

English Pronunciation Cheat Sheet

Sound more natural with these key patterns

COMMONLY MISPRONOUNCED WORDS

comfortable	KUM-fter-bul <i>not COM-for-TAY-bul</i>
vegetable	VEJ-tuh-bul <i>not VEJ-eh-TAY-bul</i>
Wednesday	WENZ-day <i>not WED-nez-day</i>
February	FEB-yoo-air-ee <i>not FEB-roo-air-ee</i>
library	LY-brer-ee <i>not LY-bear-ee</i>
entrepreneur	on-truh-pruh-NUR <i>not on-truh-preh-NOOR</i>
colleague	KOL-eeg <i>not kol-EE-gyoo</i>
schedule	SKED-yool (US) / SHED-yool (UK)
receipt	rih-SEET <i>the P is silent</i>
hierarchy	HY-uh-rahr-kee <i>not HY-ar-kee</i>
specifically	spuh-SIF-ik-lee <i>not puh-SIFF-ik-lee</i>
miscellaneous	miss-uh-LAY-nee-us <i>not miss-SELL-ay-nus</i>
determine	dih-TUR-min <i>not DEE-ter-mine</i>
genuine	JEN-yoo-in <i>not jen-yoo-EEN</i>
pronunciation	pruh-NUN-see-AY-shun <i>not pro-NOUN-see-AY-shun</i>

SILENT LETTER PATTERNS

Silent K	knife, know, knee, knock, knit
Silent P	psychology, pneumonia, receipt, pseudonym
Silent B	doubt, debt, subtle, climb, lamb, thumb
Silent W	write, wrong, wrap, wrist, answer, sword
Silent G	sign, design, foreign, gnaw, champagne
Silent H	hour, honest, honor, ghost, rhythm
Silent L	walk, talk, half, calm, salmon, could
Silent T	listen, castle, often, whistle, mortgage

MINIMAL PAIRS

Words that differ by only one sound. Practice hearing the difference.

ship / sheep	/I/ vs /i:/ <i>short vs long vowel</i>
bit / beat	/I/ vs /i:/ <i>same distinction, different words</i>
cat / cut	/ae/ vs /uh/ <i>front vs central vowel</i>
bed / bad	/e/ vs /ae/ <i>mid vs low front vowel</i>
light / right	/I/ vs /r/ <i>key distinction for many learners</i>
think / sink	/th/ vs /s/ <i>tongue between teeth vs behind</i>
vest / best	/v/ vs /b/ <i>lip-teeth vs both lips</i>
fan / van	/f/ vs /v/ <i>voiceless vs voiced</i>
pull / pool	/U/ vs /u:/ <i>short vs long back vowel</i>
heart / hurt	/ah/ vs /er/ <i>open vs r-colored vowel</i>

WORD STRESS RULES

Two-syllable nouns: stress the FIRST syllable.

RE-cord, PRE-sent, OB-ject

Two-syllable verbs: stress the SECOND syllable.

re-CORD, pre-SENT, ob-JECT

Words ending in -tion/-sion: stress the syllable before.

in-for-MA-tion, de-Cl-sion

Words ending in -ic: stress the syllable before.

dra-MA-tic, op-ti-MIS-tic

Compound nouns: stress the FIRST word.

BOOK-store, AIR-port, TOOTH-paste