A guide to speaking and pronouncing colloquial American English
Second Edition Ann Cook

Illustrated by Holly Forsyth Audio by Busy Signal Studios
This book is dedicated to Nate Cook.
Also, my special thanks for their extensive contributions to my editor, Dimitry Popow, Carolyn Jaeckin, Dr. Maria Bruno, Karina Lombard, Dr. Hyouk-Keun Kim, Ph.D., Karl Althaus, Adrian Wong, Sergey Korshunov, and Jerry Danielson at Busy Signal Studios.

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Желательно иметь шрифт WP Phonetic

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Read This First

Welcome to American Accent Training. This book and CD set is designed to get you started on your American accent. We'll follow the book and go through the 13 lessons and all the exercises step by step. Everything is explained and a complete Answer Key may be found in the back of the text.

What Is Accent?

Accent is a combination of three main components: intonation (speech music), liaisons (word connections), and pronunciation (the spoken sounds of vowels, consonants, and combinations). As you go along, you'll notice that you're being asked to look at accent in a different way. You'll also realize that the grammar you studied before and this accent you're studying now are completely different.

Part of the difference is that grammar and vocabulary are systematic and structured—the letter of the language. Accent, on the other hand, is free form, intuitive, and creative—more the spirit of the language. So, thinking of music, feeling, and flow, let your mouth relax into the American accent.

Can I Learn a New Accent?

Can a person actually learn a new accent? Many people feel that after a certain age, it's just not
possible. Can classical musicians play jazz? If they practice, of course they can! For your American accent, it's just a matter of learning and practicing techniques this book and CD set will teach you. It is up to you to use them or not. How well you do depends mainly on how open and willing you are to sounding different from the way you have sounded all your life.

A very important thing you need to remember is that you can use your accent to say what you mean and how you mean it. Word stress conveys meaning through tone or feeling, which can be much more important than the actual words that you use. We'll cover the expression of these feelings through intonation in the first lesson.

You may have noticed that I talk fast and often run my words together. You've probably heard enough "English-teacher English"—where everything is pronounced without having to listen too carefully. That's why on the CDs we're going to talk just like the native speakers that we are, in a normal conversational tone.

Native speakers may often tell people who are learning English to "slow down" and to "speak clearly." This is meant with the best of intentions, but it is exactly the opposite of what a student really needs to do. If you speak fairly quickly and with strong intonation, you will be understood more easily. To illustrate this point, you will hear a Vietnamese student first trying to speak slowly and carefully and then repeating the same words quickly and with strong intonation. Studying, this exercise took her only about two minutes to practice, but the difference makes her sound as if she had been in America for many years.

Please listen. You will hear the same words twice, Hello, my name is Muoi. I'm taking American Accent Training.

You may have to listen to this CD a couple of times to catch everything. To help you, every word on the CD is also written in the book. By seeing and hearing simultaneously, you'll learn to reconcile the differences between the appearance of English (spelling) and the sound of English (pronunciation and the other aspects of accent).

The CD leaves a rather short pause for you to repeat into. The point of this is to get you responding quickly and without spending too much time thinking about your response.

**Accent versus Pronunciation**

Many people equate accent with pronunciation. I don't feel this to be true at all. America is a big country, and while the pronunciation varies from the East Coast to the West Coast, from the southern to the northern states, two components that are uniquely American stay basically the same—the speech music, or intonation, and the word connections or liaisons. Throughout this program, we will focus on them. In the latter part of the book we will work on pronunciation concepts, such as Cat? Caught? Cut? and Betty Bought a Bit of Better Butter; we also will work our way through some of the difficult sounds, such as TH, the American R, the L, V, and Z.

"Which Accent Is Correct?"

American Accent Training was created to help people "sound American" for lectures, interviews, teaching, business situations, and general daily communication. Although America has many regional pronunciation differences, the accent you will learn is that of standard American English as spoken and understood by the majority of educated native speakers in the United States. Don't worry that you will sound slangy or too casual because you most definitely won't. This is the way a professor lectures to a class, the way a national newscaster broadcasts, the way that is most comfortable and familiar to the majority of native speakers.

"Why Is My Accent So Bad?"

Learners can be seriously hampered by a negative outlook, so I'll address this very important point early. First, your accent is not bad; it is nonstandard to the American ear. There is a joke that goes: What do you call a person who can speak three languages? Trilingual. What do you call a person who can speak two languages? Bilingual. What do you call a person who can only speak one language? American.

Every language is equally valid or good, so every accent is good. The average American, however,
truly does have a hard time understanding a nonstandard accent. George Bernard Shaw said that the English and Americans are two people divided by the same language! Some students learn to overpronounce English because they naturally want to say the word as it is written. Too often an English teacher may allow this, perhaps thinking that colloquial American English is unsophisticated, unrefined, or even incorrect. Not so at all! Just as you don't say the T in listen, the TT in better is pronounced D, bedder. Any other pronunciation will sound foreign, strange, wrong, or different to a native speaker.

Less Than It Appears ... More Than It Appears

As you will see in Exercise 1-21, Squeezed-Out Syllables, on page 18, some words appear to have three or more syllables, but all of them are not actually spoken. For example, business is not (bi/zi/ness), but rather (birz/ness).

Just when you get used to eliminating whole syllables from words, you're going to come across other words that look as if they have only one syllable, but really need to be said with as many as three! In addition, the inserted syllables are filled with letters that are not in the written word. I'll give you two examples of this strange phenomenon. Pool looks like a nice, one-syllable word, but if you say it this way, at best, it will sound like pull, and at worst will be unintelligible to your listener. For clear comprehension, you need to say three syllables (pu/wuh/luh). Where did that W come from? It's certainly not written down anywhere, but it is there just as definitely as the P is there. The second example is a word like feel. If you say just the letters that you see, it will sound more like fill. You need to say (fee/yuh/luh). Is that really a Y? Yes. These mysterious semivowels are explained under Liaisons in Chapter 2. They can appear either inside a word as you have seen, or between words as you will learn.

Language Is Fluent and Fluid

Just like your own language, conversational English has a very smooth, fluid sound. Imagine that you are walking along a dry riverbed with your eyes closed. Every time you come to a rock, you trip over it, stop, continue, and trip over the next rock. This is how the average foreigner speaks English. It is slow, awkward, and even painful. Now imagine that you are a great river rushing through that same riverbed—rocks are no problem, are they? You just slide over and around them without ever breaking your smooth flow. It is this feeling that I want you to capture in English.

Changing your old speech habits is very similar to changing from a stick shift to an automatic transmission. Yes, you continue to reach for the gearshift for a while and your foot still tries to find the clutch pedal, but this soon phases itself out. In the same way, you may still say "telephone call" (kohl) instead of (kahl) for a while, but this too will soon pass.

You will also have to think about your speech more than you do now. In the same way that you were very aware and self-conscious when you first learned to drive, you will eventually relax and deal with the various components simultaneously.

A new accent is an adventure. Be bold! Exaggerate wildly! You may worry that Americans will laugh at you for putting on an accent, but I guarantee you, they won't even notice. They'll just think that you've finally learned to "talk right." Good luck with your new accent!

A Few Words On Pronunciation

CD 1

Track 2

I'd like to introduce you to the pronunciation guide outlines in the following chart. There aren't too many characters that are different from the standard alphabet, but just so you'll be familiar with them, look at the chart. It shows eight tense vowels and six lax vowels and semivowels.

Tense Vowels? Lax Vowels?
In some books, tense vowels are called long and lax vowels are called short. Since you will be learning how to lengthen vowels when they come before a voiced consonant, it would be confusing to say that hen has a long, short vowel. It is more descriptive to say that it has a lax vowel that is doubled or lengthened.

Although this may look like a lot of characters to learn, there are really only four new ones: æ, ä, ø, and ü. Under Tense Vowels, you'll notice that the vowels that say their own name simply have a line over them: ā, ē, ī, ō, ū. There are three other tense vowels. First, [ä], is pronounced like the sound you make when the doctor wants to see your throat, or when you loosen a tight belt and sit down in a soft chair—aaaaaaaah! Next, you'll find [æ], a combination of the tense vowel [ä] and the lax vowel [ε]. It is similar to the noise that a goat or a lamb makes. The last one is [æo], a combination of [æ] and [o]. This is a very common sound, usually written as ow or ou in words like down or round.

A tense vowel requires you to use a lot of facial muscles to produce it. If you say [ē], you must stretch your lips back; for [ū] you must round your lips forward; for [ä] you drop your jaw down; for [æ] you will drop your jaw far down and back; for [ā] bring your lips back and drop your jaw a bit; for [ï] drop your jaw for the ah part of the sound and pull it back up for the ee part; and for [ö] round the lips, drop the jaw and pull back up into [ä]. An American [ō] is really [ōū].

Now you try it. Repeat after me. [ē], [ū], [ā], [æ], [ä], [i], [ō], [ö].

A lax vowel, on the other hand, is very reduced. In fact, you don't need to move your face at all. You only need to move the back of your tongue and your throat. These sounds are very different from most other languages.

Under Lax Vowels, there are four reduced vowel sounds, starting with the Greek letter epsilon [ε], pronounced eh; [i] pronounced ih, and [ü] pronounced ü, which is a combination of ih and uh, and the schwa, [ə], pronounced uh—the softest, most reduced, most relaxed sound that we can produce. It is also the most common sound in English. The semivowels are the American R (pronounced er, which is the schwa plus R) and the American L (which is the schwa plus L). Vowels will be covered in greater detail in Chapters 3, 8, and 11.

Voiced Consonants? Unvoiced Consonants?

A consonant is a sound that causes two points of your mouth to come into contact, in three locations—the lips, the tip of the tongue, and the throat. A consonant can either be unvoiced (whispered) or voiced (spoken), and it can appear at the beginning, middle, or end of a word. You'll notice that for some categories, a particular sound doesn't exist in English.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Sound</th>
<th>Spelling</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Sound</th>
<th>Spelling</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ā</td>
<td>ēi</td>
<td>take</td>
<td>[tak]</td>
<td>ε</td>
<td>eh</td>
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<td>ī</td>
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<td>took</td>
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<td>ō</td>
<td>ou</td>
<td>hope</td>
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<td>û</td>
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<td>ā</td>
<td>ah</td>
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<td>æ</td>
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<tr>
<td>æo</td>
<td>æ + o</td>
<td>down</td>
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<td>[dəʊl]</td>
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</table>
Pronunciation Points

1. In many dictionaries, you may find a character that looks like an upside down V, [A] and another character that is an upside-down e [ə], the schwa. There is a linguistic distinction between the two, but they are pronounced exactly the same. Since you can't hear the difference between these two sounds, we'll just be using the upside-down e to indicate the schwa sound. It is pronounced uh.

2. The second point is that we do not differentiate between [ä] and [ø]. The [ä] is pronounced ah. The backwards C [ɔ] is more or less pronounced aw. This aw sound has a "back East" sound to it, and as it's not common to the entire United States, it won't be included here.

3. R can be considered a semivowel. One characteristic of a vowel is that nothing in the mouth touches anything else. R definitely falls into that category. So in the exercises throughout the book it will be treated not so much as a consonant, but as a vowel.

4. The ow sound is usually indicated by [äu], which would be ah + ooh. This may have been accurate at some point in some locations, but the sound is now generally [æo]. Town is [tæon], how is [hæo], loud is [læod], and so on.

5. Besides voiced and unvoiced, there are two words that come up in pronunciation. These are sibilant and plosive. When you say the [s] sound, you can feel the air sliding out over the tip of your tongue—this is a sibilant. When you say the [p] sound, you can feel the air popping out from between your lips—this is a plosive. Be aware that there are two sounds that are sometimes mistakenly taught as sibilants, but are actually plosives: [th] and [v].

6. For particular points of pronunciation that pertain to your own language, refer to the Nationality Guides on page 172.

Throughout this text, we will be using three symbols to indicate three separate actions:

- ▼ V Indicates a command or a suggestion.
- ◊ + Indicates the beep tone.
- × + Indicates that you need to turn the CD on or off, back up, or pause.
**Telephone Tutoring**

**Preliminary Diagnostic Analysis**

This is a speech analysis to identify the strengths and weaknesses of your American accent. If you are studying American Accent Training on your own, please contact toll-free (800) 457-4255 or [www.americanaccent.com](http://www.americanaccent.com) for a referral to a qualified telephone analyst. The diagnostic analysis is designed to evaluate your current speech patterns to let you know where your accent is standard and nonstandard.

Hello, my name is ______. I'm taking American Accent Training. There's a lot to learn, but I hope to make it as enjoyable as possible. I should pick up on the American intonation pattern pretty easily, although the only way to get it is to practice all of the time.

1. all, long, caught 5. ice, I'll, sky 9. come, front, indicate 13. out, house, round
2. cat, matter, laugh 6. it, milk, sin 10. smooth, too, shoe 14. boy, oil, toy
3. take, say, fail 7. eat, me, seen 11. took, full, would
4. get, egg, any 8. work, girl, bird 12. told, so, roll

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<td>thin</td>
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<td>bleed</td>
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<td>supplies</td>
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<td>kingdom</td>
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Chapter 1 American Intonation

The American Speech Music

What to Do with Your Mouth to Sound American

One of the main differences between the way an American talks and the way the rest of the world talks is that we don't really move our lips. (So, when an American says, "Read my lips!" what does he really mean?) We create most of our sounds in the throat, using our tongue very actively. If you hold your fingers over your lips or clench your jaws when you practice speaking American English, you will find yourself much closer to native-sounding speech than if you try to pronounce every single sound very carefully.

If you can relate American English to music, remember that the indigenous music is jazz. Listen to their speech music, and you will hear that Americans have a melodic, jazzy way of producing sounds. Imagine the sound of a cello when you say, *Beddy bada bida beader budder* (*Betty bought a bit of better butter*) and you'll be close to the native way of saying it.

Because most Americans came from somewhere else, American English reflects the accent contributions of many lands. The speech music has become much more exaggerated than British English, developing a strong and distinctive intonation. If you use this intonation, not only will you be easier to understand, but you will sound much more confident, dynamic, and persuasive.

Intonation, or speech music, is the sound that you hear when a conversation is too far away to be clearly audible but close enough for you to tell the nationality of the speakers. The American intonation dictates liaisons and pronunciation, and it indicates mood and meaning. Without intonation, your speech would be flat, mechanical, and very confusing for your listener. What is the American intonation pattern? How is it different from other languages? *Foa egzampuru, eefu you hea ah Jahpahneezu pahsohn speakingu Ingurishu,* the sound would be very choppy, mechanical, and unemotional to an American. *Za sem vey vis Cheuman pipplies,* it sounds too stiff. *A mahn frohm Paree ohn zee ahzer ahnd, eez intonashon goes up at zee end ov ewree sentence,* and has such a strong intonation that he sounds romantic and highly emotional, but this may not be appropriate for a lecture or a business meeting in English.

American Intonation Do's and Don'ts

*Do Not Speak Word by Word*

| 1. Go(w) upstairs. | 2. Beddy bada bida beader budder. |
| 3. My name is Ann. | 4. Italian Italy |
| 4. Beddy bada bida beader budder. | 5. attack attic |
| 5. Give it to his owner. | 6. atomic atom |
| 6. photography photograph | 7. bet bed |
| 7. It is the end of the bad years. | 8. Go(w) upstairs. |
| 8. I(y)am going f thee(y)other room. | 9. attack attic |
| 9. My nay mi Zæn. | 10. atomic atom |
| 10. Idiz the(y)en d'y th' be dyearz. | 11. photography photograph |
| 11. G' v' to(w)i zon'r. | 12. bet bed |
Connect Words to Form Sound Groups

bä bizän the foun.

Use Staircase Intonation

\[ 
\text{Bä} \quad \text{bi} \quad \text{foun.} \\
\text{zän} \quad \text{the} \\
\text{the} \\
\text{he} \quad \text{re.} \\
\]

Start a new staircase when you want to emphasize that information, generally a noun.

+ Do not speak word by word.

If you speak word by word, as many people who learned "printed" English do, you'll end up sounding mechanical and foreign. You may have noticed the same thing happens in your own language: When someone reads a speech, even a native speaker, it sounds stiff and stilted, quite different from a normal conversational tone.

+ Connect words to form sound groups.

This is where you're going to start doing something completely different than what you have done in your previous English studies. This part is the most difficult for many people because it goes against everything they've been taught. Instead of thinking of each word as a unit, think of sound units. These sound units may or may not correspond to a word written on a page. Native speakers don't say Bob is on the phone, but say [bäbizän the foun]. Sound units make a sentence flow smoothly, like peanut butter—never really ending and never really starting, just flowing along. Even chunky peanut butter is acceptable. So long as you don't try to put plain peanuts directly onto your bread, you'll be OK.

2

+ Use staircase intonation.

Let those sound groups floating on the wavy river in the figure flow downhill and you'll get the staircase. Staircase intonation not only gives you that American sound, it also makes you sound much more confident. Not every American uses the downward staircase. A certain segment of the population uses rising staircases—generally, teenagers on their way to a shopping mall: "Hi, my name is Tiffany. I live in La Canada. I'm on the pep squad."

What Exactly Is Staircase Intonation?

In saying your words, imagine that they come out as if they were bounding lightly down a flight of stairs. Every so often, one jumps up to another level, and then starts down again. Americans tend to stretch out their sounds longer than you may think is natural. So to lengthen your vowel sounds, put them on two stairsteps instead of just one.

We're here.

\[ 
\text{We} \quad \text{re} \quad \text{he} \quad \text{re.} \\
\]

The sound of an American speaking a foreign language is very distinctive, because we double sounds that should be single. For example, in Japanese or Spanish, the word no is, to our ear, clipped or abbreviated.

No
When you have a word ending in an *unvoiced consonant*—one that you "whisper" (t, k, s, x, f, sh)—you will notice that the preceding vowel is said quite quickly, and on a single stairstep. When a word ends in a vowel or a *voiced consonant*—one that you "say" (b, d, g, z, v, zh, j), the preceding vowel is said more slowly, and on a double stairstep.

There are two main consequences of not doubling the second category of words: Either your listener will hear the wrong word, or even worse, you will always sound upset.

Consider that the words *curt, short, terse, abrupt,* and *clipped* all literally mean *short.* When applied to a person or to language, they take on the meaning of *upset* or *rude.* For example, in the expressions "*His curt reply...," "Her terse response..." or "*He was very short with me*" all indicate a less than sunny situation.

**Three Ways to Make Intonation**

About this time, you're coming to the point where you may be wondering, what exactly are the mechanics of intonation? What changes when you go to the top of the staircase or when you put stress on a word? There are three ways to stress a word.

+ The first way is to just get *louder* or raise the volume. This is not a very sophisticated way of doing it, but it will definitely command attention.
+ The second way is to *streeeeetch* the word out or lengthen the word that you want to draw attention to (which sounds very insinuating).
+ The third way, which is the most refined, is to change *pitch.* Although pausing just before changing the pitch is effective, you don't want to do it every time, because then it becomes an obvious technique. However, it will make your audience stop and listen because they think you're going to say something interesting.

**Exercise 1-1: Rubber Band Practice with Nonsense Syllables**

Take a rubber band and hold it with your two thumbs. Every time you want to stress a word by changing pitch, pull on the rubber band. Stretch it out gently, don't jerk it sharply. Make a *looping* figure with it and do the same with your voice. Use the rubber band and stretch it out every time you change pitch. Read first across, then down.

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<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>duh duh duh</td>
<td>la la la</td>
<td>mee mee mee</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>duh duh duh</td>
<td>la la la</td>
<td>mee mee mee</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>duh duh duh</td>
<td>la la la</td>
<td>mee mee mee</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>duh duh duh</td>
<td>la la la</td>
<td>mee mee mee</td>
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</table>

Read each column down, keeping the same intonation pattern.
Staircase Intonation CD 1 Track 6

So what is intonation in American English? What do Americans do? We go up and down staircases. We start high and end low.

Every time we want to stress a word or an idea, we just start a new staircase. That sounds simple enough, but when and where do you start a new staircase?

Statement Intonation with Nouns

Intonation or pitch change is primarily used to introduce new information. This means that when you are making a statement for the first time, you will stress the nouns.

Practice the noun stress pattern after me, using pitch change. Add your own examples.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Dogs eat bones.</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dogs</td>
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Every time we want to stress a word or an idea, we just start a new staircase. That sounds simple enough, but when and where do you start a new staircase?

Statement Intonation with Pronouns CD 1 Track 8

When you replace the nouns with pronouns (i.e., old information), stress the verb.

They eat them.
As we have seen, nouns are new information; pronouns are old information. In a nutshell, these are the two basic intonation patterns:

Dogs       bones.
eat       them.

Exercise 1-3; Noun and Pronoun Intonation

In the first column, stress the nouns. In the second column, stress the verb. Fill in your own examples at the bottom.

1. Bob sees Betty.             1. He sees her.
2. Betty knows Bob.            2. She knows him.
3. Ann and Ed call the kids.   3. They call them.
4. Jan sells some apples.      4. She sells some.
5. Jean sells cars.            5. She sells them.
6. Bill and I fix the bikes.   6. We fix them.
7. Carl hears Bob and me.      7. He hears us.
8. Dogs eat bones.             8. They eat them.
9. The girls have a choice.    9. They have one.
10. The kids like the candy.   10. They like it.
11. The boys need some help.   11. They need something.
12. Ellen should call her sister. 12. She should call someone.
13. The murderer killed the plumber. 13. He killed a man.
15. __________________________ 15. __________________________
16. __________________________ 16. __________________________
17. __________________________ 17. __________________________
18. __________________________ 18. __________________________
19. __________________________ 19. __________________________
20. __________________________ 20. __________________________

Statement Versus Question Intonation CD 1 Track 10

You may have learned at some point that questions have a rising intonation. They do, but usually a question will step upward until the very end, where it takes one quick little downward step. A question rises a little higher than a statement with the same intonation pattern.

"Here is my car."

Here       cā

\[\begin{array}{ll}
\text{is} & \text{är}.\\
\text{my} & \\
\end{array}\]

"Where is my car?"

cā

\[\begin{array}{ll}
\text{är?} & \\
\text{my} & \\
\end{array}\]

Emotional or Rhetorical Question Intonation
If you know that your car is parked outside, however, and someone doesn't see it and asks you where it is, you might think that it has been stolen and your emotion will show in your intonation as you repeat the question. As your feelings rise in an emotional situation, your intonation rises up along with them.
"Where is my car?"

"Why? Is it gone?"

**Exercise 1-4: Sentence Intonation Test**  
**CD 1 Track 11**

 Pause the CD and underline or highlight the words that you think should be stressed. Check Answer Key, beginning on page 193.

1. Sam sees Bill.  
2. She wants one.  
4. They play with them.  
5. Children play with toys.  
6. Bob and I call you and Bill.  
7. You and Bill read the news.  
8. It tells one.  
10. He works in one.  
11. He sees him.  
12. Mary wants a car.  
13. She likes it.  
14. They eat some.  
15. Len and Joe eat some pizza.  
16. We call you.  
17. You read it.  
18. The news tells a story.  
19. Mark lived in France.  
20. He lived there.

**Exercise 1-5: Four Main Reasons for Intonation**  
**CD 1 Track 12**

Depending on the situation, a word may be stressed for any of the following reasons:

1. New Information  
2. Opinion  
3. Contrast  
4. "Can't"

**1. New Information**

It sounds like rain.

Rain is the new information. It's the most important word in that sentence and you could replace everything else with duh-duh-duh. Duh-duh-duh rain will still let you get your point across.

V Repeat: Duh-duh-duh rain I It sounds like rain.

Duh ray  
///// duh ///// ayn.  
///// ///// duh /////  
///// ///// ///// /////

V Make rain very musical and put it on two notes: ray-ayn. Duh-duh-duh ray-ayn / It sounds like ray-ayn.

**2. Opinion**

It sounds like rain, but I don't think it is.
In this case, intonation makes the meaning the opposite of what the words say: *It looks like a diamond, but I think it's a zircon. It smells like Chanel, but at that price, it's a knock-off. It feels like... It tastes like...* These examples all give the impression that you mean the *opposite* of what your senses tell you.

V Practice the intonation difference between new information and opinion: *It sounds like rain. (It's rain.) It sounds like rain, (but it's not.)*

3. **Contrast**

*He likes rain, but he hates snow.*

*Like and hate* are contrasted and are the stronger words in the sentence.

4. **Can't**

*It can't rain when there're no clouds.*

Contractions (*shouldn't, wouldn't*) and negatives (*no, not, never*) are important words since they totally negate the meaning of a sentence, but they are not usually stressed. *Can't* is the exception.

---

**Exercise 1-6: Pitch and Meaning Change**

*Practice saying the four sentences after me. Pay close attention to the changes in pitch that you must make to convey the different meanings intended. The words to be stressed are indicated in bold face.*

1. It *sounds like* rain.
2. It *sounds* like rain.
3. He *likes* rain, but he *hates* snow.
4. It *can't rain* on my *parade!* He *can't do* it. (*See also Ex. 1-43 for negatives.*)

---

**Exercise 1-7: Individual Practice**

*Practice saying the sentences after the suggestion and the beep tone +. You will be given only a short time in which to reply so that you won't have the leisure to overthink. Start speaking as soon as you hear the tone because I'll be saying the sentence only a few seconds later.*

1. Convey the information that it really does sound as if rain is falling. +
2. Convey the opinion that although it has the sound of rain, it may be something else. +
3. Convey the different feelings that someone has about rain and snow. +
4. Convey the fact that rain is an impossibility right now. +

+ Pause the CD.

V Practice the four sentences on your own ten times.

+ Once you're familiar with moving the stress around and feeling how the meaning changes, turn the CD on to continue with the next exercise.

---

**Exercise 1-8: Meaning of "Pretty"**

*Native speakers make a clear distinction between pretty easily (easily) and pretty easily (a little difficult). Repeat the answers after me paying close attention to your stress.*

Question: How did you like the movie? Answer:

1. *It was pretty good.* (She liked it.)
2. *It was pretty good.* (She didn't like it much.)

---

**Exercise 1-9: Inflection**

*Notice how the meaning changes, while the actual words stay the same.*

1. I didn't say he stole the money. Someone *else* said it.
2. I *didn't* say he stole the money. *That's* not true at all.
3. I didn't say he stole the money. I only *suggested the possibility.*
4. I didn't say he stole the money. I think someone *else* took it.
5. I didn't say he stole the money. Maybe he just *borrowed* it.
6. I didn't say he stole the money, but rather some *other* money.
7. I didn't say he stole the money. He may have taken some jewelry.
   I didn't say he stole the money. Someone else said it. It's true that somebody said it, but I wasn't that person.

Didn't I didn't say he stole the money. That's not true at all.
   Someone has accused me and I'm protesting my innocence.

Say I didn't say he stole the money. I only suggested the possibility.
   Maybe I hinted it. Maybe I wrote it. In some way, I indicated that he stole the money, but I didn't say it.

He I didn't say he stole the money. I think someone else took it.
   I think someone stole the money, only not the person you suspect did it.

Stole I didn't say he stole the money. Maybe he just borrowed it.
   I agree that he took it, but I think his motive was different.

The I didn't say he stole the money, but rather some other money.
   We agree that he stole some money, but I don't think it's this money.

Money I didn't say he stole the money. He may have taken some jewelry.
   We agree that he's a thief, but we think he stole different things.

Notice that in the first half of these sentences nothing changes but the intonation.

V Repeat after me.

Exercise 1-10; Individual Practice

Now, let's see what you can do with the same sentence, just by changing the stress around to different words. I'll tell you which meaning to express. When you hear the tone +, say the sentence as quickly as you can, then I'll say the sentence for you. To test your ear, I'm going to repeat the sentences in random order. Try to determine which word I'm stressing. The answers are given in parentheses, but don't look unless you really have to. Here we go.
1. Indicate that he borrowed the money and didn't steal it. (5) +
2. Indicate that you are denying having said that he stole it. (2) +
3. Indicate that you think he stole something besides money. (7) +
4. Indicate that you were not the person to say it. (1) +
5. Indicate that you don't think that he was the person who stole it. (4) +
6. Indicate that you didn't say it outright, but did suggest it in some way. (3) +
7. Indicate that he many have stolen a different amount of money. (6) +

Overdo It

Practice these sentences on your own, really exaggerating the word that you think should be stressed. In the beginning, you're going to feel that this is ridiculous. (Nobody stresses this hard! Nobody talks like this! People are going to laugh at me!) Yet as much as you may stress, you're probably only going to be stressing about half as much as you should.

+ Pause the CD and practice the sentences in random order ten times. Another reason you must overexaggerate is because when you get tired, emotional, or relaxed, you will stop paying attention. When this happens, like a rubber band, you're going to snap back to the way you originally were sounding (10 percent). So, if you just stretch yourself to the exact position where you ideally want to be, you'll go back almost completely to the old way when you
relax. For practice, then, stretch yourself far beyond the normal range of intonation (150 percent), so when you relax, you relax back to a standard American sound (100 percent).

**We All Do It**
Possibly about this time you're thinking, *Well, maybe you do this in English, but in my language, I just really don't think that we do this.* I'd like you to try a little exercise.

**Exercise 1-11: Translation**

*Take the sentence I didn't say he stole the money* and translate it into your native language. Write it down below, using whatever letters or characters you use in your language.

Now that you have written your sentence down, try shifting the stress around in your own language by going through the stress patterns 1-7 in Exercise 1-9. Don't try to put on a particularly American or other accent; just concentrate on stressing a different word in the sentence each time you say it.

For example, if your language is German, *Ich habe nicht gesagt daß er das Geld gestohlen hat,* you would change the stress to: *Ich habe nicht gesagt daß er das Geld gestohlen hat,* or *Ich habe **nicht** gesagt daß er das Geld gestohlen hat.*

If you translated it into French, you would say, *Je n'ai pas dit qu'il a vole l'argent,* or *Je n' pas dit qu'il a vole l'argent.*

In Japanese, many people think that there are no intonation changes, but if you hear someone say, *wakkanai,* you'll realize that it has similarities to every other language. *Watashi wa kare ga okane o nusunda to wa iimasen deshita.* Or perhaps, *Watashi wa kare ga okane o nusunda to wa **iimasen deshita.**

No matter how strange it may sound to you, stress each different word several times in your language. You may notice that with some words it sounds perfectly normal, but with other words it sounds very strange. Or you may find that in your language, rather than stressing a word, you prefer to change the word order or substitute another word. Whatever you do is fine, as long as you realize where your language patterns are similar to and different from the American English intonation patterns. Then, when you do it again, in English, it will be much easier.

*Note* An excellent exercise is to practice speaking your native language with an American accent. If you can sound like an American speaking your native language, imagine how easy it would be to speak English with an American accent.

X Pause the CD and practice shifting the stressed words in your native language.

**Intonation Contrast**
Below are two sentences—the first is stressed on the most common, everyday word, *book.* Nine times out of ten, people will stress the sentence in this way. The second sentence has a less common, but perfectly acceptable intonation, since we are making a distinction between two possible locations.

**Normal intonation**


**Changed intonation**

*Is the book on the table or under it? It's on the table.*

X Pause the CD and repeat the sentences.

**Exercise 1-12: Create Your Own Intonation Contrast**

Write a short sentence and indicate where you think the most normal intonation would be placed. Then, change the meaning of the sentence slightly and change the intonation accordingly.

**Normal intonation**

___________________________

**Changed intonation**

___________________________
Exercise 1-13: Variable Stress

Notice how the meaning of the following sentence changes each time we change the stress pattern. You should be starting to feel in control of your sentences now.

1. What would you like?
   This is the most common version of the sentence, and it is just a simple request for information.

2. What would you like?
   This is to single out an individual from a group.

3. What would you like?
   You've been discussing the kinds of things he might like and you want to determine his specific desires: "Now that you mention it, what would you like?"
   or
   He has rejected several things and a little exasperated, you ask, "If you don't want any of these, what would you like?"

4. What would you like?
   You didn't hear and you would like the speaker to repeat herself.
   or
   You can't believe what you heard: "I'd like strawberry jam on my asparagus."
   — "What would you like?"

+ Turn off the CD and repeat the four sentences.

Exercise 1-14: Make a Variable Stress Sentence

Now you decide which words should be emphasized. Write a normal, everyday sentence with at least seven words and put it through as many changes as possible. Try to make a pitch change for each word in the sentence and think about how it changes the meaning of the entire sentence.

1. __________________________________________________________
2. __________________________________________________________
3. __________________________________________________________
4. __________________________________________________________
5. __________________________________________________________
6. __________________________________________________________
7. __________________________________________________________

Application of Intonation

There is always at least one stressed word in a sentence and frequently you can have quite a few if you are introducing a lot of new information or if you want to contrast several things. Look at the paragraph in Exercise 1-15. Take a pencil and mark every word that you think should be stressed or sound stronger than the words around it. I'd like you to make just an accent mark (') to indicate a word you think should sound stronger than others around it.

Reminder The three ways to change your voice for intonation are: (1) Volume (speak louder), (2) Length (stretch out a word), and (3) Pitch (change your tone).

* Pause the CD and work on the paragraph below.

Exercise 1-15: Application of Stress

Mark every word or syllable with ' where you think that the sound is stressed. Use the first sentence as your example. Check Answer Key, beginning on page 193. Pause the CD.
Hello, my’ name is________ ______. I'm taking American Accent Training. There's a lot to learn, but I hope to make it as enjoyable as possible. I should pick up on the American intonation pattern pretty easily, although the only way to get it is to practice all of the time. I use the up and down, or peaks and valleys, intonation more than I used to. I've been paying attention to pitch, too. It's like walking down a staircase. I've been talking to a lot of Americans lately, and they tell me that I'm easier to understand. Anyway, I could go on and on, but the important thing is to listen well and sound good. Well, what do you think? Do I?

V Listen and re-mark the stressed words with your marker. After you've put in the accent marks where you think they belong, take one of the colored translucent markers and as I read very slowly, mark the words that I stress. I am going to exaggerate the words far more than you'd normally hear in a normal reading of the paragraph. You can mark either the whole word or just the strong syllable, whichever you prefer, so that you have a bright spot of color for where the stress should fall.

Note If you do the exercise only in pencil, your eye and mind will tend to skip over the accent marks. The spots of color, however, will register as "different" and thereby encourage your pitch change. This may strike you as unusual, but trust me, it works.

* Pause the CD and practice reading the paragraph out loud three times on your own.

14 How You Talk Indicates to People How You Are CD 1 Track 24

Beware of "Revealing" a Personality that You Don't Have!

There is no absolute right or wrong in regard to intonation because a case can be made for stressing just about any word or syllable, but you actually reveal a lot about yourself by the elements you choose to emphasize. For example, if you say, Hello, this intonation would indicate doubt. This is why you say, Hello ? when answering the telephone because you don't know who is on the other end. Or when you go into a house and you don't know who's there because you don't see anyone. But if you're giving a speech or making a presentation and you stand up in front of a crowd and say, Hello, the people would probably laugh because it sounds so uncertain. This is where you'd confidently want to say Hello, my name is So-and-so.

A second example is, my name is—as opposed to my name is. If you stress name, it sounds as if you are going to continue with more personal information: My name is So-and-so, my address is such-and-such, my blood type is O. Since it may not be your intention to give all that information, stay with the standard—Hello, my name is So-and-so.

If you stress / every time, it will seem that you have a very high opinion of yourself. Try it: I'm taking American Accent Training. I've been paying attention to pitch, too. I think I'm quite wonderful.

An earnest, hard-working person might emphasize words this way: I'm taking American Accent Training (Can I learn this stuff?). I hope to make it as enjoyable as possible (I'll force myself to enjoy it if I have to). Although the only way to get it is to practice all the time (24 hours a day). A Doubting Thomas would show up with: I should pick up on (but I might not) the American intonation pattern pretty easily, (but it looks pretty hard, too). I've been talking to a lot of Americans lately, and they tell me that I'm easier to understand (but I think they're just being polite).

Exercise 1-16: Paragraph Intonation Practice CD 1 Track 25

V From your color-marked copy, read each sentence of the paragraph in Exercise 1-15 after me. Use your rubber band, give a clear pitch change to the highlighted words, and think about the meaning that the pitch is conveying.

× Back up the CD and practice this paragraph three times.

× Pause the CD and practice three times on your own.
Exercise 1-17: Staircase Intonation Practice  
CD 1 Track 26

Draw one step of the staircase for each word of the paragraph. Start a new staircase for every stressed word. There usually is more than one staircase in a sentence. New sentences don't have to start new staircases; they can continue from the previous sentence until you come to a stressed word. I'll read the beginning sentences. Check the first sentence against the example. Then put the words of the second sentence on a staircase, based on the way I read it. Remember, I'm exaggerating to make a point.

Hello. My name is ___________. I'm taking American Accent Training. I'm taking American

Lot hope enjoyable

V Write out the rest of the staircases.

× Turn the CD back on to check your staircases with the way I read the paragraph. × Pause the CD again to check your staircases in the Answer Key, beginning on page 193. × Back up the CD, and listen and repeat my reading of the paragraph while following the staircases in the Answer Key.

Exercise 1-18: Reading with Staircase Intonation  
CD 1 Track 27

Read the following with clear intonation where marked.

Hello, my name is ___________. I'm taking American Accent Training. There's a lot to learn, but I hope to make it as enjoyable as possible. I should pick up on the American intonation pattern pretty easily, although the only way to get it is to practice all of the time. I use the up and down, or peaks and valleys, intonation more than I used to. I've been paying attention to pitch, too. It's like walking down a staircase. I've been talking to a lot of Americans lately, and they tell me that I'm easier to understand. Anyway, I could go on and on, but the important thing is to listen well and sound good. Well, what do you think? Do I?

Exercise 1-19: Spelling and Numbers  
CD 1 Track 28

Just as there is stress in words or phrases, there is intonation in spelling and numbers. Americans seem to spell things out much more than other people. In any bureaucratic situation, you'll be asked to spell names and give all kinds of numbers—you're phone number, your birth date, and so on. There is a distinct stress and rhythm pattern to both spelling and numbers—usually in groups of three or four letters or numbers, with the stress falling on the last member of the group. Acronyms (phrases
that are represented by the first letter of each word) and initials are usually stressed on the last letter. Just listen to the words as I say them, then repeat the spelling after me.

### Acronym Pronunciation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IBM</td>
<td>Eye Bee Em</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MIT</td>
<td>Em Eye Tee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ph.D.</td>
<td>Pee Aitch Dee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MBA</td>
<td>Em Bee ai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LA</td>
<td>Eh Lay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IQ</td>
<td>Eye Kyu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RSVP</td>
<td>Are Ess Vee Pee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV</td>
<td>Tee Vee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>You Ess ai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASAP</td>
<td>ai Ess ai Pee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIA</td>
<td>See Eye ai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FBI</td>
<td>Eff Bee Eye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USMC</td>
<td>You Ess Em See</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COD</td>
<td>See Oh Dee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOS</td>
<td>Ess Oh Ess</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X,Y,Z</td>
<td>Ex, Why, Zee</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Spelling Pronunciation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spelling</th>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Box</td>
<td>Bee Oh Ex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cook</td>
<td>See Oh Oh Kay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilson</td>
<td>Dubba You Eye El, Ess Oh En</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Numbers Pronunciation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Numbers</th>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Area Code</td>
<td>213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zip Code</td>
<td>94708</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>9/6/62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone Number</td>
<td>555-9132</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Exercise 1-20: Sound/ Meaning Shifts CD 1 Track 29

Intonation is powerful. It can change meaning and pronunciation. Here you will get the chance to play with the sounds. Remember, in the beginning, the meaning isn't that important—just work on getting control of your pitch changes. Use your rubber band for each stressed word.

- my tie: mai-tai
- my keys: Mikey's
- inn key: in key
- my tea: mighty
- I have two: I have, too.

How many kids do you have? I have two.
I've been to Europe. I have, too.
Why do you work so hard? I have to.

### Exercise 1-21: Squeezed-Out Syllables CD 1 Track 30

Intonation can also completely get rid of certain entire syllables. Some longer words that are stressed on the first syllable squeeze weak syllables right out. Cover up the regular columns and read the words between the brackets.

- actually: [æk•chully]
- every: [ɛvree]
average [ævrˈɪ] family [ˈfeɪmlɪ]
aspirin [ˈesprɪn] finally [ˈfɪnəli]
broccoli [ˈbrækli] general [ˈdʒenərəl]
business [ˈbɪznəs] groceries [ˈɡrɑːsɪri]
camera [ˈkæmrə] interest [ˈɪntərst]
chocolate [ˈtʃɔki] jewelry [ˈdʒoʊlri]
comfortable [kərˈmftəbl] mathematics [mæθˈmædɪks]
corporal [ˈkɔrprəl] memory [ˈmɛməri]
desperate [dɛˈspərt] orange [ˈɔrɪndʒ]
diamond [ˈdæmənd] probably [ˈpræbəli]
diaper [ˈdaɪpər] restaurant [ˈrestrɑːnt]
different [ˈdifərənt] separate [ˈseprət]
emerald [ˈæməlidl] several [ˈsɛvərəl]
vegetable [ˈvejətlbl] liberal [ˈlɪbərəl]
beverage [ˈbɛvrɪdʒ] conference [ˈkɑːfnrəns]
bakery [ˈbækəri] coverage [ˈkʌvəræj]
catholic [ˈkæθəlɪk] history [ˈhɪstrɪ]
nursery [ˈnɜrsəri] accidentally [əkˈs ædəlˌsɪdli]
onion [ˈɑnɪn] basically [ˈbæsɪklə]

Note The ~cally ending is always pronounced ~klee.

18

Syllable Stress CD 1 Track 31

Syllable Count Intonation Patterns

In spoken English, if you stress the wrong syllable, you can totally lose the meaning of a word: "MA-sheen" is hardly recognizable as "ma-SHEEN" or *machine.* At this point, we won't be concerned with why we are stressing a particular syllable— that understanding will come later.

Exercise 1-22: Syllable Patterns

In order to practice accurate pitch change, repeat the following column. Each syllable will count as one musical note. Remember that words that end in a vowel or a voiced consonant will be longer than ones ending in an unvoiced consonant.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>la!</td>
<td>get</td>
<td>stop</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Exercise 1-22: Syllable Patterns continued

Pattern 1b

- cat
- jump
- box
- la-a
- dog
- see
- plan

Pattern 1b

- quick
- choice
- loss
- law
- goes
- choose
- lose
- which
- bit
- beat
- bid
- bead
- car
- know

2 Syllables

Pattern 2a

- la-la
- a dog
- a cat
- destroy
- a pen
- pretend
- your job
- pea soup

Pattern 2b

- Bob Smith
- my car
- some more
- red tape
- enclose
- consume
- my choice
- How's work?
- for you
- Who knows?
- cassette
- ballet
- valet
- to do
- today
- tonight
- wristwatch
- textbook
- bookshelf
- sunshine
- placemat
- stapler
- modern
- modem
- phone book
- doorknob
- notebook
- house key
- ballot
- valid
- dog show
- want ad

3 Syllables

Pattern 3a

- la-la-la
- Bob's hot dog
- Bob won't know.
- Sam's the boss.
- Susie's nice.
- Bill went home.

Pattern 3a

- Worms eat dirt.
- Inchworms inch.
- Pets need care.
- Ed's too late.
- Paul threw up.
- Joe has three.
- Bob has eight.
- Al jumped up.
- Glen sat down.
- Tom made lunch.
- Kids should play.
- Wool can itch.
Cats don't care.
Stocks can fall.
School is fun.

Pattern 3b

la-la-la
a hot dog
I don't know.
He's the boss.
We cleaned up.
in the bag
for a while
I went home.
We don't care.

It's in March.
Who'd you meet?

Pattern 3c

la-la-la
a hot dog
I don't know!
Jim killed it.
tomorrow
a fruitcake
the engine
a wineglass
potato
whatever

Pattern 3d

la-la-la
hot dog stand
I don't know.
analyze
article
dinnertime
digital
analog
cell structure

Birds sing songs.
Spot has fleas.
Nick's a punk.

Make a cake.
He forgot.
Take a bath.
We're too late.
I love you.
over here
What a jerk!
How's your job?
How'd it go?

Mom said, "No!"
Mars is red.
Ned sells cars.

IBM
a good time
Use your head!
How are you?
We came home.
on the bus
engineer
She fell down.
They called back.
You goofed up.

Ohio
his football
They're leaving.
How are you?
emphatic
Dale planned it.
You took it.
external
a bargain
Don't touch it.

phone number
think about
comfortable
waiting for
pitiful
everything
orchestra
ignorant
Rubbermaid

Exercise 1-22; Syllable Patterns continued
Put the following words into the proper category based on the syllable count intonation. Write the pattern number in the space provided. Check Answer Key, beginning on p. 193.

Single Words
1. stop __ 5. analyze (v) __ 9. believe ___
2. go __ 6. analysis (n) __ 10. director __
3. sympathy __ 7. analytic (adj) __ 11. indicator __
4. sympathetic __ 8. mistake __ 12. technology __

Noun Phrases
1. tech support __ 5. English test __ 9. a fire engine __
2. software program __ 6. airline pilot __ 10. sports fanatic __
3. the truth __ 7. Y2K __ 11. the kitchen floor __
4. notebook __ 8. Santa Claus __ 12. computer disk __

Phrases
1. on the table __ 5. for sure __ 9. on the way __
2. in your dreams __ 6. OK __ 10. like a princess __
3. last Monday __ 7. thank you __ 11. to pick up __
4. for a while __ 8. back to back __ 12. a pickup __

Sentences
1. All gets T-shirts. __ 5. I don't know. __ 9. She has head lice.

Mixed
1. Do it again. __ 8. in the middle __ 15. Make up your mind!
2. Joe was upset. __ 9. It's a good trick. __ 16. Tom has frostbite.
3. banana __ 10. specifically __ 17. Sam's a champ.
5. categorize __ 12. jump around __ 19. He likes to win.
6. child support __ 13. on my own __ 20. All hates pork chops.

Make up your own examples, one of each pattern. Make up more on your own.

1. __________ 2a 5. __________ 3c 9. __________ 4c
2. __________ 2b 6. __________ 3d 10. __________ 4d
3. __________ 3a 7. __________ 4a 11. __________ 4e
4. __________ 3b 8. __________ 4b 12. __________ 4f

Complex Intonation

Word Count Intonation Patterns

CD 1 Track 34

This is the beginning of an extremely important part of spoken American English—the rhythms and intonation patterns of the long streams of nouns and adjectives that are so commonly used. These exercises will tie in the intonation patterns of adjectives (nice, old, best, etc.), nouns (dog, house, surgeon, etc.), and adverbs (very, really, amazingly, etc.).

One way of approaching sentence intonation is not to build each sentence from scratch. Instead, use patterns, with each pattern similar to a mathematical formula. Instead of plugging in numbers, however, plug in words.

In Exercise 1-2, we looked at simple noun•verb•noun patterns, and in Exercise 1-22 and 1-23, the syllable-count intonation patterns were covered and tested. In Exercises 1-24 to 1-37, we'll examine intonation patterns in two word phrases.
It's important to note that there's a major difference between syllable stress and compound noun stress patterns. In the syllable count exercises, each syllable was represented by a single musical note. In the noun phrases, each individual word will be represented by a single musical note—no matter how many total syllables there may be.

At times, what appears to be a single syllable word will have a "longer" sound to it—e.g., seed takes longer to say than seat for example. This was introduced on page 3, where you learned that a final voiced consonant causes the previous vowel to double.

Exercise 1-24: Single-Word Phrases

Repeat the following noun and adjective sentences.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Noun</th>
<th>Adjective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. It's a nail.</td>
<td>It's short.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. It's a cake.</td>
<td>It's chocolate. [chäkl't]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. It's a tub.</td>
<td>It's hot. [hät]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. It's a drive.</td>
<td>It's hárd.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. It's a door.</td>
<td>It’s in back. [bæk]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. It's a cärd.</td>
<td>There are four.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. It's a spot. [säpt]</td>
<td>It's smäll.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. It's a book. [bük]</td>
<td>It's good.[güd]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Write your own noun and adjective sentences below. You will be using these examples throughout this series of exercises.

9. It's a ____________  It's ____________
10. It's a ____________  It's ____________
11. It's a ____________  It's ____________

Exercise 1-25: Sentence Stress with Descriptive Phrases

Repeat the following phrases.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adjective</th>
<th>Noun and Adjective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. It's short.</td>
<td>It's a short nail.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. It's chocolate.</td>
<td>It's a chocolate cake.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. It's good.</td>
<td>It's a good plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. It's guarded.</td>
<td>It's a guarded gate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. It's wide.</td>
<td>It's a wide river.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. There're four.</td>
<td>There're four cards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. It was small.</td>
<td>It was a small spot.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Pause the CD and write your own adjective and noun/adjective sentences. Use the same words from Ex. 1-24.

9. It's __________________  It's a __________________
10. It's __________________  It's a __________________
11. It's __________________  It's a __________________

Exercise 1 -26: Two Types of Descriptive Phrases

Repeat.

**Adjective Noun**  **Adverb Adjective**
1. It's a short **nail**.  It's really **short**.
2. It's a chocolate **cake**. It's dark **chocolate**.
3. It's a hot **bath**.    It's too **hot**.
4. It's a hard **drive**.  It's extremely **hard**.

Exercise 1 -26: Two Types of Descriptive Phrases continued

5. It's the back **door**.  It's far **back**.
6. There are four **cards**. There are only **four**.
7. It's a small **spot**.    It's laughably **small**.
8. It's a good **book**.    It's amazingly **good**.

Pause the CD and write your own adjective/noun and adverb/adjective sentences, carrying over Ex. 1-25.

9. It's a __________________  It's __________________
10. It's a __________________  It's __________________
11. It's a __________________  It's __________________

The following well-known story has been rewritten to contain only descriptions. Stress the second word of each phrase. Repeat after me.

Exercise 1-27: Descriptive Phrase Story—The Ugly Duckling

There is a **mother duck**. She lays **three eggs**. Soon, there are three **baby birds**. Two of the birds are very **beautiful**. One of them is quite **ugly**. The beautiful **ducks** make fun of their ugly **brother**. The poor thing is very **unhappy**. As the three **birds** grow older, the ugly **duckling** begins to change. His gray feathers turn **snowy white**. His gangly neck becomes beautifully **smooth**.

In **early spring**, the ugly **duckling** is swimming in a **small pond** in the **backyard** of the old farm. He sees his shimmering **reflection** in the **clear water**. What a great **surprise**. He is no longer an ugly **duckling**. He has grown into a lovely **swan**.

Set Phrases

A Cultural Indoctrination to American Norms

When I learned the alphabet as a child, I heard it before I saw it. I heard that the last four letters were **dubba-you**, ex, **why**, zee. I thought that **dubbayou** was a long, strange name for a letter, but I didn't question it any more than I did **aitch**. It was just a name. Many years later, it struck me that it was a **double U**. Of course, a W is really **UU**. I had such a funny feeling, though, when I realized that something I had taken for granted for so many years had a background meaning that I had completely overlooked. This "funny feeling" is exactly what most native speakers get when...
a two-word phrase is stressed on the wrong word. When two individual words go through the cultural process of becoming a set phrase, the original sense of each word is more or less forgotten and the new meaning completely takes over. When we hear the word *painkiller*, we think *anesthetic*. If, however, someone says *painkiller*, it brings up the strength and almost unrelated meaning of *kill*.

When you have a two-word phrase, you have to either stress on the first word, or on the second word. If you stress both or neither, it's not clear what you are trying to say. Stress on the first word is more noticeable and one of the most important concepts of intonation that you are going to study. At first glance, it doesn't seem significant, but the more you look at this concept, the more you are going to realize that it reflects how we Americans think, what concepts we have adopted as our own, and what things we consider important.

Set phrases are our "cultural icons," or word images; they are indicators of a determined use that we have internalized. These set phrases, with stress on the first word, have been taken into everyday English from descriptive phrases, with stress on the second word. As soon as a descriptive phrase becomes a set phrase, the emphasis shifts from the second word to the first. The original sense of each word is more or less forgotten and the new meaning takes over.

Set phrases indicate that we have internalized this phrase as an image, that we all agree on a concrete idea that this phrase represents. A hundred years or so ago, when Levi Strauss first came out with his denim pants, they were described as *blue jeans*. Now that we all agree on the image, however, they are *blue jeans*.

A more recent example would be the descriptive phrase, *He’s a real party animal*. This slang expression refers to someone who has a great time at a party. When it first became popular, the people using it needed to explain (with their intonation) that he was an animal at a party. As time passed, the expression became cliche and we changed the intonation to *He's a real party animal* because "everyone knew" what it meant.

Cliches are hard to recognize in a new language because what may be an old and tired expression to a native speaker may be fresh and exciting to a newcomer. One way to look at English from the inside out, rather than always looking from the outside in, is to get a feel for what Americans have already accepted and internalized. This starts out as a purely language phenomenon, but you will notice that as you progress and undergo the relentless cultural indoctrination of standard intonation patterns, you will find yourself expressing yourself with the language cues and signals that will mark you as an insider—not an outsider.

When the interpreter was translating for the former Russian President Gorbachev about his trip to San Francisco in 1990, his pronunciation was good, but he placed himself on the outside by repeatedly saying, *cable car*. The phrase *cable car* is an image, an established entity, and it was very noticeable to hear it stressed on the second word as a mere description.

An important point that I would like to make is that the "rules" you are given here are not meant to be memorized. This discussion is only an introduction to give you a starting point in understanding this phenomenon and in recognizing what to listen for. Read it over; think about it; then listen, try it out, listen some more, and try it out again.

As you become familiar with intonation, you will become more comfortable with American norms, thus the cultural orientation, or even cultural indoctrination, aspect of the following examples.

**Note** When you get the impression that a two-word description could be hyphenated or even made into one word, it is a signal that it could be a set phrase—for example, *flash light*, *flash-light*, *flashing*. Also, stress the first word with Street (*Main Street*) and nationalities of food and people (*Mexican food*, *Chinese girls*).

---

**Exercise 1-28: Sentence Stress with Set Phrases**

Repeat the following sentences.
Pause the CD and write your own noun and set phrase sentences, carrying over the same nouns you used in Exercise 1-25. Remember, when you use a noun, include the article (a, an, the); when you use an adjective, you don't need an article.

9. It's a ________
   It's a ________
   It's a ________

10. It's a ________
    It's a ________
    It's a ________

11. It's a ________
    It's a ________
    It's a ________

Exercise 1-29: Making Set Phrases

Pause the CD and add a noun to each word as indicated by the picture. Check Answer Key, beginning on page 193.

1. a chair ________ a chair man
2. a phone ________
3. a house ________
4. a base ________
5. a door ________
6. The White ________
7. a movie ________
8. The Bullet ________
9. a race ________
10. a coffee ________
11. a wrist ________
12. a beer ________
13. a high ________
14. a hunting ________
15. a dump ________
16. a jelly ________
17. a love ________
18. a thumb ________
19. a lightning ________
20. a pad ________

Exercise 1-30: Set Phrase Story—The Little Match Girl

The following story contains only set phrases, as opposed to the descriptive story in Exercise 1-27. Stress the first word of each phrase.

The little match girl was out in a snowstorm. Her feet were like ice cubes and her fingertips had frostbite. She hadn't sold any matches since daybreak, and she had a stomachache from the hunger pangs. But her stepmother would beat her with a broomstick if she came home with an empty coin purse. Looking into the bright living rooms, she saw Christmas trees and warm fireplaces. Out on the snowbank, she lit matches and saw the image of a grand dinner table of food before her. As the matchstick burned, the illusion slowly faded. She lit another one and saw a room full of happy family members. On the last match, her grandmother came down and carried her home. In the morning, the passersby saw the little match girl. She had frozen during the nighttime, but she had a smile on her face.
Contrasting a Description and a Set Phrase
We now have two main intonation patterns—first word stress and second word stress. In the following exercise, we will contrast the two.

Exercise 1-31: Contrasting Descriptive and Set Phrases

Repeat after me.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Descriptive Phrase</th>
<th>Set Phrase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. It's a short <strong>nail</strong>.</td>
<td>It's a <strong>fingernail</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. It's a chocolate <strong>cake</strong>.</td>
<td>It's a <strong>pancake</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. It's a hot <strong>bath</strong>.</td>
<td>It's a <strong>hot tub</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. It's a long <strong>drive</strong>.</td>
<td>It's a <strong>hard drive</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. It's the back <strong>door</strong>.</td>
<td>It's the <strong>backbone</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. There are four <strong>cards</strong>.</td>
<td>It's a <strong>card trick</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. It's a small <strong>spot</strong>.</td>
<td>It's a <strong>spot light</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. It's a good <strong>book</strong>.</td>
<td>It's a <strong>phone book</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pause the CD and rewrite your descriptive phrases (Ex. 1-25) and set phrases (Ex. 1-28).

9. It's a _____________
10. It's a _____________
11. It's a _____________

Exercise 1-32: Two-Word Stress

Repeat the following pairs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Descriptive Phrase</th>
<th>Set Phrase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. It's a short <strong>nail</strong>.</td>
<td>It's a <strong>fingernail</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>It's a <strong>pancake</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. It's a hot <strong>bath</strong>.</td>
<td>It's a <strong>hot tub</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. It's a long <strong>drive</strong>.</td>
<td>It's a <strong>hard drive</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. It's the back <strong>door</strong>.</td>
<td>It's the <strong>backbone</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. There are four <strong>cards</strong>.</td>
<td>It's a <strong>card trick</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. It's a small <strong>spot</strong>.</td>
<td>It's a <strong>spot light</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. It's a good <strong>book</strong>.</td>
<td>It's a <strong>phone book</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

28
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Item</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a light bulb</td>
<td>a light bulb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>blue pants</td>
<td>blue jeans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a cold fish</td>
<td>a goldfish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a gray hound</td>
<td>a greyhound</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>an old key</td>
<td>an inn key</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a white house</td>
<td>The White House</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a nice watch</td>
<td>a wristwatch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a sticky web</td>
<td>a spider web</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a clean cup</td>
<td>a coffee cup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a sharp knife</td>
<td>a steak knife</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a baby alligator</td>
<td>a baby bottle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a shiny tack</td>
<td>thumbtacks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a wire brush</td>
<td>a hairbrush</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a new ball</td>
<td>a football</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a toy gun</td>
<td>a machine gun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a silk bow</td>
<td>a Band-Aid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a bright star</td>
<td>a firecracker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Jones</td>
<td>a mailbox</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bob Smith</td>
<td>a spray can</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>foreign affairs</td>
<td>a wineglass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>down payment</td>
<td>a footprint</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>a strawberry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$$$$ Social Security</td>
<td>a fig leaf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City Hall</td>
<td>an ice cream</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Summary of Stress in Two-Word Phrases**
Nationalities
When you are in a foreign country, the subject of nationalities naturally comes up a lot. It would be nice if there were a simple rule that said that all the words using nationalities are stressed on the first word. There isn't, of course. Take this preliminary quiz to see if you need to do this exercise. For simplicity's sake, we will stick with one nationality—American.

Exercise 1-33; Nationality Intonation Quiz  CD 2 Track 1
Pause the CD and stress one word in each of the following examples. Repeat after me.
1. an American guy
2. an American restaurant
3. American food
4. an American teacher
5. an English teacher
When you first look at it, the stress shifts may seem arbitrary, but let's examine the logic behind these five examples and use it to go on to other, similar cases.

1. an Américan guy
The operative word is American; guy could even be left out without changing the meaning of the phrase. Compare / saw two American guys yesterday, with / saw two Americans yesterday. Words like guy, man, kid, lady, people are de facto pronouns in an anthropocentric language. A strong noun, on the other hand, would be stressed—They flew an American flag. This is why you have the pattern change in Exercise 1-22: 4e, Jim killed a man, but 4b, He killed a snake.

2. an American restaurant
Don't be sidetracked by an ordinary descriptive phrase that happens to have a nationality in it. You are describing the restaurant, We went to a good restaurant yesterday or We went to an American restaurant yesterday. You would use the same pattern where the nationality is more or less incidental in / had French toast for breakfast. French fry, on the other hand, has become a

First Word
- set phrases
- streets
- Co. or Corp.
- nationalities of food
- nationalities of people
- descriptive phrases

Second Word
- road designations
- modified adjectives
- place names and parks
- institutions, or Inc.
- personal names and titles
- personal pronouns and possessives
- articles
- initials and acronyms
- chemical compounds
- colors and numbers
- most compound verbs
- percent and dollar
- hyphenated nationalities
- descriptive nationalities

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set phrase.

3. **Américan food**

*Food* is a weak word. *I never ate American food when I lived in Japan. Let's have Chinese food for dinner.*

4. **an American teacher**

This is a description, so the stress is on *teacher*.

5. **an English teacher**

This is a set phrase. The stress is on the subject being taught, not the nationality of the teacher: *a French teacher, a Spanish teacher, a history teacher*.

**Exercise 1-34: Contrasting Descriptive and Set Phrases**

*Repeat the following pairs.*

**Set Phrase**

An *English* teacher...
...teaches English.

An *English* book...
...teaches the English language.

An *English* test...
...tests a student on the English language.

*English* food...
...is kippers for breakfast.

**Descriptive Phrase**

An *English* teacher...
...is from England.

An *English* book... is on any subject, but it came from England.

An *English* test... is on any subject, but it deals with or came from England.

An *English* restaurant...
...serves kippers for breakfast.

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Intonation can indicate completely different meanings for otherwise similar words or phrases. For example, an *English teacher* teaches English, but an *English teacher* is from England; *French class* is where you study French, but *French class* is Gallic style and sophistication; an *orange tree* grows oranges, but an *orange tree* is any kind of tree that has been painted orange.

To have your intonation tested, call (800) 457-4255.

**Exercise 1-35: Contrast of Compound Nouns**

*In the following list of words, underline the element that should be stressed. Pause the CD. Afterwards, check Answer Key, beginning on page 193. Repeat after me.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. The <em>White</em> House</th>
<th>21. convenience store</th>
<th>41. a doorknob</th>
<th>2. a white <em>house</em></th>
<th>22. convenient store</th>
<th>42. a glass door</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3. a darkroom</td>
<td>23. to pick up</td>
<td>43. a locked door</td>
<td>4. a dark room</td>
<td>24. a pickup truck</td>
<td>44. ice cream</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Fifth Avenue</td>
<td>25. six years old</td>
<td>45. I scream</td>
<td>6. Main Street</td>
<td>26. a six-year-old</td>
<td>46. elementary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. a main street</td>
<td>27. six and a half</td>
<td>47. a lemon tree</td>
<td>8. a hot dog</td>
<td>28. a sugar bowl</td>
<td>48. Watergate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. a hot dog</td>
<td>29. a wooden bowl</td>
<td>49. the back gate</td>
<td>10. a baby blanket</td>
<td>30. a large bowl</td>
<td>50. the final year</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
32

Exercise 1-36: Description and Set Phrase Test

Let's check and see if the concepts are clear. Pause the CD and underline or highlight the stressed word. Check Answer Key, beginning on page 193. Repeat after me.

1. He's a nice guy.
2. He's an American guy from San Francisco.
3. The cheerleader needs a rubber band to hold her ponytail.
4. The executive assistant needs a paper clip for the final report.
5. The law student took an English test in a foreign country.
6. The policeman saw a red car on the freeway in Los Angeles.
7. My old dog has long ears and a flea problem.
8. The new teacher broke his coffee cup on the first day.
9. His best friend has a broken cup in his other office.
10. Let's play football on the weekend in New York.
11. "Jingle Bells" is a nice song.
12. Where are my new shoes?
13. Where are my tennis shoes?
14. I have a headache from the heat wave in South Carolina.
15. The newlyweds took a long walk in Long Beach.
16. The little dog was sitting on the sidewalk.
17. The famous athlete changed clothes in the locker room.
18. The art exhibit was held in an empty room.
19. There was a class reunion at the high school.
20. The headlines indicated a new policy.
21. We got online and went to americanaccent dot com.
22. The stock options were listed in the company directory.
23. All the second-graders were out on the playground.

Exercise 1-37: Descriptions and Set Phrases—Goldilocks

Read the story and stress the indicated words. Notice if they are a description, a set phrase or contrast. For the next level of this topic, go to page 111. Repeat after me.

There is a little girl. Her name is Goldilocks. She is in a sunny forest. She sees a small house.
She knocks on the door, but no one answers. She goes inside. In the large room, there are three chairs. Goldilocks sits on the biggest chair, but it is too high. She sits on the middle-sized one, but it is too low. She sits on the small chair and it is just right. On the table, there are three bowls. There is hot porridge in the bowls. She tries the first one, but it is too hot; the second one is too cold, and the third one is just right, so she eats it all. After that, she goes upstairs. She looks around. There are three beds, so she sits down. The biggest bed is too hard. The middle-sized bed is too soft. The little one is just right, so she lies down. Soon, she falls asleep. In the meantime, the family of three bears comes home — the Papa bear, the Mama bear, and the Baby bear. They look around. They say, "Who's been sitting in our chairs and eating our porridge?" Then they run upstairs. They say, "Who's been sleeping in our beds?" Goldilocks wakes up. She is very scared. She runs away. Goldilocks never comes back.

Note Up to this point, we have gone into great detail on the intonation patterns of nouns. We shall now examine the intonation patterns of verbs.

**Grammar in a Nutshell**

*Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About Grammar... But Were Afraid to Use*

English is a chronological language. We just love to know when something happened, and this is indicated by the range and depth of our verb tenses. 

\[\text{I had already seen it by the time she brought it in.}\]

As you probably learned in your grammar studies, "the past perfect is an action in the past that occurred before a separate action in the past." Whew! Not all languages do this. For example, Japanese is fairly casual about when things happened, but being a hierarchical language, it is very important to know what relationship the two people involved had. A high-level person with a low-level one, two peers, a man and a woman, all these things show up in Japanese grammar. Grammatically speaking, English is democratic. The confusing part is that in English the verb tenses are very important, but instead of putting them up on the peaks of a sentence, we throw them all deep down in the valleys! Therefore, two sentences with strong intonation—such as, "Dogs eat bones" and "The dogs'll've eaten the bones"—sound amazingly similar. Why? Because it takes the same amount of time to say both sentences since they have the same number of stresses. The three original words and the rhythm stay the same in these sentences, but the meaning changes as you add more stressed words. Articles and verb tense changes are usually not stressed.

Dogs  
吃到骨头

bones

bones

Dogs  
吃到骨头

bones

Dogs  
吃到骨头

bones

Dogs  
吃到骨头

bones

The

the bones

däg  
bonz

däg  
bonz
Now let's see how this works in the exercises that follow.

### Exercise 1-38; Consistent Noun Stress in Changing Verb Tenses

This is a condensed exercise for you to practice simple intonation with a wide range of verb tenses. When you do the exercise the first time, go through stressing only the nouns Dogs eat bones. Practice this until you are quite comfortable with the intonation. The pronunciation and word connections are on the right, and the full verb tenses are on the far left.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Tense</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Object</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>eat</td>
<td>The dogs</td>
<td>eat</td>
<td>the bones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>ate</td>
<td>The dogs ate</td>
<td>the bones</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>are eating</td>
<td>The dogs' re eating</td>
<td>the bones</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>will eat</td>
<td>The dogs' ll eat</td>
<td>the bones (if...)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>would eat</td>
<td>The dogs' d eat</td>
<td>the bones (if...)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>would have eaten</td>
<td>The dogs' d'v eaten</td>
<td>the bones (if...)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>that have eaten</td>
<td>The dogs that'v eaten</td>
<td>the bones (are...)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>have eaten</td>
<td>The dogs' ve eaten</td>
<td>the bones</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>had eaten</td>
<td>The dogs' d eaten</td>
<td>the bones</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>will have eaten</td>
<td>The dogs' d'l eaten</td>
<td>the bones</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>ought to eat</td>
<td>The dogs ought to eat</td>
<td>the bones</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>should eat</td>
<td>The dogs should eat</td>
<td>the bones</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>should not eat</td>
<td>The dogs sh'dn•neet</td>
<td>the bones</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>should have eaten</td>
<td>The dogs should'v eaten</td>
<td>the bones</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>should not have eaten</td>
<td>The dogs sh'n•veetn</td>
<td>the bones</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>could eat</td>
<td>The dogs c eat</td>
<td>the bones</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>could not eat</td>
<td>The dogs c'dn•neet</td>
<td>the bones</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>could have eaten</td>
<td>The dogs c'd veetn</td>
<td>the bones</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>could not have eaten</td>
<td>The dogs c'n•veetn</td>
<td>the bones</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>might eat</td>
<td>The dogs my eat</td>
<td>the bones</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>might have eaten</td>
<td>The dogs my•veetn</td>
<td>the bones</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>must eat</td>
<td>The dogs mss deet</td>
<td>the bones</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>must have eaten</td>
<td>The dogs mss•veetn</td>
<td>the bones</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>can eat</td>
<td>The dogs c eat</td>
<td>the bones</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Exercise 1-39: Consistent Pronoun Stress In Changing Verb Tenses CD 2 Track 8

This is the same as the previous exercise, except you now stress the verbs: They eat them. Practice this until you are quite comfortable with the intonation. Notice that in fluent speech, the th of them is frequently dropped (as is the h in the other object pronouns, him, her). The pronunciation and word connections are on the right, and the tense name is on the far left.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tense/ Form</th>
<th>Sentence</th>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>present</td>
<td>They eat them.</td>
<td>theyee'd'm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>past</td>
<td>They ate them.</td>
<td>theycheid'm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>continuous</td>
<td>They're eating them.</td>
<td>thereee'ding'm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>future</td>
<td>They'll eat them (if...)</td>
<td>theleed'm (if...)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>present conditional</td>
<td>They'd eat them (if...)</td>
<td>they deed'm (if...)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>past conditional</td>
<td>They'd've eaten them (if...)</td>
<td>they daveet'n'm (if...)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>relative pronoun</td>
<td>The ones that've eaten them (are...)</td>
<td>the wanzadaveet'n'm (are...)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>present perfect</td>
<td>They've eaten them (many times).</td>
<td>they veet'n'm (many times)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>past perfect</td>
<td>They'd eaten them (before...)</td>
<td>they deet'n'm (before...)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>future perfect</td>
<td>They'll have eaten them (by...)</td>
<td>they lateet'n'm (by...)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>obligation</td>
<td>They ought to eat them.</td>
<td>they adseed'm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>obligation</td>
<td>They should eat them.</td>
<td>they sh'deed'm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>obligation</td>
<td>They shouldn't eat them.</td>
<td>they sh'dn•nee'd'm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>obligation</td>
<td>They should have eaten them.</td>
<td>they sh'daveet'n'm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>obligation</td>
<td>They shouldn't've eaten them.</td>
<td>they sh'dn•na•veet'n'm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>possibility/ability</td>
<td>They could eat them.</td>
<td>they c'deed'm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>possibility/ability</td>
<td>They couldn't eat them.</td>
<td>they c'dn•nee'd'm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>possibility/ability</td>
<td>They could have eaten them.</td>
<td>they c'do veet'n'm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>possibility/ability</td>
<td>They couldn't have eaten them.</td>
<td>they c'dn•na•veet'n'm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>possibility</td>
<td>They might eat them.</td>
<td>they mydeed'm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>possibility</td>
<td>They might have eaten them.</td>
<td>they my do veet'n'm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>probability</td>
<td>They must eat them.</td>
<td>they mass deed'm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>probability</td>
<td>They must have eaten them.</td>
<td>they mass•da•veet'n'm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ability</td>
<td>They can eat them.</td>
<td>they c'nee'd'm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ability</td>
<td>They can't eat them.</td>
<td>they caen(d)'eed'm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Exercise 1-40: Intonation in Your Own Sentence CD 2 Track 9

On the first of the numbered lines below, write a three-word sentence that you frequently use, such as "Computers organize information" or "Lawyers sign contracts" and put it through the 25 changes. This exercise will take you quite a bit of time and it will force you to rethink your
perceptions of word sounds as related to spelling. It helps to use a plural noun that ends in a [z] sound (boyz, dogz) rather than an [s] sound (hats, books). Also, your sentence will flow better if your verb begins with a vowel sound (earns, owes, offers). When you have finished filling in all the upper lines of this exercise with your new sentence, use the guidelines from Ex. 1-38 for the phonetic transcription. Remember, don't rely on spelling. Turn off the CD.

1. eat
2. ate
3. are eating
4. will eat
5. would eat
6. would have eaten
7. that have eaten
8. have eaten
9. had eaten
10. will have eaten
11. ought to eat
12. should eat
13. should not eat

Exercise 1 -40: Intonation in Hour Own Sentence continued CD 2 Track 9
For this next part of the intonation of grammatical elements, each sentence has a few extra words to help you get the meaning. Keep the same strong intonation that you used before and add the new stress where you see the bold face. Use your rubber band.

**Exercise 1-41: Supporting Words**

**1-40: Intonation in Your Own Sentence continued  CD 2 Track 9**

1. The dogs eat the bones every day.
2. The dogs ate the bones last week.

**CD 2 Track 10**

1. The dogs eat the bones every day.
2. The dogs ate the bones last week.
3. The dogs 're eating the bones right now. th' däg zr reeding th' bounz räit næo
4. The dogs'ill eat the bones if they're here. th' däg zœ leet th' bounzif thær hir
5. The dogs'd eat the bones if they were here. th' däg zœ deet th' bounzif thær wər hir
6. The dogs'd've eaten the bones if they'd been th' däg zədə veetn th' bounzif thəd bən hir
7. The dogs that've eaten the bones are sick. th' däg zədə veetn th' bounzsək
8. The dogs've eaten the bones every day. th' däg zə veetn th' bounzəvəri day
9. The dogs'd eaten the bones by the time we got th' däg zə deetn th' bounz by th' time we gāt thər
10. The dogs'll have eaten the bones by the time th' däg zələ veetn th' bounz by th' time we get thər

Exercise 1 -42: Contrast Practice
CD 2 Track 11
Now, let's work with contrast. For example, The dogs'd eat the bones, and The dogs'd eaten the bones, are so close in sound, yet so far apart in meaning, that you need to make a special point of recognizing the difference by listening for content. Repeat each group of sentences using sound and intonation for contrast.

would eat 5. The dogs'd eat the bones. the däg zə deet the bounz
had eaten 9. The dogs'd eaten the bones. the däg zə deetn the bounz
would have eaten 6. The dogs'd've eaten the bones. the däg zədə veetn the bounz
that have eaten 7. The dogs that've eaten the bones. the däg zədə veetn the bounz
will eat 4. The dogs'll eat the bones. the däg zə leet the bounz
would eat 5. The dogs'd eat the bones. the däg zə deet the bounz
would have eaten 6. The dogs'd've eaten the bones. the däg zədə veetn the bounz
have eaten 8. The dogs've eaten the bones. the däg zə deetn the bounz
had eaten 9. The dogs's eaten the bones. the däg zə deetn the bounz
will have eaten 10. The dogs'll have eaten the bones. the däg zələ veetn the bounz
would eat 5. The dogs'd eat the bones. the däg zə deet the bounz
ought to eat 11. The dogs ought to eat the bones. the däg zədə eat the bounz
can eat 24. The dogs can eat the bones. the dägz c'nəet the bounz
can't eat 25. The dogs can't eat the bones. the dägz caen(d)əet the bounz

Exercise 1 -43; Yes, You Can or No, You Can't?  CD 2 Track 12
Next you use a combination of intonation and pronunciation to make the difference between can and can't. Reduce the positive can to [k 'n] and stress the verb. Make the negative can't ([kən(t)]) sound very short and stress both can't and the verb. This will contrast with the positive, emphasized can, which is doubled—and the verb is not stressed. If you have trouble with can't before a word that starts with a vowel, such as open, put in a very small ([d]) — The keys keen(d) open the locks. Repeat.

I can do it. [I k'n do it] positive
I can't do it. [I kən(t)do it] negative
I can do it. [I kæn do it] extra positive
I can't do it. [I kæn(t)do it] extra negative
Exercise 1 -44: Building an Intonation Sentence

Repeat after me the sentences listed in the following groups.

1. I bought a sandwich.
2. I said I bought a sandwich.
3. I said I think I bought a sandwich.
4. I said I really think I bought a sandwich.
5. I said I really think I bought a chicken sandwich.
6. I said I really think I bought a chicken salad sandwich.
7. I said I really think I bought a half a chicken salad sandwich.
8. I said I really think I bought a half a chicken salad sandwich this afternoon.
9. I actually said I really think I bought a half a chicken salad sandwich this afternoon.
10. I actually said I really think I bought another half a chicken salad sandwich this afternoon.
11. Can you believe I actually said I really think I bought another half a chicken salad sandwich this afternoon?

Exercise 1 -45; Building Your Own intonation Sentences

Build your own sentence, using everyday words and phrases, such as think, hope, nice, really, actually, even, this afternoon, big, small, pretty, and so on.

1. __________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________
2. __________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________
3. __________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________
4. __________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________
5. __________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________
Exercise 1 - Regular Transitions of Nouns and Verbs

In the list below, change the stress from the first syllable for nouns to the second syllable for verbs. This is a regular, consistent change. Intonation is so powerful that you’ll notice that when the stress changes, the pronunciation of the vowels do, too.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nouns</th>
<th>Verbs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>an accent [æks'nt]</td>
<td>to accent [æksənt]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a concert [kän'sert]</td>
<td>to concert [k'nsert]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a conflict [kän'flikt]</td>
<td>to conflict [k'nflikt]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a contest [kän'test]</td>
<td>to contest [k'n'test]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a contract [kän'trækt]</td>
<td>to contract [k'n'trækt]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a contrast [kän'træst]</td>
<td>to contrast [k'n'træst]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a convert [kän'vert]</td>
<td>to convert [k'n'vert]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a convict [kän'vikt]</td>
<td>to convict [k'n'veict]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a default [deef'ált]</td>
<td>to default [d'fält]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a desert* [diz'rt]</td>
<td>to desert [d'z'rt]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a discharge [dischäjr]</td>
<td>to discharge [d'schäjr]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>an envelope [än'vel'p]</td>
<td>to envelop [envel'p]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>an incline [inkline]</td>
<td>to incline [inkline]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>an influence [influ(w)'ns]</td>
<td>to influence [influ(w)'ns]†</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>an insert [ins'ert]</td>
<td>to insert [ins'ert]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>an insult [ins'lt]</td>
<td>to insult [ins'lt]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>an object [äb'ject]</td>
<td>to object [äb'ject]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>perfect [prf'ckt]</td>
<td>to perfect [prf'ckt]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a permit [pr'mit]</td>
<td>to permit [pr'mit]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a present [pr'z'nt]</td>
<td>to present [pr'z'nt]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>produce [prə'duce]</td>
<td>to produce [prə'duce]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>progress [prə'grəs']</td>
<td>to progress [prə'grəs']</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a project [prə'jekt]</td>
<td>to project [prə'jekt]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a pronoun [prə'noun]</td>
<td>to pronounce [prə'noun]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a protest [pro'test]</td>
<td>to protest [pro'test]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a rebel [r'bel]</td>
<td>to rebel [r'bel]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a recall [r'käll]</td>
<td>to recall [r'käll]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a record [r'kord]</td>
<td>to record [r'kord]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a reject [r'jekt]</td>
<td>to reject [r'jekt]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The désert is hot and dry. A dessért is ice cream. To desért is to abandon.

Exercise 1-47: Regular Transitions of Adjectives and Verbs  

A different change occurs when you go from an adjective or a noun to a verb. The stress stays in the same place, but the -mate in an adjective is completely reduced [-mˈt], whereas in a verb, it is a full [a] sound [-mɛit].

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nouns/Adjectives</th>
<th>Verbs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>advocate</td>
<td>[ædˈvækˈt] to advocate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>animate</td>
<td>[ænˈmɛt] to animate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>alternate</td>
<td>[æltərˈnɛt] to alternate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>appropriate</td>
<td>[əprəproʊˈrait] to appropriate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>approximate</td>
<td>[əprəˈkreɪt] to approximate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>articulate</td>
<td>[ərˈtɪkjuˈlɛt] to articulate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>associate</td>
<td>[əsəˈsoʊsɪt] to associate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>deliberate</td>
<td>[dəˈliːberət] to deliberate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>discriminate</td>
<td>[dəˈskrɪmənət] to discriminate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>duplicate</td>
<td>[dəˈpluːtət] to duplicate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>elaborate</td>
<td>[eləˈbreɪt] to elaborate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>an estimate</td>
<td>[ɛnˈɪstət] to estimate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>graduate</td>
<td>[ɡræˈdjuət] to graduate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>intimate</td>
<td>[ɪnˈtɪmət] to intimate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>moderate</td>
<td>[mədərət] to moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>predicate</td>
<td>[prɛdˈeɪt] to predicate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>separate</td>
<td>[sɛprɛt] to separate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Exercise 1-48; Regular Transitions of Adjectives and Verbs  

Mark the intonation or indicate the long vowel on the italicized word, depending which part of speech it is. Pause the CD and mark the proper syllables. See Answer Key, beginning on page 193.

1. You need to insert a paragraph here on this newspaper insert.
2. How can you object to this object?
3. I'd like to present you with this present.
4. Would you care to elaborate on his elaborate explanation?
5. The manufacturer couldn't recall if there'd been a recall.
6. The religious convert wanted to convert the world.
7. The political rebels wanted to rebel against the world.
8. The mogul wanted to record a new record for his latest artist.
9. If you perfect your intonation, your accent will be perfect.
10. Due to the drought, the fields didn't produce much produce this year.
11. Unfortunately, City Hall wouldn't permit them to get a permit.
12. Have you heard that your associate is known to associate with gangsters?
13. How much do you estimate that the estimate will be?
14. The facilitator wanted to separate the general topic into separate categories.

The Miracle Technique  

CD 2 Track 18
Regaining Long-Lost Listening Skills

The trouble with starting accent training after you know a great deal of English is that you know a great deal about English. You have a lot of preconceptions and, unfortunately, misconceptions about the sound of English.

A Child Can Learn Any Language

Every sound of every language is within every child. So, what happens with adults? People learn their native language and stop listening for the sounds that they never hear; then they lose the ability to hear those sounds. Later, when you study a foreign language, you learn a lot of spelling rules that take you still further away from the real sound of that language—in this case, English.

What we are going to do here is teach you to hear again. So many times, you've heard what a native speaker said, translated it into your own accent, and repeated it with your accent. Why? Because you "knew" how to say it.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Tense Vowels</th>
<th>Lax Vowels</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ṁ</td>
<td>ei</td>
<td>take</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ë</td>
<td>ee</td>
<td>eat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ī</td>
<td>āi</td>
<td>ice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ō</td>
<td>ou</td>
<td>hope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ŭ</td>
<td>ooh</td>
<td>smooth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å</td>
<td>ah</td>
<td>caught</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>æ</td>
<td>æ + ɛ</td>
<td>cat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>æo</td>
<td>æ + ə</td>
<td>down</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Semivowels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Sound</th>
<th>Spelling</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>æ</td>
<td>æ + ɛ</td>
<td>[kæt]</td>
<td>cat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>æo</td>
<td>æ + ə</td>
<td>[dæon]</td>
<td>down</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Exercise 1 - 49: Tell Me Wādai Say!

The first thing you're going to do is write down exactly what I say. It will be nonsense to you for two reasons: First, because I will be saying sound units, not word units. Second, because I will be starting at the end of the sentence instead of the beginning. Listen carefully and write down exactly what you hear, regardless of meaning. The first sound is given to you—cher.

Exercise 1-50: Listening for Pure Sounds

Again, listen carefully and write the sounds you hear. The answers are below.
Let's do a few more pure sound exercises to fine-tune your ear. Remember, start at the end and fill in the blanks right to left, then read them back left to right. Write whichever symbols are easiest for you to read back. There are clues sprinkled around for you and all the answers are in the Answer Key, beginning on page 193.

**Exercise 1-51 : Extended Listening Practice**

**CD 2 Track 22**

Let's do a few more pure sound exercises to fine-tune your ear. Remember, start at the end and fill in the blanks right to left, then read them back left to right. Write whichever symbols are easiest for you to read back. There are clues sprinkled around for you and all the answers are in the Answer Key, beginning on page 193.

**CD 2 Track 23**

1. ____dläik______ ____ _____ _____ _____ _____
2. ____ ______ ______ ______ ______ ______
3. ____ ______ ______ ______ ______ ______
4. ____ ______ ______ ______ ______ ______
5. ____ ______ ______ wi(th) the ______ ______
6. ____ ______ ______ ______ ______ ______
7. ____ ______ ______ ______ ______ ______
8. ____ ______ ______ ______ ______
9. ____ ______ ______ ______ ______
10. ____ ______ ______ ______ ______ ______

**Reduced Sounds**

**CD 2 Track 24**

**The Down Side of Intonation**

Reduced sounds are all those extra sounds created by an absence of lip, tongue, jaw, and throat movement. They are a principal function of intonation and are truly indicative of the American sound.

**Reduced Sounds Are "Valleys"**

American intonation is made up of peaks and valleys—tops of staircases and bottoms of staircases. To have strong peaks, you will have to develop deep valleys. These deep valleys should be filled with all kinds of reduced vowels, one in particular—the completely neutral schwa. Ignore spelling. Since you probably first became acquainted with English through the printed word, this is going to be quite a challenge. The position of a syllable is more important than spelling as an indication of correct pronunciation. For example, the words *photograph* and *photography* each have two O's and an A. The first word is stressed on the first syllable so *photograph* sounds like *[fəd'græf]*. The second word is stressed on the second syllable, *photography*, so the word comes out *[fətəl'græf'i]*. You can see here that their spelling doesn't tell you how they sound. Word stress or intonation will determine the pronunciation. Work on listening to words. Concentrate on hearing the pure sounds, not in trying to make the word fit a familiar spelling. Otherwise, you will be taking the long way around and giving yourself both a lot of extra work and an accent!
Syllables that are perched atop a peak or a staircase are strong sounds; that is, they maintain their original pronunciation. On the other hand, syllables that fall in the valleys or on a lower stairstep are weak sounds; thus they are reduced. Some vowels are reduced completely to schwas, a very relaxed sound, while others are only toned down. In the following exercises, we will be dealing with these "toned down" sounds.

In the Introduction ("Read This First," page iv) I talked about overpronouncing. This section will handle that overpronunciation. You're going to skim over words; you're going to dash through certain sounds. Your peaks are going to be quite strong, but your valleys, blurry—a very intuitive aspect of intonation that this practice will help you develop.

Articles (such as the, a) are usually very reduced sounds. Before a consonant, the and a are both schwa sounds, which are reduced. Before a vowel, however, you'll notice a change—the schwa of the turns into a long [e] plus a connecting (y)—Th ' book changes to thee(y)only book; A hat becomes a nugo ly hat. The article a becomes an. Think of [ə•nornj] rather than an orange; [ə•nop'ning], [ə•neye], [ə•nimaginary animal].

**Exercise 1-52; Reducing Articles**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consonants</th>
<th>Vowels</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the man</td>
<td>thee(y)apple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a girl</td>
<td>an orange [ə•nornj]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the best</td>
<td>thee(y)egg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a banana</td>
<td>an opening [ə•nop'ning]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the last one</td>
<td>thee(y)easy way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a computer</td>
<td>an interview [ə•ninerview]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When you used the rubber band with [Däg zeet bounz] and when you built your own sentence, you saw that intonation reduces the unstressed words. Intonation is the peak and reduced sounds are the valleys. In the beginning, you should make extra-high peaks and long, deep valleys. When you are not sure, reduce. In the following exercise, work with this idea. Small words such as articles, prepositions, pronouns, conjunctions, relative pronouns, and auxiliary verbs are lightly skimmed over and almost not pronounced.

You have seen how intonation changes the meaning in words and sentences. Inside a one-syllable word, it distinguishes between a final voiced or unvoiced consonant be-ed and bet. Inside a longer word, éunuch vs unique, the pronunciation and meaning change in terms of vocabulary. In a sentence (He seems nice; He seems nice.), the meaning changes in terms of intent.

In a sentence, intonation can also make a clear vowel sound disappear. When a vowel is stressed, it has a certain sound; when it is not stressed, it usually sounds like uh, pronounced [ə]. Small words like to, at, or as are usually not stressed, so the vowel disappears.

**Exercise 1-53: Reduced Sounds**

*Read aloud from the right-hand column. The intonation is marked for you.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To</th>
<th>Looks Like...</th>
<th>Sounds Like...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The preposition</td>
<td>today</td>
<td>[t'day]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to</td>
<td>tonight</td>
<td>[t'nait]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>usually reduces</td>
<td>tomorrow</td>
<td>[t'mārou]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>so much that it's</td>
<td>to work</td>
<td>[t'wrk]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>like</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
dropping the vowel. Use an *t* or *to* sound to replace *to*.

- to school
- to the store
- We have to go now.
- He went to work
- They hope to find it.
- I can't wait to find out.
- We don't know what to do.
- Don't jump to conclusions.
- To be or not to be...
- He didn't get to go.

If that same *to* follows a vowel sound, it will become *d* or *də*.

- He told me to help.
- She told you to get it.
- I go to work
- at a quarter to two
- The only way to get it is...
- You've got to pay to get it.
- We plan to do it.
- Let's go to lunch.
- The score was 4 ~ 6

**Exercise 1-53: Reduced Sounds continued**

**To**

**Looks Like...**

It's the only way to do it.

So to speak...

I don't know how to say it.

Go to page 8.

Show me how to get it.

You need to know when to do it.

Who's to blame?

We're at home.

I'll see you at lunch.

**Sounds Like...**

[its th'oʊnly wiədə do (w)'t]

[soda speak]

[æi don(t)know hæwdə say(y) it]

[gəʊdə pay jæt]

[show me hæədə geddit]

[yoov gədə paydə geddit]

[we plæn də do it]

[lets gəʊdə lʌŋtʃ]

[th' score w'z for də six]

**At**

*At* is just the opposite of *to*. It's a
small grunt followed by a reduced [t].

Dinner's at five. Leave them at the door. The meeting's at one. He's at the post office. They're at the bank. I'm at school.

If at is followed by a vowel sound, it will become 'd or əd.

It's at a meeting. She laughed at his idea. One at a time We got it at an auction. The show started at eight. The dog jumped out at us. I was at a friend's house.

It Can you do it? It and at sound the same in context — [t]

...and they both turn to 'd or əd between vowels or voiced consonants.

Give it a try. Let it alone. Take it away. I got it in London. What is it about? Let's try it again. Look! There it is!

Exercise 1-53; Reduced Sounds continued

For Looks Like...
This is for you. It's for my friend. A table for four, please. We planned it for later. For example, for instance What is this for? What did you do it for? Who did you get it for? It's from the IRS. I'm from Arkansas. There's a call from Bob. This letter's from Alaska! Who's it from?

From
It's in the bag.

In

Sounds Like...
[th's'z fr yu] [ts fr my friend] [ɑ tble fr fəur, pliz] [w plnd dt fr layd'r] [frg zmpl] [frn stns] [w'dz tis fr] (fr is not reduced at the end of a sentence) [hooj yd dt fr] [ts frm tht(ɑ)ə(ə) rss] [ɑim fr'm ɑr'k'ns] [tzerk kll frm Bb] [this lddrz frm lks] [hooz frm] [whr'r yu frm] [tsn th bæg]
What's in it? [w'ts'n't]
I'll be back in a minute. [äiyəl be bæk'no m'nt]
This movie? Who's in it? [this movie ... hooz'n't]
Come in. [c 'min]
He's in America. [heez'no ə məsəkə]
He's an American. [heez'no mərəskən]
An
I got an A in English. [äi ɡâddə nay ih ˈnɪŋglish]
He got an F in Algebra. [hee ɡâddə neffinəl ˈjæbɾə]
He had an accident. [he ɪdənt ˈneksədənt]
We want an orange. [we ˈwænt nərən]
He didn't have an excuse. [he ɪdənt hævə ɪks kəʊs]
I'll be there in an instant. [äi(y)ʻl be theər ɪn əˈɪnstnt]
It's an easy mistake to make. [ɪtsə ˈniːzizi mə ˈstreɪk t' ˈmeɪk]
And
ham and eggs [hæm ən egz]
bread and butter [bredn ˈbudər]
Coffee? With cream and sugar? [ˈkæfɪ ... wɪð kriəm ən ˈʃʊɡər]
No, lemon and sugar. [ˈnəʊ ən ˈlemən ən ˈʃʊɡər]
... And some more cookies? [wən ˈmɔr kəʊkiːz]
They kept going back and forth. [ðeɪ ˈkɛpt ˈgoʊŋ bæk ənd fɔːθ]
We watched it again and again. [wi wɔtʃd ɪt ˈeɪɡn ənd ˈeɪɡn]
He did it over and over. [he dɪd ɪt əvər ənd əvər]
We learned by trial and error. [wi lɜnd ɪn ˈtɹɪəl ən ˈɛrə]

Exercise 1-53: Reduced Sounds continued

Or
Look Like...
Soup or salad?
no either or later
more or less
left or right
For here or to go?
Are you going up or down?

Sounds Like...
[supər ˈsæləd]
[ˈnɔ(r) ˈleɪdər]
[ˈmɔ(r) ˈles]
[ˈlɛftər ˈraɪt]
[fr ˈhɪrər ˈdəʊ]
[ɑr ˈyu ɡoʊŋ ˈʌpər ˈdəʊn]

This is an either / or question (Up? Down?) Notice how the intonation is different from "Cream and sugar?", which is a yes / no question.

Are
What are you doing?
Where are you going?
What're you planning on doing?
How are you?
Those are no good.
How are you doing?
The kids are still asleep.

Your
How's your family?
Where're your keys?
You're American, aren't you?
Tell me when you're ready.
Is this your car?
You're late again, Bob.
Which one is yours?
**Exercise 1-53: Reduced Sounds continued**

### Sounds Like...

- **A**
  - It's a present. [tsə prernt]
  - You need a break. [ju:] nedə brk]
  - Give him a chance. [giv him ə chæns]
  - Let's get a new pair of shoes. [letz gedə new pərə shoʊz]
  - Is that a computer? [izə tæə kəmˈpjuːtə]
  - Where's a public telephone? [wɛəzə pəblik ˈtɛləfəun]

- **Of**
  - It's the top of the line. [tsə tæpˈvə lɪn]
  - As a matter of fact, ... [zər mætər ə fækt]
  - Get out of here. [get aʊt əf hɪər]
  - Practice all of the time. [ˈpræktɪs əl əv ˈtaɪm]
  - Today's the first of May. [təˈdeɪz əf ˈmɛɪ]
  - What's the name of that movie? [wɛts ə nəm əv ˈmɔvɪ]
  - That's the best of all! [ə tæə ə bɛst əv ˈɔl]
  - Some of them [səməvəm]
  - All of them [ɔləvəm]
  - Most of them [mɔstəvəm]
  - None of them [nənəvəm]
  - Any of them [ənəvəm]
  - The rest of them [ərəstəvəm]

- **Can**
  - Can you speak English? [kən speAk ˈɪŋɡlɪʃ]
  - I can only do it on Wednesday. [ai ˈkənəli də ˈwenzdeɪ]
  - A can opener can open cans. [ə kənˈpɛnər kənˈpɛn kænz]
  - Can I help you? [kənˈhel piu]
  - Can you do it? [kənju doʊt]
  - We can try it later. [wi kən tɹi ɪt ˈlətər]
### Exercise 1 - 53: Reduced Sounds continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exercise 1 - 53: Reduced Sounds continued</th>
<th>CD 2 Track</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Would</strong></td>
<td><strong>Looks Like...</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He would have helped, if...</td>
<td>[he wuda help dif ...]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would he like one?</td>
<td>[woody lye kw'n]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you think he'd do it?</td>
<td>[dyiu thing keed du(w)'t]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why would I tell her?</td>
<td>[why wüdai teller]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We'd see it again, if...</td>
<td>[weed see(y)iagen, if...]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He'd never be there on time.</td>
<td>[heed never be therän time]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would you ever have one?</td>
<td>[w'jou(w)ever hæv'n]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Was</strong></td>
<td><strong>Sounds Like...</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He was only trying to help.</td>
<td>[he w'zounly trying dö help]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark was American.</td>
<td>[mär kw'z'mer'k'n]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where was it?</td>
<td>[wer w'z't]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How was it?</td>
<td>[hæow'z't]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That was great!</td>
<td>[thæt w'z great]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who was with you?</td>
<td>[hoow'z with you]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She was very clear.</td>
<td>[she w'z very clear]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When was the war of 1812?</td>
<td>[wen w'z th' wor'v ei(t)teen twelv]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What time is it?</td>
<td>[w't tye m'z't]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What's up?</td>
<td>[w'ts'p]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What's on your agenda?</td>
<td>[w'tsäñy scojendä]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What do you mean?</td>
<td>[w'dy' mean]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What did you mean?</td>
<td>[w'j'meän]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What did you do about it?</td>
<td>[w'j' du(w)øbaedid]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What took so long?</td>
<td>[w't tük so læng]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What do you think of this?</td>
<td>[w'ddyø thing k'v this]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What did you do then?</td>
<td>[w'jiu do then]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don't know what he wants.</td>
<td>[I dont know woödee wänts]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Some</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some are better than others.</td>
<td>[s'mr beddr thänathærz]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are some leftovers.</td>
<td>[ther'r s'm lef doverz]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Let's buy some ice cream.</td>
<td>[let spy s' mice creem]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Could we get some other ones?</td>
<td>[kwee get s 'mother w'nz]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take some of mine.</td>
<td>[take səməv mine]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Would you like some more? [w' joo like s'more]
(or very casually) [jlike s'more]
Do you have some ice? [dyü hæv səmice]
Do you have some mice? [dyü hæv səmice]

"You can fool some of the people some of the time, but you can't fool all of the people all of the time." [yuk'n fool səmə thə peep'ə thə time, b'choo kænt fool əlləthə peep'ə thə əlləthə time] 54

Exercise 1-54: Intonation and Pronunciation of "That" CD 2 Track 27

That is a special case because it serves three different grammatical functions. The relative pronoun and the conjunction are reducible. The demonstrative pronoun cannot be reduced to a schwa sound. It must stay [æ].

Relative Pronoun
The car that she ordered is red. [the car th't she order diz red]

Conjunction
He said that he liked it. [he sed the dee lɪɪkɪd. ]

Demonstrative
Why did you do that? [why dijoo do thæt?]

Combination
I know that he'll read that book [æɪ kəʊn thə dill rəd thæt bʊk the dai tojoo(w) bæot]

Exercise 1-55: Crossing Out Reduced Sounds CD 2 Track 28

Pause the CD and cross out any sound that is not clearly pronounced, including to, for, and, that, then, the, a, the soft [ə], and unstressed syllables that do not have strong vowel sounds. Hello, my name is_________. I'm taking American Accent Training. There's a lot to learn, but I hope to make it as enjoyable as possible. I should pick up on the American intonation pattern pretty easily, although the only way to get it is to practice all of the time. I use the up and down, or peaks and valleys, intonation more than I used to. I've been paying attention to pitch, too. It's like walking down a staircase. I've been talking to a lot of Americans lately, and they tell me that I'm easier to understand. Anyway, I could go on and on, but the important thing is to listen well and sound good. Well, what do you think? Do I?

Exercise 1-56; Reading Reduced Sounds CD 2 Track 29

Repeat the paragraph after me. Although you're getting rid of the vowel sounds, you want to maintain a strong intonation and let the sounds flow together. For the first reading of this paragraph, it is helpful to keep your teeth clenching together to reduce excess jaw and lip movement. Let's begin.

Hello, my name'z_________. I'm taking 'mer'k'n Acc'nt Train'ng. Therez' lott' learn, b't I hope t'make 't'z njoy'bl'z poss'bl. I sh'd p'ck 'p on the 'mer'k'n 'nt'nash'n pattern pretty eas'ly, although the only way t' get 't'z t' præct's all 'v th' time. I use the 'p'n down, or peaks 'n valleys, 'n'nash'n more th'n I used to. I've b'n pay'ng 'tensh'n t' p'ch, too. 'Ts like walk'ng down' staircase. I've b'n talk'ng to lot 'v'mer'k'ns lately, 'n they tell me th't Im eas'er to 'nderstand. Anyway, I k'd go on 'n on, b't the 'mport'nt th'ng 'z t' l's'n wel'n sound g'd. W'll, wh' d'y' th'nk? Do I? 55

Word Groups and Phrasing CD
2 Track 30

Pauses for Related Thoughts, Ideas, or for Breathing

By now you've begun developing a strong intonation, with clear peaks and reduced valleys, so you're ready for the next step. You may find yourself reading the paragraph in Exercise 1-15 like this: Hello'mynamesisSo-and-so'I'makingAmericanAccentTraining. There 'salottomakeitasesjoyableaspossible. If so, your audience won't completely
comprehend or enjoy your presentation. In addition to intonation, there is another aspect of speech that indicates meaning. This can be called **phrasing** or **tone**. Have you ever caught just a snippet of a conversation in your own language, and somehow known how to piece together what came before or after the part you heard? This has to do with phrasing.

In a sentence, phrasing tells the listener where the speaker is at the moment, where the speaker is going, and if the speaker is finished or not. Notice that the intonation stays on the nouns.

**Exercise 1-57: Phrasing**

*CD Track 31*

**Repeat after me.**

**Statement**

Dogs eat bones.

**Clauses**

Dogs eat bones, but cats eat fish, or As we all know, dogs eat bones.

**Listing**

Dogs eat bones, kibbles, and meat.

**Question**

Do dogs eat bones?

**Repeated Question**

Do dogs eat bones?!!

**Tag Question**

Dogs eat bones, don't they?

**Tag Statement**

Dogs eat bones, DON'T they!

**Indirect Speech**

He asked if dogs ate bones.

**Direct Speech**

"Do dogs eat bones?" he asked.

For clarity, break your sentences with pauses between natural word groups of related thoughts or ideas. Of course, you will have to break at every comma and every period, but besides those breaks, add other little pauses to let your listeners catch up with you or think over the last burst of information and to allow you time to take a breath. Let's work on this technique. In doing the following exercise, you should think of using breath groups and idea groups.

**Exercise 1-58: Creating Word Groups**

*CD 2 Track 32*

Break the paragraph into natural word groups. Mark every place where you think a pause is needed with a slash.

Hello, my name is ___________. I'm taking American Accent Training. There's a lot to learn, but I hope to make it as enjoyable as possible. I should pick up on the American intonation pattern pretty easily, although the only way to get it is to practice all of the time. I use the up and down, or peaks and valleys intonation more than I used to. I've been paying attention to pitch, too. It's like walking down a staircase. I've been talking to a lot of Americans lately, and they tell me that I'm easier to understand. Anyway, I could go on and on, but the important thing is to listen well and sound good. Well, what do you think? Do I?

**Note** In the beginning, your word groups should be very short. It'll be a sign of your growing sophistication when they get longer.

+ Pause the CD to do your marking.

**Exercise 1-59: Practicing Word Groups**

*CD 2 Track 33*

When I read the paragraph this time, I will exaggerate the pauses. Although we're working on word groups here, remember, I don't want you to lose your intonation. Repeat each sentence group after me.

Hello, my name is ___________. | I'm taking American Accent Training. There's a
lot to learn, but I hope to make it as enjoyable as possible. I should pick up on the American intonation pattern pretty easily, although the only way to get it is to practice all of the time. I use the up and down, or peaks and valleys intonation more than I used to. I've been paying attention to pitch. It's like walking down a staircase. I've been talking to a lot of Americans lately, and they tell me that I'm easier to understand. Anyway, I could go on and on, but the important thing is to listen well and sound good. Well, what do you think? Do I?

Next, back up the CD and practice the word groups three times using strong intonation. Then, pause the CD and practice three more times on your own. When reading, your pauses should be neither long nor dramatic — just enough to give your listener time to digest what you're saying.

Exercise 1-60: Tag Endings

Pause the CD and complete each sentence with a tag ending. Use the same verb, but with the opposite polarity — positive becomes negative, and negative becomes positive. Then, repeat after me. Check Answer Key, beginning on page 193.

Intonation
With a query, the intonation rises. With confirmation, the intonation drops.

Pronunciation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Did he?</th>
<th>Didee?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Does he?</td>
<td>Duzzy?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Was he?</td>
<td>Wuzzy?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has he?</td>
<td>Hazzy?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is he?</td>
<td>Izzy?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will he?</td>
<td>Willy?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would he?</td>
<td>Woody?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can he?</td>
<td>Canny?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wouldn't you?</td>
<td>Wooden chew?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shouldn't I?</td>
<td>Shüd näi?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Won't he?</td>
<td>Woe knee?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Didn't he?</td>
<td>Didn knee?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hasn't he?</td>
<td>Has a knee?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wouldn't he?</td>
<td>Wooden knee?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isn't he?</td>
<td>Is a knee?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isn't it?</td>
<td>Is a nit?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doesn't it?</td>
<td>Duzza nit?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aren't I?</td>
<td>Are näi?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Won't you?</td>
<td>Wone chew?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't you?</td>
<td>Done chew?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can't you?</td>
<td>Can chew?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Could you?</td>
<td>Cüjoo?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would you?</td>
<td>Wüjoo?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. The new clerk is very slow, isn't he!
2. But he can improve.
3. She doesn't type very well!
4. They lost their way.
5. You don't think so.
6. I don't think it's easy.
7. I'm your friend.
8. You won't be coming.
The basic techniques introduced in this chapter are pitch, stress, the staircase and musical notes, reduced sounds, and word groups and phrasing. In chapters 2 through 13, we refine and expand this knowledge to cover every sound of the American accent.

Chapter 2. Word Connections

As mentioned in the previous chapter, in American English, words are not pronounced one by one. Usually, the end of one word attaches to the beginning of the next word. This is also true for initials, numbers, and spelling. Part of the glue that connects sentences is an underlying hum or drone that only breaks when you come to a period, and sometimes not even then. You have this underlying hum in your own language and it helps a great deal toward making you sound like a native speaker.

Once you have a strong intonation, you need to connect all those stairsteps together so that each sentence sounds like one long word. This chapter is going to introduce you to the idea of liaisons, the connections between words, which allow us to speak in sound groups rather than in individual words. Just as we went over where to put an intonation, here you're going to learn how to connect words. Once you understand and learn to use this technique, you can make the important leap from this practice book to other materials and your own conversation.

To make it easier for you to read, liaisons are written like this: They tell me the dame easier.
(You've already encountered some liaisons in Exercises 1-38, 1-49, 1-53.) It could also be written theytellmethedaim easier, but it would be too hard to read.

Exercise 2-1 : Spelling and Pronunciation

Read the following sentences. The last two sentences should be pronounced exactly the same, no matter how they are written. It is the sound that is important, not the spelling.

The dime.
The dime easier.
They tell me the dime easier.
They tell me the dime easier to understand.
They tell me that I'm easier to understand.

Words are connected in four main situations:
Liaison Rule 1: Consonant / Vowel

Words are connected when a word ends in a consonant sound and the next word starts with a vowel sound, including the semivowels W, Y, and R.

Exercise 2-2: Word Connections

My name is... [my nay•miz]
because I've [b'k'zäiv]
pick up on the American intonation [pi•kô pân the(y)ômer'kô ninôtanashân]

In the preceding example, the word name ends in a consonant sound [m] (the e is silent and doesn't count), and is starts with a vowel sound [i], so naymiz just naturally flows together. In because I've, the [z] sound at the end of because and the [äi] sound of I blend together smoothly. When you say the last line [pi•kôpân the(y)ômer'kôninôtanashân], you can feel each sound pushing into the next.

Exercise 2-3: Spelling and Number Connections

You also use liaisons in spelling and numbers:
LA (Los Angeles) [eh•lây]
902-5050 [nai•no•too fai•vo•fai•vo]

What's the Difference Between a Vowel and a Consonant?

In pronunciation, a consonant touches at some point in the mouth. Try saying [p] with your mouth open—you can't do it because your lips must come together to make the [p] sound. A vowel, on the other hand, doesn't touch anywhere. You can easily say [e] without any part of the mouth, tongue, or lips coming into contact with any other part. This is why we are calling W, Y, and R semivowels, or glides.

Exercise 2-4: Consonant / Vowel Liaison Practice

Pause the CD and reconnect the following words. On personal pronouns, it is common to drop the H. See Answer Key, beginning on page 193. Repeat.
hold on [hol don]
turn over [tur nover]
tell her I miss her [tellerl misser]
1. read only ______________________
2. fall off ______________________
60

Exercise 2-4: Consonant / Vowel Liaison Practice continued

3. follow up on ______________________
4. come in ______________________
5. call him ______________________
6. sell it ______________________
7. take out ______________________
8. fade away ______________________
Liaison Rule 2: Consonant / Consonant

Words are connected when a word ends in a consonant sound and the next word starts with a consonant that is in a similar position. What is a similar position? Let's find out.

Exercise 2-5: Consonant / Consonant Liaisons         CD 2 Track 40

Say the sound of each group of letters out loud (the sound of the letter, not the name: [b] is [buh] not [bee]). There are three general locations—the lips, behind the teeth, or in the throat. If a word ends with a sound created in the throat and the next word starts with a sound from that same general location, these words are going to be linked together. The same with the other two locations. Repeat after me.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behind the teeth</th>
<th>unvoiced</th>
<th>voiced</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>t</td>
<td>d</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ch</td>
<td>j</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s</td>
<td>z</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sh</td>
<td>zh</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>y</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>At the lips</th>
<th>unvoiced</th>
<th>voiced</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>p</td>
<td>b</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f</td>
<td>v</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>w</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In the throat</th>
<th>unvoiced</th>
<th>voiced</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>k</td>
<td>g</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ng</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>r</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Exercise 2-6: Consonant / Consonant Liaisons         CD 2 Track 41

I just didn't get the chance.  [I'jus didn't·ge(1)the·chance.] I've been late twice.  [I'vbinla(2)twice.]
In the preceding examples you can see that because the ending [st] of just and the beginning [d] of didn’t are so near each other in the mouth, it’s not worth the effort to start the sound all over again, so they just flow into each other. You don't say I just didn’t get the chance, but do say I just didn’t get the chance. In the same way, it’s too much work to say I’ve been late twice, so you say it almost as if it were a single word, I’ve been late twice.

The sound of TH is a special case. It is a floater between areas. The sound is sometimes created by the tongue popping out from between the teeth and other times on the back of the top teeth, combining with various letters to form a new composite sound. For instance, [s] moves forward and the [th] moves back to meet at the mid-point between the two.

**Note** Each of the categories in the drawing contains two labels—voiced and unvoiced. What does that mean? Put your thumb and index fingers on your throat and say [z]; you should feel a vibration from your throat in your fingers. If you whisper that same sound, you end up with [s] and you feel that your fingers don’t vibrate. So, [z] is a voiced sound, [s], unvoiced. The consonants in the two left columns are paired like that.

### Consonants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Voiced</th>
<th>Unvoiced</th>
<th>Voiced</th>
<th>Unvoiced</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>p</td>
<td>h</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>i</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v</td>
<td>f</td>
<td>r</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g</td>
<td>k</td>
<td>m</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i</td>
<td>ch</td>
<td>n</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>z</td>
<td>s</td>
<td>ng</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>th</td>
<td>th</td>
<td>y</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zh</td>
<td>sh</td>
<td>w</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Exercise 2-7: Liaisons with TH Combination**

When the TH combination connects with certain sounds, the two sounds blend together to form a composite sound. In the following examples, see how the TH moves back and the L moves forward, to meet in a new middle position. Repeat after me.

- th + l with lemon
- th + n with nachos
- th + t both times
- th + d with delivery
- th + s both sizes
- th + z with zeal
- th + ch both charges
- th + j with juice
- n + th in the
- z + th was that
- d + th hid those

**Exercise 2-8: Consonant / Consonant Liaison Practice**

Pause the CD and reconnect the following words as shown in the models. Check Answer Key, beginning on page 193. Repeat.

1. business deal
2. credit check
3. the top file
4. sell nine new cars

th + 1 with lemon th + ch both charges
th + n with nachos th + j with juice
th + t both times
th + d with delivery n + th in the
th + s both sizes z + th was that
th + z with zeal d + th hid those
5. sit down _________________________
6. some plans need luck_________________________
7. check cashing _________________________
8. let them make conditions _________________________
9. had the _________________________
10. both days _________________________

Liaison Rule 3: Vowel / Vowel
When a word ending in a vowel sound is next to one beginning with a vowel sound, they are connected with a glide between the two vowels. A glide is either a slight [y] sound or a slight [w] sound. How do you know which one to use? This will take care of itself—the position your lips are in will dictate either [y] or [w].

Go away.
Go(w)away.
I also need the other one. I(y)also need the(y)other one.

For example, if a word ends in [o] your lips are going to be in the forward position, so a [w] quite naturally leads into the next vowel sound—[Go(w)away]. You don't want to say Go...away and break the undercurrent of your voice. Run it all together: [Go(w)away].

After a long [e] sound, your lips will be pulled back far enough to create a [y] glide or liaison: [I(y)also need the(y)other one]. Don't force this sound too much, though. It's not a strong pushing sound. [I(y) also need the(y)other one] would sound really weird.

Exercise 2-9: Vowel / Vowel Liaison Practice

Pause the CD and reconnect the following words as shown in the models. Add a (y) glide after an [e] sound, and a (w) glide after an [u] sound. Don't forget that the sound of the American O is really [ou]. Check Answer Key, beginning on page 193.

1. go anywhere
2. so honest
3. through our
4. you are
5. he is
6. do I?
7. I asked
8. to open
9. she always
10. too often

Liaison Rule 4: T, D, S, or Z + Y
When the letter or sound of T, D, S, or Z is followed by a word that starts with Y, or its sound, both sounds are connected. These letters and sounds connect not only with Y, but they do so as well with the initial unwritten [y].

Exercise 2-10; T, D, S, or Z + Y Liaisons

Repeat the following.

T + Y = CH
What's your name? [wæcher name]
Can't you do it? [kænt chew do(w)it]
Actually [æk-chully]
Don't you like it? [dont chew lye kit]
Wouldn't you? [wooden chew]
Haven't you? No, not yet. [hæven chew? nou, nā chet]
I'll let you know. [I'll letcha know]
Can I get you a drink? [k'nāi getcheẘ drink]

Exercise 2-10: T, D, S, or Z + Y Liaisons continued

D + Y = J
Did you see it? [didjə see(y)it]
How did you like it? [hæo•jə lye kit]
Could you tell? [kūjə tell]
Where did you send your check? [wɛrjə senjer check]
What did your family think? [wæjə fæmlee think]
Did you find your keys? [didjə fine jer keez]
We followed your instructions. [we fælləw jər in strækʃənz]
Congratulations! [k'ngræj'lationz]
education [edjə•cation]
individual [in'dæviʃəl]
graduation [græjə(w)əl]

S + Y = SH
Yes, you are. [yeshu are]
Insurance [inshurəns]
Bless you! [bleshhuə]
Press your hands together. [pressə hænz d'geθr]
c 'new dreshier self [c 'new dreshier self]
yuk'n pæsher egzæmz thisheer [yuk'n pæsher egzæmz thisheer]
I'll try to guess your age. [el trydə geshierəge]
Let him gas your car for you. [leddim gæshier cær fr you]

Z + Y = ZH
How's your family? [hæozhier fæmlee]
How was your trip? [hæo-wæzhier trip]
Who's your friend? [hoozhier frem]
Where's your mom? [wɜrzh'B ræm]
Where's your birthday? [wænzh'B brθdæi]
She says you're OK. [she sæzhierou kæ]
Who does your hair? [hoo dæzhier hɛr]
casual [kæ•zhya(w)əl]
visual [vi•zhya(w)əl]
Exercise 2-10: T, D, S, or Z + Y Liaisons continued

CD 2 Track 45

Exercise 2-11: T, D, S, or Z + Y Liaison Practice

CD 2 Track 46

Exercise 2-12: Finding Liaisons and Glides

CD 2 Track 47

Exercise 2-13: Practicing Liaisons

CD 3 Track 1
Back up the CD to the last paragraph just read and repeat again. This time, however, read from the paragraph below. The intonation is marked for you in boldface. Use your rubber band on every stressed word.

He llo, my nay miz ___________. I'm takingAmerica naeccent(training. There za lättə learn, bə däi hope t' ma ki desen joyablez possible. I shud pi kapən theymerica nintonash'n pæddern pridy(y)ezily, although thee(y)only waydə gëddidiz t' prækti sälləv th' time. (y)use thee(y)up'a down, or peak s'n valley zintonashan more thə nai used to. Ivbn payiŋə tenshan t' pitch, too. Itsläi kwälking dow na staircase. Ivbn talking to(w)ə läddfə merican zla(t)ely, 'n they tell me the däimezier t(w)unstand. Anyway, I could go(w)ə nə nən, but(y)the(y)important thingiz t' lisənwellən sound(d) good. Well, whəddyū think? Do(w)I?

Exercise 2-14: Additional Liaison Practice

CD 3 Track 2

T Use these techniques on texts of your own and in conversation.
(1) Take some written material and mark the intonation, then the word groups, and finally the liaisons.
(2) Practice saying it out loud.
(3) Record yourself and listen back.
V In conversation, think which word you want to make stand out, and change your pitch on that word. Then, run the in-between words together in the valleys. Listen carefully to how Americans do it and copy the sound.

Exercise 2-15: Colloquial Reductions and Liaisons

CD 3 Track 3

In order for you to recognize these sounds when used by native speakers, they are presented here, but I don't recommend that you go out of your way to use them yourself. If, at some point, they come quite naturally of their own accord in casual conversation, you don't need to resist, but please don't force yourself to talk this way. Repeat.

I have got to go.
I have got a book.
Do you want to dance?
Do you want a banana?
Let me in.
Let me go.
I'll let you know.
Did you do it?
Not yet.
I'll meet you later.
What do you think?
What did you do with it?
How did you like it?
When did you get it?
Why did you take it?
Why don't you try it?
What are you waiting for?
What are you doing?
How is it going?
Where's the what-you-may-call-it?
Where's what-is-his-name?
How about it?
He has got to hurry because he is late.
I could've been a contender.

I've gotta go.
I've gotta book.
Wanna dance?
Wanna banana?
Lemme in.
Lemme go.
I'll letcha know.
Dija do it?
Nä chet.
I'll meechu layder.
Whaddyu think?
Whajoo do with it?
Howja like it?
When ju gëddit?
Whyju tay kit?
Why don chu try it?
Whaddya waitin' for?
Whatcha doin'?
Howzit going?
Where's the whatchamacallit?
Where's whatzisname?
How 'bout it?
He's gotta hurry 'cuz he's late.
I coulda bina contender.
Exercise 2-15: Colloquial Reductions and Liaisons continued CD 3 Track 3

Could you speed it **up**, please? Couldjoo spee di **dup**, pleez?

Would you mind if I **tried** it? Would joo mindifai **try** dit?

Aren't you Bob **Barker**? Arnchoo Bab **Barker**?

Can't you see it **my** way for a change? Kænchoo see it **my** way for a change?

Don't you **get** it? Doancha **geddit**?

I should have **told** you. I shoulda **told**oo.

Tell her (that) I **miss** her. Teller I **misser**.

Tell him (that) I **miss** him. Tellim I **missim**.

**Did you eat?** Jeet?

No, **did you?** No, **joo?**

Why don't you **get a job?** Whyncha **getta job?**

I don't know, it's **too hard.** I dunno, stoø **härd.**

**Could we go?** Kwee **gou?**

**Let's go!** Skø!

*Spoon or Sboon?*

An interesting thing about liaisons is that so much of it has to do with whether a consonant is voiced or not. The key thing to remember is that the vocal cords don't like switching around at the midpoint. If the first consonant is voiced, the next one will be as well. If the first one is unvoiced, the second one will sound unvoiced, no matter what you do. For example, say the word *spoon.* Now, say the word *sboon.* Hear how they sound the same? This is why I'd like you to always convert the preposition **to** to **do** when you're speaking English, no matter what comes before it. In the beginning, to get you used to the concept, we made a distinction between **to** and **do**, but now that your schwa is in place, use a single *d* sound everywhere, except at the very beginning of a sentence.

After a voiced sound: He had to do it. [he hæ(d) d(y)u(w)t]

After an unvoiced sound: He got to do it. [he gæ(t) d(y)u(w)t]

At the beginning of a sentence: To **be or not to be.** [t(bee) y(ñ)t(bee)]

To have your liaisons tested, call (800) 457-4255.

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Exercise 2-16: Liaison Staircases

You are going to make staircases again from the paragraph below—pretty much as you did in Exercise 1-17 on page 16. This time, instead of putting a whole word on each staiirstep, put a single sound on each step. This is also similar to the second pan of the Dogs Eat Bones Exercise 1-38 on page 36. Use the liaison techniques you have just learned to connect the words; then regroup them and place one sound unit on a step. As before, start a new staircase every time you stress a word. Remember, new sentences don't have to start new staircases. A staircase can continue from one sentence to another until you come to a stressed word. Pause the CD.

After laying our foundation with intonation and liaisons, here we finally begin to refine your pronunciation! We are now going to work on the differences between [æ], [ä], and [ə], as well as [ō], [ā], and [ē]. Let's start out with the [æ] sound.

The [æ] Sound

Although not a common sound, [æ] is very distinctive to the ear and is typically American. In the practice paragraph in Exercise 3-2 this sound occurs five times. As its phonetic symbol indicates, [æ] is a combination of [ä] + [ε]. To pronounce it, drop your jaw down as if you were going to say [ä]; then from that position, try to say [ε]. The final sound is not two separate vowels, but rather the end result of the combination. It is very close to the sound that a goat makes: ma-a-a-a!

Y Try it a few times now: [ä] f [æ]
If you find yourself getting too nasal with [æ], pinch your nose as you say it. If [kæt] turns into [kɛt], you need to pull the sound out of your nose and down into your throat.

Note As you look for the [æ] sound you might think that words like down or sound have an [æ] in them. For this diphthong, try [æ] + oh, or [æo]. This way, down would be written [dæon]. Because it is a combined sound, however, it's not included in the Cat? category. (See Pronunciation Point 4 on page ix).

The [ä] Sound

The [ä] sound occurs a little more frequently; you will find ten such sounds in the exercise. To pronounce [ä], relax your tongue and drop your jaw as far down as it will go. As a matter of fact, put your hand under your chin and say [mä], [pä], [tä], [sä]. Your hand should be pushed down by your jaw as it opens. Remember, it's the sound that you make when the
doctor wants to see your throat, so open it up and *dräp your jäw.*

The Schwa \[ə\] Sound

Last is the schwa [ə], the *most common* sound in American English. When you work on Exercise 3-2, depending on how fast you speak, how smoothly you make liaisons, how strong your intonation is, and how much you relax your sounds, you will find from 50 to 75 schwas. Spelling doesn't help identify it, because it can appear as any one of the vowels, or a combination of them. It is a neutral vowel sound, *uh.* It is usually in an unstressed syllable, though it can be stressed as well. Whenever you find a vowel that can be crossed out and its absence wouldn't change the pronunciation of the word, you have probably found a schwa: *photography* [ph'ogr'phy] (the two apostrophes show the location of the neutral vowel sounds). Because it is so common, however, the wrong pronunciation of this one little sound can leave your speech strongly accented, even if you Americanized everything else.

*Note* Some dictionaries use two different written characters, [ə] and [ʌ], but for simplicity, we are only going to use the first one.

Silent or Neutral?

A schwa is neutral, but it is not silent. By comparison, the silent E at the end of a word is a signal for pronunciation, but it is not pronounced itself: *code* is [kod]. The E tells you to say an [ʊ]. If you leave the E off, you have *cod,* [käd]. The schwa, on the other hand is neutral, but it is an actual sound—*uh.* For example, you could also write *photography* as *phuh•tah•gruh•fee.* Because it's a neutral sound, the schwa doesn't have any distinctive characteristics, yet it is *the most common sound in the English language.*

To make the [ə] sound, put your hand on your diaphragm and push until a grunt escapes. Don't move your jaw, tongue, or lips; just allow the sound to flow past your vocal cords. It should sound like *uh.*

Once you master this sound, you will have an even easier time with pronouncing *can* and *can't.* In a sentence, *can't* sounds like [kæn(t)], but *can* becomes [kən], unless it is stressed, when it is [kæn], (as we saw in Exercise 1-43 on p. 41). Repeat.

- I can **do** it.  [I kæn do it]
- I can't **do** it.  [I kæn't do it]

In the vowel chart that follows, the four corners represent the four most extreme positions of the mouth. The center box represents the least extreme position—the neutral schwa. For these four positions, only move your lips and jaw. Your tongue should stay in the same place—with the tip resting behind the bottom teeth.

Vowel Chart
1. To pronounce **beat**, your lips should be drawn back, but your teeth should be close together. Your mouth should form the shape of a **banana**.

2. To pronounce **boot**, your lips should be fully rounded, and your teeth should be close together. Your mouth should form the shape of a **Cheerio**.

3. To pronounce **bought**, drop your jaw straight down from the **boot** position. Your mouth should form the shape of an **egg**.

4. To pronounce **bat**, keep your jaw down, pull your lips back, and try to simultaneously say [ä] and [ε]. Your mouth should form the shape of a **box**.

**Note** Word-by-word pronunciation will be different than individual sounds within a sentence. That, than, as, at, and, have, had, can, and so on, are [æ] sounds when they stand alone, but they are weak words that reduce quickly in speech.

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**Exercise 3-1: Word-by-Word and in a Sentence**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stressed</th>
<th>Unstressed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>that</td>
<td>thät</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>than</td>
<td>thän</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>as</td>
<td>æz</td>
</tr>
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<td>at</td>
<td>æt</td>
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<td>and</td>
<td>ænd</td>
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<tr>
<td>have</td>
<td>hæv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>had</td>
<td>hæd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>can</td>
<td>cæn</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stressed</th>
<th>Unstressed</th>
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<td>th' t</td>
<td>thät</td>
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<td>th'n</td>
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<td>'z</td>
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<td>h'd</td>
<td>hæd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c'n</td>
<td>cæn</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

|                     | He said th't it's OK. |
|                     | It's bigger th'n before |
|                     | 'z soon 'z he gets here... |
|                     | Look 't the time! |
|                     | ham 'n eggs |
|                     | Where h'v you been? |
|                     | He h'd been at home. |
|                     | C'n you do it? |

---

**Exercise 3-2: Finding [æ], [â], and [ð] Sounds**

There are five [æ], ten [â], and seventy-five [ð] sounds in the following paragraph. Underscore them in pen or pencil. (The first one of each sound is marked for you.)

**Hello, my name is ___________.** I'm taking American accent Training. There's a lat to learn, but I hope to make it as enjoyable as possible. I should pick up on the American intonation pattern pretty easily, although the only way to get it is to practice all of the time. I use the up and down, or peaks and valleys intonation more than I used to. I've been paying attention to pitch, too. It's like walking down a staircase. I've been talking to a lot of Americans lately, and they tell me that I'm easier to understand. Anyway, I could go on and on, but the important thing is to listen well and sound good. **Well**, what do you think? **Do I?**

Next, check your answers with the Answer Key, beginning on page 193. Finally, take your markers and give a color to each sound. For example, mark [æ] green, [â] blue, and [ð] yellow.
Turn your CD off and read the paragraph three times on your own.

Note *It sounds regional to end a sentence with [ustə]. In the middle of a sentence, however, it is more standard: [I ustə live there.]*

**Exercise 3-3: Vowel-Sound Differentiation**

*Here we will read down from 1 to 24, then we will read each row across. Give the [ā] sound a clear double sound [ɛ + ee]. Also, the [o] is a longer sound than you might be expecting. Add the full ooh sound after each "o."*

| 1. Ann | on | un~ | own | aɪn't | end |
| 2. ban | bond | bun | bone | bane | Ben |
| 3. can | con | come | cone | cane | Ken |
| 4. cat | caught/cot | cut | coat | Kate | ketch |
| 5. Dan | Don/dawn | done | don't | Dane | den |
| 6. fan | fawn | fun | phone | feign | fend |
| 7. gap | gone | gun | goat | gain | again |
| 8. hat | hot | hut | hotel | hate | het up |
| 9. Jan | John | jump | Joan | Jane | Jenny |
| 10. lamp | lawn | lump | loan | lane | Len |
| 11. man | monster | Monday | moan | main | men |
| 12. matter | motto | mutter | motor | made her | met her |
| 13. Nan | non~ | none/nun | known | name | nemesis |
| 14. gnat | not/knot | nut | note | Nate | net |
| 15. pan | pawn | pun | pony | pain/pane | pen |
| 16. ran | Ron | run | roan | rain/reign | wren |
| 17. sand | sawn | sun | sewn/sown | sane | send |
| 18. shall | Sean | shut | show | Shane | Shen |
| 19. chance | chalk | chuck | choke | change | check |
| 20. tack | talk | tuck | token | take | tech |
| 21. van | Von | vug | vogue | vague | vent |
| 22. wax | want | won/one | won't | wane | when |
| 23. yam | yawn | young | yo! | yea! | yen |
| 24. zap | czar | result | zone | zany | zen |

To have your pronunciation tested, call (800) 457-4255.

**Exercise 3-4: Reading the [æ] Sound**

*The Tæn Mæn*

A fashionably tan man sat casually at the bat stand, lashing a handful of practice bats. The manager, a crabby old bag of bones, passed by and laughed, "You're about average, Jack. Can't you lash faster than that?" Jack had had enough, so he clambered to his feet and lashed bats faster than any man had ever lashed bats. As a matter of fact, he lashed bats so fast that he seemed to dance. The manager was aghast. "Jack, you're a master bat lasher!" he gasped. Satisfied at last, Jack sat back and never lashed another bat.

*Pause the CD and read The Tæn Mæn aloud. Turn it back on to continue.*
Exercise 3-5: Reading the [ä] Sound

A Lät of Läng, Hät Walks in the Garden

John was not sorry when the boss called off the walks in the garden. Obviously, to him, it was awfully hot, and the walks were far too long. He had not thought that walking would have caught on the way it did, and he fought the policy from the onset. At first, he thought he could talk it over at the law office and have it quashed, but a small obstacle* halted that thought. The top lawyers always bought coffee at the shop across the lawn and they didn't want to stop on John's account. John's problem was not office politics, but office policy. He resolved the problem by bombing the garden.

* lobster • a small lobster • obstacle • a small obstacle
* Pause the CD and read A Lät of Läng, Hät Walks in the Gärden aloud.

Exercise 3-6: Reading the [ə] Sound

When you read the following schwa paragraph, try clenching your teeth the first time. It won't sound completely natural, but it will get rid of all of the excess lip and jaw movement and force your tongue to work harder than usual. Remember that in speaking American English we don't move our lips much, and we talk though our teeth from far back in our throats. I'm going to read with my teeth clenched together and you follow along, holding your teeth together.

What Must the Sun Above Wonder About?

Some pundits proposed that the sun wonders unnecessarily about sundry and assorted conundrums. One cannot but speculate what can come of their proposal. It wasn't enough to trouble us,* but it was done so underhandedly that hundreds of sun lovers rushed to the defense of their beloved sun. None of this was relevant on Monday, however, when the sun burned up the entire country. *[at ənənənə ə trəbələs]
* Pause the CD and read What Must the Sun Above Wonder About? twice. Try it once with your teeth clenched the first time and normally the second time.

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Chapter 4. The American T

The American T is influenced very strongly by intonation and its position in a word or phrase. At the top of a staircase T is pronounced T as in Ted or Italian; a T in the middle of a staircase is pronounced as D [Beddy] [Idaly] ; whereas a T at the bottom of a staircase isn't pronounced at all [ho(t)]. Look at Italian and Italy in the examples below. The [tæl] of Italian is at the top of the staircase and is strong: Italian. The [da] of Italy is in the middle and is weak: Italy.

Exercise 4-1 ; Stressed and Unstressed T

Repeat after me.

Italian Italian
attack attic
atomic atom
photography photograph

Exercise 4-2: Betty Bought a Bit of Better Butter

In the sentence Betty bought a bit of better butter, all of the Ts are in weak positions, so they all sound like soft Ds. Repeat the sentence slowly, word by word: [Beddy ... badə... bidə... bedder ... buddə]. Feel the tip of your tongue flick across that area behind your top teeth. Think of the music of a cello again when you say, Betty bought a bit of better butter.
**Betty Bought a Bit of Better Butter**

Betty bought a bit of better butter, Beddy bá de bihda bedder budder.
But, said she, Bu(t), said she,
This butter's bitter. This budder' z bidder.
If I put it in my batter, If I püdi din my ba extradition,
It'll make my batter bitter. Id'll make my bedder bidder.

If you speak any language—such as Spanish, Japanese, Hindi, Italian, or Dutch, among others—where your R touches behind the teeth, you are in luck with the American T. Just fix the association in your mind so that when you see a middle position T, you automatically give it your native R sound. Say, *Berni bara bira* ... with your native accent. (Not if you are French, German, or Chinese!)

Along with liaisons, the American T contributes a great deal to the smooth, relaxed sound of English. When you say a word like *atom*, imagine that you've been to the dentist and you're a little numb, or that you've had a couple of drinks, or maybe that you're very sleepy. You won't be wanting to use a lot of energy saying [æ•tom], so just relax everything and say [adəm], like the masculine name, Adam. It's a very smooth, fluid sound. Rather than saying, *BetTty boughT a biT of beTTer buTTer*, which is physically more demanding, try, *Beddy bada bidda bedder budder.* It's easy because you really don't need much muscle tension to say it this way.

The staircase concept will help clarify the various T sounds. The American T can be a little tricky if you base your pronunciation on spelling. Here are five rules to guide you.

1. **T** is **T** at the beginning of a word or in a stressed syllable.
2. **T** is **D** in the middle of a word.
3. **T** is **Held** at the end of a word.
4. **T** is **Held before N** in -tain and -ten endings.
5. **T** is **Silent after N** with lax vowels.

**Exercise 4-3: Rule 1—Top of the Staircase**

*When a T is at the top of a staircase, in a stressed position, it should be a clear popped sound.*

1. In the beginning of a word, T is [t].
   *Ted took ten tomatoes.*
2. With a stressed T and ST, TS, TR, CT, LT, and sometimes NT combinations, T is [t].
   *He was content with the contract.*
3. T replaces D in the past tense, after an unvoiced consonant sound — f, k, p, s, ch, sh, th — (except T).
   *T: laughed [läft], picked [pikt], hoped [hōpt], raced [raist], watched [wächt], washed [wäsht], unearthed [uneartht]*
   *D: halved [hœvd], rigged [rigd], nabbed [næbd], raised [razd], judged [j'jd], garaged [garazhd], smoothed [smouthd]*
   **Exceptions:** wicked [wikəd], naked [nakəd], crooked [krükəd], etc.

**Exercise 4-3; Rule 1—Top of the Staircase continued**

*Read the following sentences out loud. Make sure that the underlined (stressed) Ts are sharp and clear.*

1. It took *Tim* ten times to try the telephone.
2. Stop touching *Ted's* toes.
3. Turn toward *Stella* and study her contract together.
4. Control your *ears.*
5. It's *Tommy's* turn to tell the teacher the truth.

**Exercise 4-4: Rule 2—Middle of the Staircase**
An unstressed T in the middle of a staircase between two vowel sounds should be pronounced as a soft D.

Betty bought a bit of better butter.  [Beddy bæðə bida bedder badder]
Pat ought to sit on a lap.  [pædədə sidənə læp]

Read the following sentences out loud. Make sure that the underlined (unstressed) Ts sound like a soft D.

1. She hit the hot hut with her hat.
2. We went to that 'Net site to get what we needed.
3. Pat was quite right, wasn't she?
4. What a good idea.
5. Put it in a bottle.
6. Write it in a letter.
7. Set it on the metal gutter.
8. Get a better water heater.
9. Let her put a sweater on.
10. It's getting hotter and hotter.
11. Patty ought to write a better letter.
12. Freida had a little metal bottle.

Exercise 4-5: Rule 3—Bottom of the Staircase

T at the bottom of a staircase is in the held position. By held, I mean that the tongue is in the T position, but the air isn't released. To compare, when you say T as in Tom, there's a sharp burst of air over the tip of the tongue, and when you say Betty, there's a soft puff of air over the tip of the tongue. When you hold a T, as in hot, your tongue is in the position for T, but you keep the air in.

1. She hit the hot hut with her hat.
2. We went to that 'Net site to get what we needed.
3. Pat was quite right, wasn't she?

Exercise 4-5: Rule 3—Bottom of the Staircase continued

5. hot, late, fat, goaT, hit, put, not, hurt, what, set, painT, wait, sit, dirt, note, fit, lot, light, suit, point, incident, tight

Exercise 4-6: Rule 4—"Held T" Before N

The "held T" is, strictly speaking, not really a T at all. Remember [t] and [n] are very close in the mouth (see Liaisons, Exercise 2-5). If you have an N immediately after a T, you don't pop the T—the tongue is in the T position—but you release the air with the N, not the T. There is no [t] and no [s]. Make a special point of not letting your tongue release from the top of your mouth before you drop into the [n]; otherwise, butt(ton) would sound like two words: but-ton. An unstressed T or TT followed by N is held. Read the following words and sentences out loud. Make sure that the underlined Ts are held. Remember, there is no "uh" sound before the [n].

Note Another point to remember is that you need a sharp upward sliding intonation up to the "held T," then a quick drop for the N.
1. He's forgotten the carton of satin mittens.
2. She's certain that he has written it.
3. The cotton curtain is not in the fountain.
4. The hikers went in the mountains.
5. Martin has gotten a kitten.
6. Students study Latin in Britain.
7. Whitney has a patent on those sentences.
8. He has not forgotten what was written about the mutant on the mountain.
9. It's not certain that it was gotten from the fountain.
10. You need to put an orange curtain on that window.
11. We like that certain satin better than the carton of cotton curtains.
12. The intercontinental hotel is in Seattle.
13. The frightened witness had forgotten the important written message.
14. The child wasn't beaten because he had bitten the button.

Exercise 4-7: Rule 5—The Silent T

[t] and [n] are so close in the mouth that the [t] can simply disappear. Repeat.

1. interview
2. interface
3. Internet
4. interstate
5. interrupt
6. interfere
7. interactive
8. international
9. advantage
10. percentage
11. twenty
12. printout
13. printer
14. winter
15. enter

Exercise 4-8: Rule 5—The Silent T

Read the following sentences out loud. Make sure that the underlined Ts are silent.

1. He had a great interview. [he hæd gray intəvju]
2. Try to enter the information. [trai də enər dənəfermən]
3. Turn the printer on. [tRN də prinər pən]
4. Finish the printing. [f’n’shə prinən]
5. She's at the international center. [shez (t)ə innənənʃənəl senər]
6. It's twenty degrees in Toronto. [ts twen'ni d'greez in trö'nno] 
7. I don't understand it. [I doe nander stænd d't] 
8. She invented it in Santa Monica. [she(9)in'vend din sænə mänəkə] 
9. He can't even do it. [he kænəvən du(w)ˈt] 
10. They don't even want it. [they doe neevən wændt] 
11. She's the intercontinental representative. [shez(9)in'rentənəlrepr'sentətiv] 
12. Hasn't he? [hæzəni] 
13. Isn't he? [izəni] 
15. Wasn't he? [wɔsəni] 
16. Didn't I? [diəndənə] 
17. Wouldn't it? [wʊndənt] 
18. Does he? [dəzə] 
19. Wouldn't it? [wʊndənt] 
20. What's the point of it? [wətəs the poiəntvət] 
21. It's twenty degrees in Toronto. [ts twen'ni d'greez in trö'nno] 
22. But it looks like what I need. [bəd(9)lʊk sli kwədəi nəd] 
23. But you said that you wouldn't. [bədə shəd thə wʊdnət] 
24. I know what you think. [i kəʊən wət you tʃɪŋk] 
25. But I don't think that he will. [bədə dənt tʃɪŋk thə wɪll] 
26. He said that if we can do it, he'll help. [he sed thə dɪf we kə'n də(w)ɪt, hiə hələ] 
27. But isn't it easier this way? [bədəntəzərə tɪz wæ] 

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Exercise 4-9: Karina's T Connections  
CD 3 Track 2: 

Here are some extremely common middle T combinations. Repeat after me:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What</th>
<th>But</th>
<th>That</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>wədə</td>
<td>bədə</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>wədəi</td>
<td>bədəi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I'm</td>
<td>wədəim</td>
<td>bədəim</td>
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<td>I've</td>
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<td>it's</td>
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<td>bədɪts</td>
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<td>wədɪzn[t]</td>
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<td>he</td>
<td>wədee</td>
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<td>he's</td>
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<td>wədr</td>
<td>bədr</td>
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<tr>
<td>you</td>
<td>wəchəw</td>
<td>bəchəw</td>
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<tr>
<td>you'll</td>
<td>wəchʊəl</td>
<td>bəchʊəl</td>
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<td>you've</td>
<td>wəchoov</td>
<td>bəchoov</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you're</td>
<td>wəchr</td>
<td>bəchr</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Exercise 4-10: Combinations in Context  
CD 3 Track 2: 

Repeat the following sentences.

1. I don't know what it means. [i dənt kəʊən wədət mənz] 
2. But it looks like what I need. [bəd(9)lʊk sli kwədəi nəd] 
3. But you said that you wouldn't. [bədə shəd thə wʊdnət] 
4. I know what you think. [i kəʊən wət you tʃɪŋk] 
5. But I don't think that he will. [bədə dənt tʃɪŋk thə wɪll] 
6. He said that if we can do it, he'll help. [he sed thə dɪf we kə'n də(w)ɪt, hiə hələ] 
7. But isn't it easier this way?
We want something that isn't here.

You'll like it, but you'll regret it later.

But he's not right for what I want.

It's amazing what you've accomplished.

What if he forgets?

OK, but aren't you missing something?

I think that he's OK now.

She wanted to, but her car broke down.

We think that you're taking a chance.

They don't know what it's about.

We want something that isn't here.

You'll like it, but you'll regret it later.

But he's not right for what I want.

It's amazing what you've accomplished.

What if he forgets?

OK, but aren't you missing something?

I think that he's OK now.

She wanted to, but her car broke down.

We think that you're taking a chance.

They don't know what it's about.

Exercise 4-11: Voiced and Unvoiced Sounds with T

This exercise is for the practice of the difference between words that end in either a vowel or a voiced consonant, which means that the vowel is lengthened or doubled. Therefore, these words are on a much larger, longer stairstep. Words that end in an unvoiced consonant are on a smaller, shorter stairstep. This occurs whether the vowel in question is tense or lax.

Exercise 4-12: Finding American T Sounds CD 3 Track 24

Once again, go over the following familiar paragraph. First, find all the T's that are pronounced D (there are nine to thirteen here). Second, find all the held Ts (there are seven). The first one of each is marked for you. Pause the CD to do this and don't forget to check your answers with the Answer Key, beginning on page 193, when you finish.

Hello, my name is _______________. I'm taking American Accen(t) Training. There's a lot to learn, but I hope to make it as enjoyable as possible. I should pick up on the American intonation pattern pretty easily, although the only way to get it is to practice all of the time. I use the up and down, or peaks and valleys, intonation more than I used to. I've been paying attention to pitch, too. It's like walking down a staircase. I've been talking to a lot of Americans lately, and they tell me that I'm easier to understand. Anyway, I could go on and on, but the important thing is to listen well and sound good/Well, what do you think? Do I?

Voiced Consonants and Reduced Vowels
The strong intonation in American English creates certain tendencies in your spoken language. Here are four consistent conditions that are a result of intonation's tense peaks and relaxed valleys:

1. **Reduced vowels**
   You were introduced to reduced vowels in Chapter 1. They appear in the valleys that are formed by the strong peaks of intonation. The more you reduce the words in the valleys, the smoother and more natural your speech will sound. A characteristic of reduced vowels is that your throat muscles should be very relaxed. This will allow the unstressed vowels to reduce toward the schwa. Neutral vowels take less energy and muscularity to produce than tense vowels. For example, the word *unbelievable* should only have one hard vowel: [ʌnbɛlvəbəl].

2. **Voiced consonants**
   The mouth muscles are relaxed to create a voiced sound like [z] or [d]. For unvoiced consonants, such as [s] or [t], they are sharp and tense. Relaxing your muscles will simultaneously reduce your vowels and voice your consonants. Think of **voiced consonants** as reduced consonants. Both reduced consonants and reduced vowels are unconsciously preferred by a native speaker of American English. This explains why T so frequently becomes D and S becomes Z: Get it is to ... [gedidizd].

3. **Like sound with like sound**
   It's not easy to change horses midstream, so when you have a voiced consonant; let the consonant that follows it be voiced as well. In the verb *used* [yuszd], for example, the S is really a Z, so it is followed by D. The phrase *used to* [yus tu], on the other hand, has a real S, so it is followed by T. Vowels are, by definition, voiced. So when one is followed by a common, reducible word, it will change that word's first sound—like the preposition *to*, which will change to [də].

   The only way to get it is to practice all of the time. [They only wei•d•geddidiz•d•practice all of the time.]

   Again, this will take time. In the beginning, work on recognizing these patterns when you hear them. When you are confident that you understand the structure beneath these sounds and you can intuit where they belong, you can start to try them out. It's not advisable to memorize one reduced word and stick it into an otherwise overpronounced sentence. It would sound strange.

4. **R'læææææææææææex**
   You've probably noticed that the preceding three conditions, as well as other areas that we've covered, such as liaisons and the schwa, have one thing in common—the idea that it's physically easier this way. This is one of the most remarkable characteristics of American English. You need to relax your mouth and throat muscles (except for [æ], [ä], and other tense vowels), and let the sounds flow smoothly out. If you find yourself tensing up, pursing your lips, or tightening your throat, you are going to strangle and lose the sound you are pursuing. Relax, relax, relax.

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**Chapter 5. The EL**

This chapter discusses the sound of L (not to be confused with that of the American R, which is covered in the next chapter). We'll approach this sound first, by touching on the difficulties it presents to foreign speakers of English, and next by comparing L to the related sounds of T, D, and N.

**L and Foreign Speakers of English**

The English L is usually no problem at the beginning or in the middle of a word. The native language of some people, however, causes them to make their English L much too short. At the end of a word, the L is especially noticeable if it is either missing (Chinese) or too short (Spanish). In addition, most people consider the L as a simple consonant. This can also cause a lot of trouble. Thus, two things are at work here: location of language sounds in the mouth, and the complexity of the L sound.
**Location of Language in the Mouth**

The sounds of many Romance languages are generally located far forward in the mouth. My French teacher told me that if I couldn't see my lips when I spoke French—it wasn't French! Spanish is sometimes even called the smiling language. Chinese, on the other hand, is similar to American English in that it is mostly produced far back in the mouth. The principal difference is that English also requires clear use of the tongue's tip, a large component of the sound of L.

**The Compound Sound of L**

The L is not a simple consonant; it is a compound made up of a vowel and a consonant. Like the [æ] sound discussed in Chapter 3, the sound of L is a combination of [ə] and [l]. The [ə], being a reduced vowel sound, is created in the throat, but the [l] part requires a clear movement of the tongue. First, the tip must touch behind the teeth. (This part is simple enough.) But then, the back of the tongue must then drop down and back for the continuing schwa sound. Especially at the end of a word, Spanish-speaking people tend to leave out the schwa and shorten the L, and Chinese speakers usually leave it off entirely.

One way to avoid the pronunciation difficulty of a final L, as in *call*, is to make a liaison when the next word begins with a vowel. For example, if you want to say *I have to call on my friend*, let the liaison do your work for you; say [I have to kälän my friend].

**L Compared with T, D, and N**

When you learn to pronounce the L correctly, you will feel its similarity with T, D, and N. Actually, the tongue is positioned in the same place in the mouth for all four sounds—behind the teeth. The difference is in how and where the air comes out. (See the drawings in Exercise 5-1.)

**T and D**

The sound of both T and D is produced by allowing a puff of air to come out over the tip of the tongue.

**N**

The sound of N is nasal. The tongue completely blocks all air from leaving through the mouth, allowing it to come out only through the nose. You should be able to feel the edges of your tongue touching your teeth when you say *nnn*.

With L, the tip of the tongue is securely touching the roof of the mouth behind the teeth, but the sides of the tongue are dropped down and tensed. This is where L is different from N. With N, the tongue is relaxed and covers the entire area around the back of the teeth so that no air can come out. With L, the tongue is very tense, and the air comes out around its sides. At the beginning it's helpful to exaggerate the position of the tongue. Look at yourself in the mirror as you stick out the tip of your tongue between your front teeth. With your tongue in this position say *el* several times. Then, try saying it with your tongue behind your teeth. This sounds complicated, but it is easier to do than to describe. You can practice this again later with Exercise 5-3. Our first exercise, however, must focus on differentiating the sounds.

**Exercise 5-1: Sounds Comparing L with T, D, and N**

*CD 3 Track 26*

For this exercise, concentrate on the different ways in which the air comes out of the mouth when producing each sound of L, T, D, and N. Look at the drawings included here, to see the correct position of the tongue. Instructions for reading the groups of words listed next are given after the words.

**T/D Plosive**

A puff of air comes out over the tip of the tongue. The tongue is somewhat tense.
Exercise 5-1; Sounds Comparing L with T, D and N continued  CD 3 Track 26

N  
Nasal  
Air comes out through the nose. The tongue is completely relaxed.

L  
Lateral  
Air flows around the sides of the tongue. The tongue is very tense. The lips are not rounded!

1. At the beginning of a word 
   law  gnaw  taw  daw  
   low  know  toe  dough  
   lee knee  tea  D

2. In the middle of a word  
   belly  Benny  Betty  
   caller  Conner  cotter
Exercise 5-2; Sounds Comparing L with T, D, and N

Repeat after me, first down and then across.

T Look at group 3, B. This exercise has three functions:
1. Practice final els.
2. Review vowels sounds.
3. Review the same words with the staircase.

Note Notice that each word has a tiny schwa after the el. This is to encourage your tongue to be in the right position to give your words a "finished" sound. Exaggerate the final el and its otherwise inaudible schwa.

Y Repeat the last group of words.
Once you are comfortable with your tongue in this position, let it just languish there while you continue vocalizing, which is what a native speaker does.

V Repeat again: fillll, fullll, foollll, feellll, fuellll, furllll.

What Are All Those Extra Sounds I’m Hearing?

I hope that you’re asking a question like this about now. Putting all of those short little words on a staircase will reveal exactly how many extra sounds you have to put in to make it "sound right." For example, if you were to pronounce fail as [fal], the sound is too abbreviated for the American ear—we need to hear the full [fæylə].

Exercise 5-3: Final El with Schwa

Repeat after me.

Exercise 5-4: Many Final Els

This time, simply hold the L sound extra long. Repeat after me.
Exercise 5-5: Liaise the Ls

As you work with the following exercise, here are two points you should keep in mind. When a word ends with an L sound, either (a) connect it to the next word if you can, or (b) add a slight schwa for an exaggerated [ə] sound. For example:

(a) enjoyable as [enjoyəbaləz]
(b) possible [pasəbəla]

**Note** Although (a) is really the way you want to say it, (b) is an interim measure to help you put your tongue in the right place. It would sound strange if you were to always add the slight schwa. Once you can feel where you want your tongue to be, hold it there while you continue to make the L sound. Here are three examples:

**Call**

caw [kä] (incorrect)
call [cälə] (understandable)
call [käləl] (correct)

You can do the same thing to stop an N from becoming an NG.

**Con**

cong [käŋ] (incorrect)
con [känə] (understandable)
con [känən] (correct)

---

Exercise 5-6: Finding L Sounds

Pause the CD, and find and mark all the L sounds in the familiar paragraph below; the first one is marked for you. There are seventeen of them; **five are silent.** Afterwards, check Answer Key, beginning on page 193.

Hello, my name is______________. I'm taking American Accent Training. There's a lot to learn, but I hope to make it as enjoyable as possible. I should pick up on the American intonation pattern pretty easily, although the only way to get it is to practice all of the time. I use the up and down, or peaks and valleys, intonation more than I used to. I've been paying attention to pitch, too. It's like walking down a staircase. I've been talking to a lot of Americans lately, and they tell me that I'm easier to understand. Anyway, I could go on and on, but the important thing is to listen well and sound good. Well, what do you think? Do I?

Exercise 5-7: Silent Ls

Once you've found all the L sounds, the good news is that very often you don't even have to pronounce them. Read the following list of words after me.

1. would could should
2. chalk talk walk
Before reading about Little Lola in the next exercise, I'm going to get off the specific subject of L for the moment to talk about learning in general. Frequently, when you have some difficult task to do, you either avoid it or do it with dread. I'd like you to take the opposite point of view. For this exercise, you're going to completely focus on the thing that's most difficult: leaving your tongue attached to the top of your mouth. And rather than saying, "Oh, here comes an L, I'd better do something with my tongue," just leave your tongue attached all through the entire paragraph!

Remember our clenched-teeth reading of What Must the Sun Above Wonder About?, in Chapter 3? Well, it's time for us to make weird sounds again.

Exercise 5-8: Hold Your Tongue!  
CD 3 Track 33

You and I are going to read with our tongues firmly held at the roofs of our mouths. If you want, hold a clean dime there with the tongue's tip; the dime will let you know when you have dropped your tongue because it will fall out. (Do not use candy: it will hold itself there since wet candy is sticky.) If you prefer, you can read with your tongue between your teeth instead of the standard behind-the-teeth position, and use a small mirror. Remember that with this technique you can actually see your tongue disappear as you hear your L sounds drop off.

It's going to sound ridiculous, of course, and nobody would ever intentionally sound like this, but no one will hear you practice. You don't want to sound like this: llllllllll. Force your tongue to make all the various vowels in spite of its position. Let's go.

Leave a little for Lola!

Exercise 5-9: Little Lola  
CD 3 Track 34

Now that we've done this, instead of L being a hard letter to pronounce, it's the easiest one because the tongue is stuck in that position. Pause the CD to practice the reading on your own, again, with your tongue stuck to the top of your mouth. Read the following paragraph after me with your tongue in the normal position. Use good, strong intonation. Follow my lead as I start dropping h's here.

Little Lola felt left out in life. She told herself that luck controlled her and she truly believed that only by loyally following an exalted leader could she be delivered from her solitude. Unfortunately, she learned a little late that her life was her own to deal with. When she realized it, she was already eligible for Social Security and she had lent her lifelong earnings to a lowlife in Long Beach. She lay on her linoleum and slid along the floor in anguish. A little later, she leapt up and laughed. She no longer longed for a leader to tell her how to live her life. Little Lola was finally all well.

In our next paragraph about Thirty Little Turtles, we deal with another aspect of L, namely consonant clusters. When you have a dl combination, you need to apply what you learned about liaisons and the American T as well as the L. Since the two sounds are located in a similar position in the mouth, you know that they are going to be connected, right? You also know that all of these middle Ts are going to be pronounced D, and that you're going to leave the tongue stuck to the top of your mouth. That may leave you wondering: Where is the air to escape? The L sound is what determines that. For the D, you hold the air in, the same as for a final D, then for the L, you release it around the sides of the tongue. Let's go through the steps before proceeding to our next exercise.

Exercise 5-10: Dull versus ~dle  
CD 3 Track
Repeat after me.

**laid**
Don't pop the final D sound.

**ladle**
Segue gently from the D to the L, with a "small" schwa in-between. Leave your tongue touching behind the teeth and just drop the sides to let the air pass out.

**lay dull**
Here, your tongue can drop between the D and the L.

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### Exercise 5-11: Final L Practice

**CD 3 Track 36**

Repeat the following lists.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>üll</th>
<th>ãll</th>
<th>æwl</th>
<th>ell</th>
<th>ale</th>
<th>oll</th>
<th>eel</th>
<th>dl</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bull</td>
<td>ball</td>
<td>bowel</td>
<td>bell</td>
<td>bale</td>
<td>bowl</td>
<td>Beal</td>
<td>bottle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hall</td>
<td>howl</td>
<td>hell</td>
<td>hail</td>
<td>hole</td>
<td>heel</td>
<td>huddle</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hauled</td>
<td>howled</td>
<td>held</td>
<td>hailed</td>
<td>hold</td>
<td>healed</td>
<td>turtle</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pull</td>
<td>Powell</td>
<td>pell</td>
<td>pail</td>
<td>pole</td>
<td>peel</td>
<td>poodle</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wool</td>
<td>wall</td>
<td>well</td>
<td>whale</td>
<td>whole</td>
<td>wheel</td>
<td>wheedle</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>full</td>
<td>fall</td>
<td>foul</td>
<td>fell</td>
<td>fail</td>
<td>foal</td>
<td>feel</td>
<td>fetal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schultz</td>
<td>shawl</td>
<td>shell</td>
<td>shale</td>
<td>shoal</td>
<td>she'll</td>
<td>shuttle</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tulle</td>
<td>tall</td>
<td>towel</td>
<td>tell</td>
<td>tale</td>
<td>toll</td>
<td>teal</td>
<td>turtle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vault</td>
<td>vowel</td>
<td>veldt</td>
<td>veil</td>
<td>vole</td>
<td>veal</td>
<td>vital</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you'll</td>
<td>yawl</td>
<td>yowl</td>
<td>yell</td>
<td>Yale</td>
<td>yield</td>
<td>yodel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>call</td>
<td>cowl</td>
<td>Kelly</td>
<td>kale</td>
<td>cold</td>
<td>keel</td>
<td>coddle</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To hear the difference between [d³l] and [dœl], contrast the sentences, *Don't lay dull tiles* and *Don't ladle tiles*.

### Exercise 5-12: Thirty Little Turtles In a Bottle of Bottled Water

**CD 3 Track 37**

Repeat the following paragraph, focusing on the consonant + ñl combinations.

**Threede Lidd³ Terdal Zina Bäädala Bädd³ Dwäder**

A bottle of bottled water held 30 little turtles. It didn't matter that each turtle had to rattle a metal ladle in order to get a little bit of noodles, a total turtle delicacy. The problem was that there were many turtle battles for the less than oodles of noodles. The littlest turtles always lost, because every time they thought about grappling with the haggler turtles, their little turtle minds boggled and they only caught a little bit of noodles.

*******

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### Exercise 5-13: Speed-reading

**CD 3 Track »**

We've already practiced strong intonation, so now we'll just pick up the speed. First I'm going to read our familiar paragraph, as fast as I can. Subsequently, you'll practice on your own, and then we'll go over it together, sentence by sentence, to let you practice reading very fast, right after me. By then you will have more or less mastered the idea, so record yourself reading really fast and with very strong intonation. Listen back to see if you sound more fluent. Listen as I read.
Hello, my name is __________. I'm taking American Accent Training. There's a lot to learn, but I hope to make it as enjoyable as possible. I should pick up on the American intonation pattern pretty easily, although the only way to get it is to practice all of the time. I use the up and down, or peaks and valleys, intonation more than I used to. I've been paying attention to pitch, too. It's like walking down a staircase. I've been talking to a lot of Americans lately, and they tell me that I'm easier to understand. Anyway, I could go on and on, but the important thing is to listen well and sound good. Well, what do you think? Do I?

+ Pause the CD and practice speed-reading on your own five times.
V Repeat each sentence after me.
V Record yourself speed-reading with strong intonation.

**Exercise 5-14: Tandem Reading**

The last reading that I'd like you to do is one along with me. Up to now, I have read first and you have repeated in the pause that followed. Now, however, I would like you to read along at exactly the same time that I read, so that we sound like one person reading. Read along with me.

**Voice Quality**

In the next chapter, we'll be working on a sound that is produced deep in the throat—the American R. In Chapter 3, we studied two tense vowels, æ and ä, and the completely neutral schwa, ø. The æ sound has a tendency to sound a little nasal all on its own, and when other vowels are nasalized as well, it puts your whole voice in the wrong place. This is an opportune moment, then, to go into the quality of your voice. In my observation, when people speak a foreign language, they tense up their throat, so their whole communication style sounds forced, pinched, strained, artificial, or nasal. The foreign speaker's voice is also generally higher pitched than would be considered desirable. To practice the difference between high pitch and lower pitch, work on uh-oh. In addition to pitch, this exercise will let you discover the difference between a tinny, nasal tone and a deep, rich, mellifluous, basso profundo tone. The tilda (~) is used to indicate a nasal sound.

**Exercise 5-15: Shifting Your Voice Position**

Pinch your nose closed and say æ. You should feel a high vibration in your nasal passages, as well as in your fingers. Now, continue holding your nose, and completely relax your throat—allow an ah sound to flow from deep in your chest. There should be no vibration in your nose at all. Go back and forth several times. Next, we practice flowing from one position to the other, so you can feel exactly when it changes from a nasal sound to a deep, rich schwa. Remember how it was imitating a man's voice when you were little? Do that, pinch your nose, and repeat after me.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nose</th>
<th>Throat</th>
<th>Chest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ææ</td>
<td>ææ</td>
<td>ææ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ææ</td>
<td>ææ</td>
<td>ææ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here, we will practice the same progression, but we will stick with the same sound, æ.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nose</th>
<th>Throat</th>
<th>Chest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ææ</td>
<td>ææ</td>
<td>ææ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As you will see in Chapter 12, there are three nasal consonants, m, n, and ng. These have non-nasal counterparts, mb, nd, ng. We're going to practice totally denasalizing your voice for a moment, which means turning the nasals into the other consonants. We'll read the same sentence three times. The first will be quite nasal. The second will sound like you have a cold. The third will have appropriate nasal consonants, but denasalized vowels. Repeat after me.

**Nasal**

Māry might need money. Berry bite deed buddy. Mary might need money.

Now that you have moved your voice out of your nose and down into your diaphragm, let's apply it.

A Lät of Läng, Hät Wälks in the Gärden. John was not sorry when the boss called off the walks.
in the garden. Obviously, to him, it was awfully hot, and the walks were far too long. He had not thought that walking would have caught on the way it did, and he fought the policy from the onset.

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Chapter 6. The American R

American English, today—although continually changing—is made up of the sounds of the various people who have come to settle here from many countries. All of them have put in their linguistic two cents, the end result being that the easiest way to pronounce things has almost always been adopted as the most American. R is an exception, along with L and the sounds of [æ] and [th], and is one of the most troublesome sounds for people to acquire. Not only is it difficult for adults learning the language, but also for American children, who pronounce it like a W or skip over it altogether and only pick it up after they've learned all the other sounds.

The Invisible R

The trouble is that you can't see an R from the outside. With a P, for instance, you can see when people put their lips together and pop out a little puff. With R, however, everything takes place behind almost closed lips—back down in the throat—and who can tell what the tongue is doing? It is really hard to tell what's going on if, when someone speaks, you can only hear the err sound, especially if you're used to making an R by touching your tongue to the ridge behind your teeth. So, what should your tongue be doing?

This technique can help you visualize the correct tongue movements in pronouncing the R. (1) Hold your hand out flat, with the palm up, slightly dropping the back end of it. That's basically the position your tongue is in when you say ah [ä], so your flat hand will represent this sound. (2) Now, to go from ah to the er, take your fingers and curl them up slightly. Again, your tongue should follow that action. The sides of your tongue should come up a bit. When the air passes over that hollow in the middle of your tongue (look at the palm of your hand), that's what creates the er sound.

Try it using both your hand and tongue simultaneously. Say ah, with your throat open (and your hand flat), then curl your tongue up (and your fingers) and say err. The tip of the tongue should be aimed at a middle position in the mouth, but never touching, and your throat should relax and expand. R, like L, has a slight schwa in it. This is what pulls the er down so far back in your throat.

Another way to get to er is to go from the ee sound and slide your tongue straight back like a collapsing accordion, letting the two sides of your tongue touch the insides of your molars; the tip of the tongue, however, again, should not touch anything. Now from ee, pull your tongue back toward the center of your throat, and pull the sound down into your throat:

Since the R is produced in the throat, let's link it with other throat sounds.

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Exercise 6-1: R Location Practice

Repeat after me.

[g], [gr], greek, green, grass, grow, crow, core, cork, coral, cur, curl, girl, gorilla, her, erg, error, mirror, were, war, gore, wrong, wringer, church, pearl

While you're perfecting your R, you might want to rush to it, and in doing so, neglect the preceding vowel. There are certain vowels that you can neglect, but there are others that demand their full sound. We're going to practice the ones that require you to keep that clear sound before you add an R.