



Sounds Practice

Train your ears. Tweak your tongue.

These word pairs differ by just one sound—but that one sound can change everything. Practice aloud.

FOCUS SOUNDS: /ʃ/ vs /s/:

Practice Pairs:

- sheep – seep
- shore – sore
- ship – sip
- shell – sell
- shock – sock

Model Phrase: “She sells sea-shells on the sea shore.”

TIP:

- /ʃ/: Lips rounded, air flows through a narrow channel
- /s/: Lips relaxed, sound is sharper and hiss-like

Here’s an example with context and why it works:

Context: *You’re following up after a team meeting where no decision was made.*

Example: *“Since we didn’t finalize the action plan yesterday, I’ve taken the liberty of outlining three quick next steps. Here’s a draft—feel free to build on it.”*

Why it works: *It shows leadership without overstepping. “I’ve taken the liberty...” softens the assertiveness just enough.*

FOCUS SOUNDS /t/ vs /d/:

Practice Pairs:

- tin – din
- tick – dick
- taught – dot
- tear – dare
- try – dry



Model Phrase: “Try the *tin* on the *top* shelf—*don’t drop it.*”

◆ Tongue Tip Reminder

- Lightly tap the ridge behind your upper front teeth.
- Do *not* curl the tongue upward into the palate (common in Indian languages).
- The English /t/ and /d/ are produced with a forward, flat tongue position—short, clean, and unobstructed.

FOCUS SOUND: /f/ vs /p^h/

Practice Pairs:

- fan – pan
- fine – pine
- face – pace
- fill – pill
- fail – pale

Model Phrase: “She packed the *fan* with the *pan* in the same bag.”

Pronunciation Tips

- ❖ /f/: Bite your bottom lip lightly with your top front teeth and blow air out. No vocal cord vibration.
- ❖ /p^h/ (aspirated /p/): Close your lips fully and release with a small burst of air.
- ❖ Avoid saying “phan” when you mean “fan”—the difference matters in English.

FOCUS SOUND: /ɪ/ vs /i:/

/ɪ/ – short, relaxed, as in *bit* /i:/ – long, tense, as in *beat*

Practice Pairs:

- ship – sheep
- bit – beat
- live – leave
- sit – seat
- fill – feel



The English Workshop

Model Phrase: “She *sat* on the *seat* and read the *bit* about the *beet* harvest.”

◆ Pronunciation Tips

- ❖ /ɪ/: Mouth slightly open, lips relaxed, tongue in mid-high position.
- ❖ /i:/: Lips slightly stretched, tongue tense and high near the roof of the mouth.
- ❖ TIP: Try holding the /i:/ sound for a moment longer—*sheeeeeep* vs *ship*.

NEED PERSONALISED ATTENTION?

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