound in English - New and IMPROVED Lesson](#)

[How to Pronounce TH | The ULTIMATE Guide for English Learners!](#)

[Learn English Pronunciation: TH & THR](#)

[English TH - Accent Training](#)

### Adding additional vowel sounds in consonant clusters

Many non-native English speakers, often native Arabic and Japanese speakers, add extra vowels where consonant clusters are either used differently or nonexistent. Some speakers have a habit to add extra vowel sounds to make it easier, without realizing making words such as 'start' into 'sat-art' or 'blue' into 'bu-lue.'

### The 22 Most Common Consonant Clusters in English | BoldVoice

Speakers making this mistake should focus on being aware of and eliminating the extra vowels.

### English Pronunciation Practice: CONSONANT CLUSTERS

English Pronunciation Practice | CONSONANT CLUSTERS | British English

Consonant Clusters - Pronunciation | What are consonant clusters?

### Leaving off final consonants

For some speakers leaving off final consonants in their native languages is common or normal, the problem is that if they do this in English they become difficult to understand. These final consonant sounds are often the key to important words, 'map' and 'mat' sound the same if the final consonant is left off.

Speakers can improve clarity and precision by practicing fully pronouncing the final consonant in words, in addition, giving extra attention to words where leaving the final consonant off is a risk.

### Dropped Consonants | INTRO | English Pronunciation

[Advanced] Ending Voiced vs. Unvoiced Consonants -- American Accent

Voiced vs. Voiceless Final Consonant Sounds | Advanced English Pronunciation (free PDF)

## Word Stress

Word stress can be very difficult for non-native speakers who have not grown up with English in their daily lives. It refers to the emphasis placed on certain syllables within a word when spoken, it is crucial in communicating meaning, distinguishing differences between words, and holding the rhythm of speech. Pronouncing 'photograph' as 'pho-TO-graph' instead of 'PHO-to-graph' can be very confusing for the audience.

The general rule for two-syllable words is that with nouns the stress falls on the first syllable whereas with verbs the stress falls on the second syllable.

- Noun: DIScount "Is there a discount on this?"
- Verb: disCOUNT "They discounted the theories."

The stress patterns are not always predictable; they might naturally be picked up in conversations. Speakers who can understand the underlying rules can improve their pronunciation a lot.

Two-syllable nouns and adjectives are usually stressed on the first syllable, whereas two-syllable verbs and prepositions tend to stress the second. For example.

- TAbble
- PICTure
- reLAX
- beTWEEN

[Sentence Stress and Intonation in English \(The Complete Guide\)](#)

[Master Word Stress: 9 Essential Rules! - English Pronunciation](#)

[WORD STRESS in English - What are the rules for Word Stress in English?](#)

[Syllables and Word Stress - English Pronunciation Lesson](#)

[Mini English lessons: Word stress](#)

[💧 8 Easy WORD STRESS Rules to Speak English Clearly \(Powerful!\)](#)



### Replacing the Schwa sounds with full vowels

The schwa sound /ə/ is a unique neutral, unstressed vowel sound found that is found in weak syllables. This sound is different from a regular vowel and is pronounced like a quick and relaxed 'uh.'

Some speakers replace the schwa sound with full vowel sounds, this makes their speech sound very formal or uncomfortable. To pronounce this sound effectively, the speaker should keep their jaw, tongue, and lips relaxed in a neutral position.

This sound is in words such as.

- Comma, broken, animal, second and minus.

### 128+ Schwa Sound Words: Free Printable Lists - Literacy Learn

### The SCHWA Sound! English Pronunciation Lesson

The Schwa Sound: How to Pronounce the Schwa in Words and Sentences (The Complete Guide)

The Schwa - English In A Minute

English Pronunciation - The Schwa Sound /ə/ (Part 1)

Schwa - the BEST vowel sound in English

American English Sounds - UH [ə] Vowel - How to make the SCHWA Vowel

### The 'u' sound in words such as 'pup'

The 'u' sound in words like 'pup' and 'gut' is unique in English, this can create pronunciation mistakes for non-native speakers.

Speakers can practice by relaxing their lips, keeping them slightly open when saying words like 'pup', 'bun,' and 'fuss'.

### Vowel Pronunciation - u (uh/oo)

Short vowel /ʊ/ - 'foot', 'put' & 'good' - English Pronunciation Tips

## Silent Letters

There are many English words with silent letters and they do not sound the way they are spelt. The most common mistake is to pronounce these silent letters, examples are,

'b' in 'thumb', 'bomb', 'climb' and 'subtle'

'g' in 'gnat', 'gnaw' and 'sign'

'h' in 'heiress', 'hour', 'school', 'white' and 'honest' (often words derived from French)

'k' in 'knight', 'kneel', 'know' and 'knife'

'l' in 'calf', 'half', 'salmon' and 'talk' (words containing 'al')

'p' in 'psychology', 'receipt' and 'psalm'

's' in 'aisle', 'island' and 'debris'

't' in 'castle', 'Listen' and 'whistle'

'u' in 'guide', 'guess' and 'guitar' (words starting with 'gu')

'w' in 'Wrap', 'wrist' and 'write' (words starting with 'wr')

The best way for speakers to improve pronunciation of these words is through learning the common patterns that occur frequently.

Lists of words with silent letters

[Silent Letters in English A-Z List \(PDF\)](#)

[Words with Silent Letters from A-Z \(with Pronunciation Video\) • 7ESL](#)

[ALL Silent Letters in ENGLISH From A to Z ||| Perfect ENGLISH Pronunciation](#)

[Silent Letters in English: Rules for Silent Letter Words in English with Examples and Pronunciation](#)

[SILENT LETTERS with RULES | English Speaking, Pronunciation, & Vocabulary, American English](#)

[Silent Letters in English | A to Z Rules](#)

[Silent Letters in English | Pronunciation Practice](#)

[Silent Letters | English Pronunciation & Vocabulary | PART 1](#)

[BEGINNER to ADVANCED - Silent Letter RULES - English Pronunciation](#)

## Pronouncing “ED” Suffixes Incorrectly

Many learners over-pronounce the “ed” ending of words, making verbs sound unnatural. In English, the “ed” ending can be pronounced as /t/, /d/, or /ɪd/, depending on the verb. Over-pronouncing endings this way makes speakers sound unnatural and draws attention to how they are speaking rather than what they are saying.

The “ed” ending past tense verbs has complex rules governing its pronunciation, there are three variants.

- /t/ as in worked
- /d/ as in played
- /ɪd/ as in wanted

The error usually happens when learners apply the default /ɪd/ pronunciation for all verbs, or pronounce the ending exactly as it’s spelled. However, the pronunciation of the “-ed” ending depends on the sound that comes before it.

There is a rule, that is that if the last sound of the word is voiced, then use /d/ (e.g. loved), if it’s voiceless, then use /t/ (e.g. worked), and finally if the word ends in “ted” or “ded”, use /ɪd/ (e.g. needed).

The sound is pronounced as /t/ when the verb ends in an unvoiced consonant sound.

- Asked, bumped and hoped

When the verb ends in a voiced sound, it is pronounced as a /d/:

- Called, moved and slayed

Finally, pronounced /ɪd/ when the verb ends in a /t/ or /d/ sound:

- Created, decided and ranted

Speakers should both consider the verbs they are using and how native speakers pronounce them, then practice using recordings or apps that focus on verb tenses.

[ED pronunciation in English | How to pronounce ED endings | Learn English Pronunciation ED ENDING WORDS | How to pronounce words ending in ED | /ɪd/ /d/ /t/ sound | Learn with examples](#)

[How to Pronounce 'ed' Endings in English \(+ FREE PDF 📄\)](#)

[How to pronounce -ED GB \(Full explanation\)](#)

[Stop mispronouncing "ED"! | Perfect English Pronunciation](#)



### The flap “T” in American English

In American English if there is a ‘t’ sound between two vowel sounds, it often becomes a flap T. The sound of a flap T is softer, like a quicker version of the sound ‘d’, making ‘water’ sound like ‘wad-er’. Actually, many English learners and some native speakers either pronounce it as a full ‘d’, which is very heavy, or as a clean ‘t’, which sounds far too precise and unnatural in normal speech.

In order to create a flap T, the speaker must place the tip of their tongue near the bumpy area behind the upper front teeth and keep it relaxed. Then, they should lightly touch the area with a quick motion, like a flick.

- The speaker has to avoid holding this position and creating a strong burst of air like they do with a traditional /t/.
- The flap T requires minimal air pressure, making it sound smoother unlike regular ‘t’ sounds.

[Consonant Sound Flap 'T' / ɾ / as in "water" – American English Pronunciation](#)

[Flap T: Really a D Sound? American English Pronunciation](#)

[How to Practice the Flap T -- American English Pronunciation](#)

[How to Pronounce the Glottal Stop/Glottal T and When is it Used](#)

## Rising and Falling Tones

Intonation is the rise and fall of the voice when speaking and effective English depends on intonation to demonstrate emotions and meaning. A rising tone at the end of a sentence often indicates a question, whereas a falling tone means the end of a statement. When speakers use intonation incorrectly their speech can be very confusing and hard to follow, affecting the credibility of the speaker.

On a more positive level, leaders often try to master intonation in order to be seen as more engaging, insightful and inspiring. When applied correctly intonation can clarify specific meaning when sharing information, priorities or commands.

To improve intonation speakers can record themselves when practicing a presentation or simply reading aloud, then the speaker should listen for parts of speech in which the intonation sounds unnatural or could be improved. The recording or specific sounds can be compared to that of native speakers.

## Intonation in English - English Pronunciation Lesson

### Rising and Falling Intonation

### How to use QUESTION INTONATION in ENGLISH | RISING and FALLING QUESTION INTONATION

### INTONATION IN NATURAL SPEECH: Giving New and Old Information | English Pronunciation Lesson

### What is intonation in English? How many types does it have?

## The short 'i' and the long 'ee' sound

For many non-native speakers words such as 'bit' and 'beat' or 'pip' and 'peep' sound the same which creates confusion.

Speakers can practice by using pairs of words (wit/wheat, hit/heat), the following can help.

## Minimal Pairs /ɪ/ and /i:/ - List of Words with Pronunciation

### A Look at Short I and Short E Confusion

### Vowel Sound / i / as in "be" - American English Pronunciation

### SHIP vs SHEEP? Long and Short "i" Vowels

### How to Pronounce /e/ /ɪ/ /i:/ | bet, bit, beat / set, sit, seat

## [Listening and Imitation: The Fast Track to Pronunciation Mastery](#)

Non-native speakers can improve their pronunciation by using active listening and then imitating. Particularly effective methods are listening to podcasts or having conversations with native speakers as this exposes them to the natural rhythm and flow of English. Imitating trains the brain and muscles to produce sounds more accurately.

## [YouTube Videos on Pronunciation](#)

### [Most Common Pronunciation Mistakes in English](#) ✕

[10 English Words You're \(probably\) Mispronouncing! | Difficult Pronunciation | Common Mistakes](#)

[10 English words that you pronounce INCORRECTLY | British English Pronunciation + \(Free PDF & Quiz!\)](#)

[50 Words You're Pronouncing WRONGLY Right Now! | Top 50 Mispronounced English Words, Common Mistakes](#)

[Syllables and Word Stress - English Pronunciation Lesson](#)

[British English Pronunciation in 50 Minutes - ALL 150 words you need \(+ free Pronunciation Ebook\)](#)

[60 WORDS You're Pronouncing INCORRECTLY! Pronunciation Mistakes | Commonly Mispronounced Words](#)

[Fix these basic English pronunciation mistakes!](#)