

English for
Academic Study

New edition



Pronunciation

Study Book

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Book map

	Topics	Objectives
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vowel sounds: /æ/, /e/, /ɪ/, /ɒ:/, /ɜ:/, /i:/ Syllables and word stress Weak forms in function words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learn which phonemic symbols represent certain vowel sounds Practise recognizing and producing these vowel sounds Learn about the concepts of the syllable and word stress Practise producing words with the correct word stress; Practise recognizing weak forms of function words when listening
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vowel sounds: /ɒ/, /ʌ/, /ə/, /ʊ/, /ɔ:/, /u:/ Unstressed syllables and word stress patterns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learn which phonemic symbols represent the other vowel sounds Practise recognizing and producing these vowel sounds Learn more about which syllable is stressed in some types of word
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Voiced and unvoiced consonants Consonant sounds: /θ/, /ð/, /t/, /s/ Sentence stress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learn about the pronunciation of voiced and unvoiced consonants Practise recognizing and producing these sounds Learn to identify stressed words in sentences Practise using sentence stress to highlight important information
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consonant sounds: /ʒ/, /v/, /j/, /ʃ/, /tʃ/, /dʒ/ Word stress on two-syllable words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learn phonemic symbols representing consonant sounds Practise recognizing and producing these consonant sounds Learn where to place the stress in words with two syllables
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diphthongs: /aɪ/, /əʊ/, /eɪ/ Sounds in connected speech: linking, insertion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learn which phonemic symbols represent certain diphthongs Practise recognizing and producing diphthongs Learn how the pronunciation of words is affected by their context in connected speech
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consonant clusters: at the beginning and in the middle of words Sounds in connected speech: disappearing sounds, contractions Tone units 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learn how to pronounce groups of consonants (consonant clusters) at the beginning and in the middle of words Learn how to divide up connected speech into tone units

	Topics	Objectives
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Diphthongs: /aʊ/, /eə/, /ɪə/, /ɔɪ/ ■ Sentence stress and tone units 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Learn which phonemic symbols represent other diphthongs ■ Practise recognizing and producing these diphthongs ■ Have more practice identifying sentence stress and tone units
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Consonant clusters: at the end of words and across two words ■ Intonation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Learn how to pronounce consonant clusters at the end of words and across two words ■ Learn how intonation is used to organize and emphasize information

Vowel sounds 1, word stress and weak forms

In this unit you will:

- learn which **phonemic symbols** represent certain vowel sounds
- practise recognizing and producing these vowel sounds
- learn about the concepts of the syllable and **word stress**
- practise producing words with the correct word stress
- practise recognizing **weak forms** of **function words** when listening

There are 12 vowel sounds in English. In this unit, you will focus on the six sounds shaded in the table. You will also look at how vowels are used in syllables and are affected by word stress patterns.

/æ/	/e/	/ɪ/	/ɒ/	/ʌ/	/ə/
pl <u>a</u> n	e <u>n</u> d	bi <u>g</u>	jo <u>b</u>	su <u>m</u>	the
/ʊ/	/ɑː/	/ɜː/	/ɪː/	/ɔː/	/uː/
goo <u>d</u>	ca <u>r</u>	he <u>r</u>	fee	la <u>w</u>	too

Task 1 Vowel sounds

1.1 ► **CD1: 1** Listen to the difference in the pronunciation of these pairs of words. In each of them the vowel sound is different.

1. /ɪ/ /iː/
 fit feet
 dip deep
 hit heat

2. /æ/ /e/
 mass mess
 band bend
 had head

3. /æ/ /ɑː/
 hat heart
 match march
 pack park

- | | |
|--------|---------|
| 4. /e/ | /ɜ:/ |
| ten | turn |
| head | heard |
| went | weren't |

Listen again and repeat the words.

- 1.2 ► **CD1: 2** You will hear some of the words from Ex 1.1. Listen and circle the **phonemic transcription** that matches the pronunciation of the word you hear.

- | | | | |
|----------|---------------|------------|---------|
| 1. /hed/ | <u>/hɜ:d/</u> | 6. /went/ | /wɜ:nt/ |
| 2. /pæk/ | /pɑ:k/ | 7. /dɪp/ | /di:p/ |
| 3. /ten/ | /tɜ:n/ | 8. /hæd/ | /hed/ |
| 4. /mæs/ | /mes/ | 9. /hæt/ | /hɑ:t/ |
| 5. /hɪt/ | /hi:t/ | 10. /bænd/ | /bend/ |

Note: You can check all your answers at the back of the book on pages 102–112.

- 1.3 ► **CD1: 3** Listen to six more words and do activities a and b.

- a. Listen and circle the phonemic transcription that matches the pronunciation of the word you hear.

- | | | | |
|-----------|-------|--------|-------|
| 1. /sɪt/ | _____ | /sɪt/ | _____ |
| 2. /mæt/ | _____ | /met/ | _____ |
| 3. /hɜ:t/ | _____ | /hɑ:t/ | _____ |
| 4. /fɑ:/ | _____ | /fɜ:/ | _____ |
| 5. /lɪv/ | _____ | /li:v/ | _____ |
| 6. /sæd/ | _____ | /sed/ | _____ |

- b. Write the words, with the correct spelling, in the spaces next to the phonemic transcriptions.

Study tip

Learners' dictionaries include phonemic transcriptions of all headwords. Use these to check the pronunciation of vocabulary you are uncertain about. It is also useful to remind yourself of the pronunciation of new words by transcribing them in your own notebook.

Task 2 Syllables

For pronunciation purposes, words can be divided into syllables. A syllable contains only one vowel sound, which may be preceded or followed by consonants. Remember that some consonants can also be pronounced as vowels; for example, *heavy* is a two-syllable word, because the *-y* is pronounced as a vowel.

2.1 ► CD1: 4 Listen to these examples of one, two, three or more syllable words.

1. one-syllable words

aid	quote	source	fee
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2. two-syllable words

cred•it	ac•cept	heav•y	e•quate
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3. three or more syllable words.

pol•i•cy	sim•i•lar	en•vi•ron•ment	i•den•ti•fy	in•di•vid•ual
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2.2 ► CD1: 5 Listen to these words and decide how many syllables there are in each of them.

	Syllables		Syllables
1. specific	_____	6. consequent	_____
2. alter	_____	7. framework	_____
3. resource	_____	8. significant	_____
4. preliminary	_____	9. adapt	_____
5. available	_____	10. differentiate	_____

► Pronunciation note ◀

There is some variation in the way people pronounce words and whether they 'drop' syllables in some multi-syllable words. For example, some people pronounce *preliminary* with four syllables /prɪ'lɪmɪnəri/, while other people pronounce it with five syllables /prɪ'lɪmɪnəri/.

Task 3 Word stress patterns

In words of more than one syllable, one syllable is emphasized more than others; it has a stronger sound than other syllables and is known as a *stressed* syllable. If you pronounce a word with the main stress on the wrong syllable, you will sometimes be misunderstood.

Study tip

In a dictionary, the stressed syllable of a word or phrase is indicated by an apostrophe (') – this is inserted before the stressed syllable.

3.1 ► **CD1: 6 Listen for the stressed syllable in these words.**

The stressed syllable is marked with (ˈ).

'pɒlɪˌsiː	'sɪmɪˌlɑː	enˌviːrənˌment	iˌdenˌtiːfɪ	ɪnˌdiːvɪdˌʊəl
əˈsʊm	'mæɪjə	oʊvəˌsiːz	ɒpəˌreɪʃən	riːnˌfɔːs

3.2 ► **CD1: 7 Listen again to the words from Ex 2.2. Mark the stressed syllables as shown in the example.**

Example: 1. speˈsɪfɪk

3.3 ► **CD1: 8 Listen to the following sentences and mark the stressed syllable on the underlined words. The first one has been done for you.**

1. The protection of children is the main purpose of this legislation.
2. The samples were analyzed in the lab.
3. Chemical analysis of the rock provided surprising results.
4. The aim of the study was to identify the factors contributing to domestic violence.
5. Periodicals are kept in an area on the ground floor.
6. The administration of these drugs needs to be closely monitored.
7. In percentage terms, this is not a significant increase.
8. This is the standard procedure for limiting the spread of the disease.

Task 4

Strong and weak forms of function words

4.1 ► **CD1: 9 Listen to these pairs of sentences. What is the difference in the pronunciation of the underlined words in each pair? How can you explain this difference?**

1. a. Interest rates are rising.
b. No, that's not true. We are doing something about it.
2. a. Would you like some tea?
b. Most scientists are convinced about global warming, but some are not.
3. a. Where's he coming from?
b. Results differed from one region to another.
4. a. Is that your pen or mine?
b. Can I borrow your dictionary?

► Pronunciation note ◀

Ex 4.1 shows that the pronunciation of some **function words** is not always the same. Function words include conjunctions, pronouns, prepositions, articles, determiners and auxiliary verbs. They do not appear to have much meaning, but they have a grammatical function in the sentence.

Generally, a function word is unstressed and it very often uses the sound /ə/ instead of the full vowel. This reduced vowel sound is known as a **weak form**.

► Pronunciation note ◀

In the sentences in Ex 4.1, you will see that function words are stressed when they add emphasis, e.g., *No, that's not true. We are doing something about it.* This is also done to indicate a contrast, e.g., *Most scientists are convinced ..., but some are not.* You may also notice that function words at the end of sentences or questions have a strong form.

The following table contains some examples of these function words and their different pronunciations.

	Stressed/Strong	Unstressed/Weak
but	/bʌt/	/bət/
than	/ðæn/	/ðən/
them	/ðem/	/ðəm/
you	/ju:/	/jə/
at	/æt/	/ət/
for	/fɔ:/	/fə/
the	/ði:/	/ðə/
some	/sʌm/	/səm/
has	/hæz/	/həz/, /əz/
does	/dʌz/	/dəz/
can	/kæn/	/kən/

4.2 ► **CD1: 10** Listen to these sentences and write in the missing words, which are all weak forms of function words.

- One criticism levelled _____ the board was their lack _____ financial control.
- This issue was discussed _____ some length during the conference.
- These points should _____ been made more effectively.
- How do we account _____ this change in behaviour?
- This might do more harm _____ good.
- This kind of restructuring is usually regarded by employees _____ a change _____ the worse.
- This problem _____ easily be solved _____ minimal cost.
- Trade sanctions will be imposed with effect _____ the 1st of December.

4.3 ► **CD1: 11** Study the following introduction from a lecture on globalization. Listen and write in the missing words. They are all weak forms of function words.

Well, as Ros said, I'm going to talk about globalization today, which is one _____ the catchphrases, or buzzwords, if you like, _____ the late 20th _____ early 21st centuries. It's constantly in _____ news. It's used by politicians, by people in _____ media, by businesspeople, and when they're referring _____ globalization they talk about things like _____ way we _____ communicate almost instantaneously nowadays with people on the other side _____ world by e-mail or by television. They're also talking about, _____ example, the way that _____ fall in share prices in one part _____ world, _____ example, in the Far East, _____ have an immediate impact on the stock markets on the other side _____ world, like in London or Frankfurt.

4.4 ► **CD1: 12** Listen to these phrases and repeat them. Can you identify and produce the weak forms of the function words?

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. past and present figures | 6. too good to be true |
| 2. more or less fifty | 7. needless to say |
| 3. they were selected at random | 8. it's gone from bad to worse |
| 4. it was far from clear | 9. we'll have to wait and see |
| 5. the results of the trials | 10. we had some problems |

Unit summary

In this unit, you have learnt six English vowel sounds: /ɪ/, /i:/, /e/, /ɜ:/, /æ/, /ɑ:/, and practised their pronunciation. You have also become more aware of syllables and word stress, and practised listening for weak forms of function words.

1

Say the words in the box aloud. Decide how many syllables there are in each word and write them in the correct spaces below.

globalization	century	constantly	politician
refer	media	financial	market

- a. two-syllable words: _____
- b. three-syllable words: _____
- c. four-syllable words: _____
- d. five-syllable words: _____

2

▶ **CD1: 13** Now listen to the words from Ex 1 and mark the stressed syllable in each word.

3

Which of the stressed syllables you marked in Ex 2 have the following vowel sounds?

Note: Only six of the words contain these sounds.

/ɪ/ /i:/ /e/ /ɜ:/ /æ/ /ɑ:/

4

Read the following sentences. Which words would usually be pronounced using a weak form?

- a. Globalization is one of the buzzwords of the 21st century.
- b. It's constantly in the news and is often referred to by politicians and the media.
- c. A fall in share prices in one part of the world can have an impact on the stock markets on the other side of the world.

5

Think about these questions.

- a. Why do you think learners confuse some of the vowel sounds you have practised in this unit?
- b. Why is it useful to make a note of the stressed syllable when you learn a new multi-syllable word?
- c. How can you check the correct stress and number of syllables in words that you learn in English?

For web resources relevant to this book, see:

www.englishforacademicstudy.com

This weblink will provide you with further practice in areas of pronunciation such as the sounds, stress and intonation patterns of English.