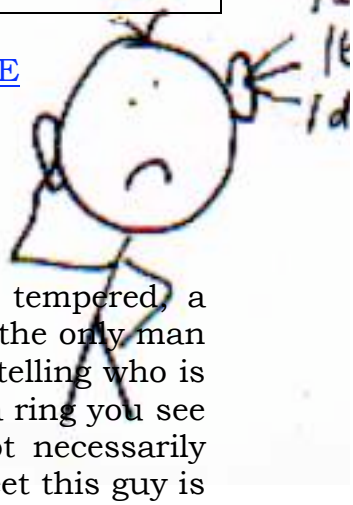
Pronounciation Work-Out!



Introduction - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iPyrFTE3C6E

ACTIVITY ONE : Difficult sounds to pronounce

Read out the following text :

Carl King. He is every woman's hero.He is handsome, even tempered, a sharp dresser and a smooth talker ! Unfortunately though he's the only man in the office who is taken. This thing is that there is no way of telling who is single and who isn't these days. Not every married man wears a ring you see and people talk about work, sports or current affairs but not necessarily about their personal life. Everyone's first thought when they meet this guy is « is he single ». Every girl's secret dream in the office is to be caught under the mistletoe with him at the office Christmas party. However hard they try it just never seems to happen. Because mister perfect is very much in love, with his wife.

In this text there were a lot of words with an 'h' or a 'th' or an 's' at the end. French people often find these sounds difficult to pronounce. How did you do ?

ACTIVITY TWO : Pronunciation of the past tense.

Say these words in the simple past tense:

Laugh	**Walk**	**Enjoy**	**Marry**
Need	**Save**	**Kiss**	**Decide**

Did you pronounce them correctly ?

You may have noticed that the "-ed" ending in the past tense adds another syllable to the word with some verbs.

(For example : It ends at twelve, it ended at twelve).

However we don't add another syllable to the past tense of every verb. For example, "worked" is only pronounced with one syllable (as if we were adding a 't' sound).

A second syllable with the "-ed" ending is only necessary when the last sound (not the last letter) is a /t/ or /d/, for example, "wanted," "decided," "needed," or "invited." The last sound for the words "want" and "invite" is /t/. The last sound for the words "decide" and "need" is /d/. These two sounds require that the added -ed ending be pronounced with an additional syllable.



Note – There there are some exceptions : When we use the past participle as an adjective with we pronounce the additional syllable. Some common examples are : aged, blessed, crooked, dogged, learned, ragged, and wretched.

So how do you know when to pronounced the second syllable ?
Well through practice, but you can also use this rule : Voiced and Unvoiced Sounds :

The "-ed" ending of unvoiced sounds takes on a /t/.
Voiced sounds take on a /d/.
Put two or three fingers gently against your throat and then make a sound. If you feel a vibration, the sound is voiced.If not it is unvoiced.

Examples of /t/ Endings for Past Tense Verbs

"laugh" becomes "laughed" and is pronounced "laugh/t/" (one syllable)

"walk" becomes "walked" and is pronounced "walk/t/" (one syllable)

"kiss" becomes "kissed" and is pronounced "kiss/t/" (one syllable)

"finish" becomes "finished" and is pronounced "finish/t/" (two syllables)

Examples of /d/ Endings for Past Tense Verbs

"clean" becomes "cleaned" and is pronounced "clean/d/" (one syllable)

"dream" becomes "dreamed" and is pronounced "dream/d/" (one syllable; note that "dreamt" is the British English version of the past tense of "dream")

"save" becomes "saved" and is pronounced "save/d/" (one syllable)

"enjoy" becomes "enjoyed" and is pronounced "enjoy/d/" (two syllables)

"marry" becomes "married" and is pronounced "marry/d/" (two syllables)

ACTIVITY THREE : Two Tips for Pronunciation

1 / English is not Phonetic

Always remember that English is not "phonetic". That means that we do not always say a word the same way that we spell it.
Let's investigate…
http://www.uiowa.edu/~acadtech/phonetics/english/frameset.html

Some words can have the same spelling but different pronunciation, for example:

* I like to read [ri:d].
* I have read [red] that book.

Some words have different spelling but the same pronunciation, for example:

* I have read [red] that book.
* My favourite colour is red [red].

One of the best ways to improve your pronunication is by watching films in English (VO) with the subtitles in English so that you can observe and listen. You should watch at least one film a week. Try watching a TV series in English, one episode a day.

2 / How to Pronounce "the" in English

Normally, we pronounce "the" with a short sound (like "thuh"). But when "the" comes before a vowel sound, we pronounce it as a long "thee".

ACTIVITY FOUR : *LET'S GET DOWN TO BUSINESS !*

Correctly pronouncing words in any foreign language is tricky. Indeed, good pronunciation is commonly seen as an indication of linguistic ability. Non-native pronunciations of English result from the common linguistic phenomenon in which no-native users tend to carry the intonation, phonological processes and pronunciation rules from their mother tongue into their English speech.

Due to the phonetic differences between spoken English and French, pronouncing English can be particularly difficult for French native speakers because they can only comprehend up to two sounds of a language. This is mostly because the majority of French sounds are **silent**; "an", "in", "un", "on", "eu", "au", "ai", "ouin", "oin", "ion", "eau", etc.

Like French, English is not a phonetic language. It is therefore important to understand that we often do not say a word the same way it is spelt – there is not always a direct relationship between the spelling of the word and its sound. For more details, have a look at a phonetic alphabet (http://www.antimoon.com/how/pronunc-soundsipa.htm).

To illustrate this point, we say that the spelling "ough" can be pronounced with seven different sounds. Take a look at the list below and say the words aloud, taking note of the sounds in brackets.

1. though (like 'o' in go)
2. through (like 'oo' in too)
3. cough (like 'off' in offer)
4. rough (like 'uff' in suffer)
5. plough (like 'ow' in flower)
6. ought (like 'aw' in saw)
7. borough (like 'a' in above)

Although this list looks confusing, the correct pronunciations of these words can be quickly learnt with practice. Take a look at this video: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qFNK4ebSicA

The best place to start is to master some sounds that French native speakers can often find difficult. Look at the example words so that you can recognise these sounds in the future. To listen to each sound, click on the link (http://www.antimoon.com/how/pronunc-soundsipa.htm), and then click on the relevant sound from the phonetic alphabet.

1. **Sound like 'ea' in 'eat' (phoneme - i:)**
- **How to make the sound:** Open the lips wide sideways, while keeping the tongue suspended on the mouth.
- **Example words that use this sounds:** **ea**t, sh**ee**p, h**ea**t, **ee**l, rec**ei**ve, l**ea**ve

2. **Sound like 'i' in 'ship' (phoneme – i)**
- **How to make the sound:** Relax the mouth and keep the sound short.
- **Example words that use this sounds:** sh**i**p, h**i**t, s**i**ck, s**ie**ve, l**i**ve

3. **Sound like 's' in 'sick' (phoneme – s)**
- **How to make the sound:** Put the tip of your tongue behind your bottom front teeth, raise the test of your mouth, and let air hiss through the narrow opening.
- **Example words that use this sounds:** **s**ick, **S**cottish, **s**cary, **s**cream, mi**ss**

4. Sound like 'th' in 'thick' (phoneme - θ)
How to make the sound: Put the tip of your tongue between your top and bottom front teeth and let air escape around your tongue, without your vocal cords vibrating.
- **Example words that use this sounds:** **th**ick, my**th**, **th**ick, **th**umb

5. **Sound like 'v' in 'van' (phoneme – v)**
- **How to make the sound:** To pronounce the 'v' sound, place your top front teeth against your bottom lip but then without releasing air, vibrate your vocal cords and release your teeth from your lip.
- **Example words that use this sounds:** **v**an, **v**ine, **v**iew, o**v**al

6. **Sound like 'f' in 'f**an**' (phoneme – f)**
- **How to make the sound:** Press your upper front teeth against your bottom lip. Force air through the opening, then release your teeth from your lip.
- **Example words that use this sounds:** **f**an, **f**riends, **f**erry

7. **Sound like 'sh' in '**fi**sh' (phoneme - ʃ)**
- **How to make the sound:** To pronounce the 'sh' sound, place the whole width of your tongue close to the roof of your mouth behind your top front teeth, but without touching the roof, then let air slowly escape through the opening.

- **Example words that use this sounds:** a**sh**, fi**sh**, wa**sh**, **sh**op, situa**tio**n, ac**tio**n

8. **Sound like 'ch' in 'ch**air' **(phoneme - tʃ)**
- **How to make the sound:** To pronounce 'ch', press the whole width of your tongue against the roof of your mouth behind your top front teeth, then release your tongue just enough to let a **'t'** sound and a wide hiss of air come out.
- **Example words that use this sounds: ch**air, **ch**eese, tea**ch**er, **ch**op

7. **Sound like 'h' in 'h**ouse'
- **How to make the sound:** The letter H is pronounced with your mouth relaxed, your jaw slightly open, and with a puff of air being forced from your throat.
- **Example words that use this sounds: h**ouse, **h**ello, **h**op, **h**eat

8. **Sound like 'r' in 'r**un'
- **How to make the sound:** To pronounce the 'r' sound, open your mouth slightly, raise the middle and back of your tongue toward the roof of your mouth without touching it, and vibrate your vocal cords.
- **Example words that use this sounds: r**un, **r**ed, **wr**ite, **r**obin

With pronunciation, practice makes perfect. Listen to the sounds, recognise the words, and perfect the pronunciation.

ACTIVITY FIVE: Tongue Twisters

Repeat the sentences as quickly as possible.

1/
She sells sea shells on the sea shore.

2/
Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled pepper.
A peck of pickled pepper peter piper picked.

3/

Betty Botter had some butter,

"But," she said, "this butter's bitter.

If I bake this bitter butter,

It would make my batter bitter.

But a bit of better butter,

That would make my batter better."

So she bought a bit of butter –

Better than her bitter butter –

And she baked it in her batter;

And the batter was not bitter.

So 'twas better Betty Botter

Bought a bit of better butter.

