

ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION IN USE

**Self-study and
classroom use
Second edition**

Intermediate

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1

From zero to hero

Playing with the sounds of English

A

It is common for speakers to play with the sounds of the language. Read these sentences from newspapers and magazines. Notice that the blue phrases contain words which sound similar. They contain rhymes: the final vowel or vowel + consonant sounds are the same or similar-sounding, e.g. *sign* and *time*.

Appearance is very important in the fashion business. According to company director Martha Friedl, **'You have to dress for success.'**

Fernando goes from **zero to hero** after scoring a last-minute goal in the European championship.

'On this island, nothing happens in a hurry,' says Jamie, 'You just have to relax and **go with the flow**.'

In the age of the text message, it is perhaps a **sign of the times** that many teenagers can no longer write with a pen.



B

A1 Listen to this poem. Notice the pronunciation of the blue words.

It's very strange, but did you know
Shoe will never rhyme with **toe**?
 And **foot** will never sound like **boot**;
Boot's like **suit** and **flute** and **fruit**.
Foot's like **put** and **feet**'s like **seat**;
Great's like **eight** but not like **eat**.

Work is not pronounced like **fork**.
Fork's like **walk** and also **talk**.
 Why is **beard** not like **heard**?
 Why does **bird** rhyme with **word**?
 This is what I've sometimes found:
 Spelling's often not like sound.

Spelling is not always a good guide to pronunciation. Listen to these groups of words from the poem. Notice that A does *not* rhyme with B even though the spelling of the end of the word is the same. B rhymes with C even though the spelling of the end of the word is different. The phonemic symbols make this clear.

A
 shoe /ʃuː/
 foot /fʊt/
 great /ɡreɪt/
 work /wɜːk/
 beard /bɪəd/

B
 toe /təʊ/
 boot /buːt/
 seat /siːt/
 fork /fɔːk/
 heard /hɜːd/

C
 know /nəʊ/
 suit /suːt/
 feet /fiːt/
 walk /wɔːk/
 bird /bɜːd/



Note: The rhyming words above may not rhyme in all accents. For more on accent variation, see Units 56–60.

Exercises

1.1 Underline the phrases containing rhymes in these sentences from newspapers and magazines.

EXAMPLE We bring you the latest news and views from the sporting world.

1 Fancy flying to the Mediterranean for a weekend of fun in the sun?

2 An extremely low tide has left many boats high and dry on the beach.

3 'You don't get to the top by doing nothing,' says manager Bob Clarke, 'Hard work is the name of the game.'

4 'I'm a man with a plan,' Mitchell tells Democratic Party conference.

5 Back in the 1970s, school classrooms were all chalk and talk. Nowadays, kids expect their lessons to be entertaining.

6 Motorists have been advised to steer clear of Junction 15 during the roadworks.

1.2 Read the poem below and write the words from the box in the gaps. Listen, check and repeat.

ðə doll go goal hour magazine rude sounds slower wood

It's very strange, but did you know
ðə..... will never sound like ¹.....?
 Ocean doesn't rhyme with *clean*;
Clean's like *green* and ².....
³..... will never rhyme with *roll*;
Roll's like *hole* and also ⁴.....

⁵..... doesn't rhyme with *flower*
 And *four* will never sound like ⁶.....
Good's like ⁷..... but not like *food*,
Would's like *could* but not like ⁸.....
 You know that *wounds* are not like *pounds*
 'Cause letters aren't the same as ⁹.....

1.3 Which word does not rhyme with the others? Underline it. The phonemic symbols will help you. Listen and check your answers.

EXAMPLE hair here there where /heə hɪə ðeə weə/

- 1 car star far war /kɑ: stɑ: fɑ: wɑ: /
- 2 slow cow go know /sləʊ caʊ gəʊ nəʊ /
- 3 nose grows does goes /nəʊz grəʊz dɔ:z gəʊz /
- 4 clear near bear hear /klɪə nɪə beə hɪə /
- 5 really early nearly clearly /rɪəlɪ ɜ:li nɪəlɪ klɪəlɪ /
- 6 close choose lose shoes /kləʊz tʃu:z lu:z ʃu:z /
- 7 above glove love move /ə'ʌv glʌv lʌv mu:v /

1.4 Find groups of rhyming words or letter names in these pictures. There are three words or letter names in each group.

EXAMPLE boot - suit - fruit

.....



2

Plane, plan

The vowel sounds /eɪ/ and /æ/

A

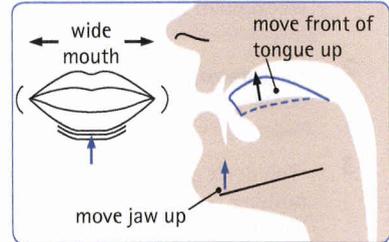
When you say the letters of the alphabet, A has the long vowel sound /eɪ/. You hear this sound in the word *plane*. But the letter A is also pronounced as the short vowel sound /æ/, as in the word *plan*.

A4 Listen to the sound /eɪ/ on its own. Look at the mouth diagram to see how to make this long vowel sound.

Listen to the target sound /eɪ/ in the words below and compare it with the words on each side.

target /eɪ/

meat	mate	met
come	came	calm
white	wait	wet
buy	bay	boy



Listen and repeat these examples of the target sound.

play played plate
grey grade great
aim age eight

longer ← → shorter



The plane was delayed so we waited and played.

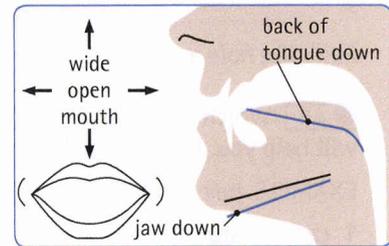
B

A5 Listen to the sound /æ/. Look at the mouth diagram to see how to make this short vowel sound.

Listen to the target sound /æ/ in the words and compare it with the words on each side.

target /æ/

mud	mad	made
sing	sang	sung
pen	pan	pain
hot	hat	heart



Listen and repeat these examples of the target sound.

bank bag back
hand cash catch
ham has hat

longer ← → shorter

Accent variation

SE

 /

NE

 : /ɑː/ or /æ/ ⇒ Unit 57.

Accent variation

SE

 /

NZ

 : /æ/ or /e/ ⇒ Unit 57.



A man in a black hat with a bag of cash in his hand

C

Spelling

	frequently
/eɪ/	A-E (<i>mate</i>), AY (<i>say</i>), EY (<i>grey</i>), EI (<i>eight</i>), AI (<i>wait</i>), EA (<i>great</i>)
/æ/	A (<i>hat</i>)

Exercises

2.1 Write the words for these things in the correct part of the table.

words with /eɪ/	words with /æ/
cake	apple



2.2 **A6** Look at the blue words or syllables in the dialogue. Do they contain 1 /eɪ/ or 2 /æ/? Write 1 or 2 in the gap after each word. Then listen and check your answers.

Kate: What are your **plans** ...2... for the holiday, ...1... **Jack?**

Jack: I'm off to **Spain** with **Jane**

Kate: Sounds **great!** How are you getting there?

Jack: **Train** to **Manchester** and the **plane** to Malaga.
And you? What are you doing?

Kate: No **plans** I'm a bit short of **cash** **actually**, so I'm **staying** here.

Jack: Oh. In **that** **case**, **Kate**, can you do me a **favour?**

Kate: What?

Jack: Can you go to my **flat** and feed the **cat** ?
It's just for a few **days**

Kate: When do you get **back**

Jack: I'm **back** on **Saturday**

Kate: Well, **okay** then.



Follow-up: Play the recording again. Pause and repeat after each line.

2.3 **A6 (cont.)** Listen and underline the word you hear. If you find any of these difficult, go to Section E4 *Sound pairs* for further practice.

- 1 Man or men? Did you see the **man / men**? (⇒ Sound pair 1)
- 2 Cap or cup? Have you seen my **cap / cup**? (⇒ Sound pair 2)
- 3 Hat or heart? She put her hand on her **hat / heart**. (⇒ Sound pair 3)
- 4 Pain or pen? I've got a **pain / pen** in my hand. (⇒ Sound pair 4)
- 5 Stay or stare? There's no reason to **stay / stare**. (⇒ Sound pair 5)

Follow-up: Record yourself saying the sentences in 2.3, choosing one of the two words each time. Make a note of which words you say. Then listen to your recording in about two weeks. Is it clear which words you said?

3

Back, pack

The consonant sounds /b/ and /p/

A

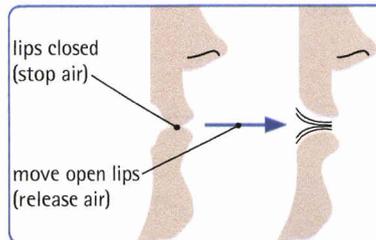
A7 When you say the alphabet, the letters B and P have the sounds /bi:/ and /pi:/. In words, they have the consonant sounds /b/ and /p/.

Look at the mouth diagram to see how to make these sounds.

Listen to the sounds /b/ and /p/.

The mouth is in the same position for both sounds, but:

- in /b/ there is voice from the throat, whereas in /p/ there is no voice from the throat
- when /p/ is at the start of a word, there is a small explosion of air when the lips open. With /b/ this does not happen.



B

A8 Now listen to the sound /b/ on its own.

Listen to the target sound /b/ in the words below and compare it with the words on each side.

target /b/

pack	back	pack
cap	cab	cap
very	berry	very
covered	cupboard	covered

Listen and repeat these examples of the target sound.

bought	bike	broke
rubber	about	able
job	web	tube



The boy bought a blue bike but his new blue bike broke.

C

A9 Listen to the sound /p/ on its own.

Listen to the target sound /p/ in the words below and compare it with the words on each side.

target /p/

bay	pay	bay
lab	lap	lab
full	pull	full
coffee	copy	coffee

Listen and repeat these examples of the target sound.

post	park	price
open	happen	spring
shop	help	jump



Penny went to post a parcel and paid a pound to park.

D

Spelling

	frequently	notes
/b/	B (<i>job</i>), BB (<i>rubber</i>)	B is sometimes silent (<i>comb</i>).
/p/	P (<i>open</i>), PP (<i>happen</i>)	PH is pronounced /f/ (<i>phone</i>). P is sometimes silent (<i>psychology</i>).

Exercises

3.1 **A10** Listen and read this dialogue. What are the three misunderstandings? Complete the table.

Mel: Oh, hello, Stef – back from the shops already? Is it still raining?
Stef: Yeah, it's pouring!
Mel: Boring? If you're bored, get yourself a hobby!
Stef: No, I said pouring, with a P.
Mel: Oh, I see, pouring, right. Was there anything in the post box today?
Stef: Nothing interesting, just some bills.
Mel: Oh? I wonder who put pills in the post box!
 Did you remember to buy a gift for Tom's birthday?
Stef: Yes. Now I just need to wrap it.
Mel: Rabbit? What do you need a rabbit for?



Stef says:	Mel hears:
1 pouring.....	boring.....
2
3 it

Follow-up: Play the recording again. Pause and repeat after each line.

3.2 **A11** Read the joke and write the letter *b* or *p* in each gap. Listen and check your answers. Then practise saying the joke.

A baboon goes into a pet shop to buy peanuts and ...b...ananas.
 'Sorry,' says the sho...p...keeper, 'This is a pet shop – we only sell food forets.'
 'OK,' says the baboon, 'I'd like touy food for my pet rabbit.'
 'What does your pet rabbit eat?' asks the shopkeeper.
 '.....eanuts and bananas,' re.....lies theaboon.



3.3 **A12** Listen. In one word in each group, the B or P is not pronounced. Underline the word.

EXAMPLE	double	<u>doubt</u>	Dublin
1	lamb	label	lab
2	crab	robbed	climb
3	cup	cupboard	copy
4	photo	potato	paper
5	recipe	repeat	receipt
6	possibly	psychology	special
7	Cambridge	combine	combing

3.4 **A13** Listen and tick (✓) the sentence you hear, A or B. If you find any of these difficult, go to Section E4 *Sound pairs* for further practice.

A	B	
1 There's a bear in that tree.	There's a pear in that tree.	(⇒ Sound pair 28)
2 He had the beach to himself.	He had the peach to himself.	(⇒ Sound pair 28)
3 They burned it.	They've earned it.	(⇒ Sound pair 29)
4 Say 'boil'.	Save oil.	(⇒ Sound pair 29)
5 This is a nicer pear.	This is a nice affair.	(⇒ Sound pair 30)
6 Would you like a copy?	Would you like a coffee?	(⇒ Sound pair 30)

Follow-up: Record yourself saying the sentences in 3.4, choosing sentence A or B. Make a note of which sentence you say. Then listen to your recording in about two weeks. Is it clear which sentences you said?