ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION

['ɪŋɡlɪʃ prənuːnsɪ'eɪʃn]
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INTRODUCTION

The text follows the contents of G. Ludbrook: *English Pronunciation. CD* (Edizioni Erickson)

Unlike Italian, English is not a phonetic language which is the principle reason why it is difficult to write and pronounce English words. Although there are 26 letters in the English alphabet, the sounds that may be produced are almost double that number. This text is a short introduction to the phonetic transcription of English phonemes (vowel and consonant sounds) to increase the Italian student’s understanding of English pronunciation, improve speech and reading, and help students consult a dictionary. The phonemic transcriptions in dictionaries are based on the standard English accent known as ‘Received Pronunciation’ (RP for short) and other regional and international English accents will not be considered here. The text will focus particularly on sounds that are difficult to pronounce for Italian students and those that may be easily confused.

Another common problem is the stress placed on the pronunciation of words and phrases, as English is stress–timed, unlike Italian which is syllable–timed. Attention is paid to strong and weak stress in words and phrases, taking into consideration function words, contracted forms, compound nouns and adjectives, prefixes and suffixes. The problem of English spelling is explored through a brief study of homophones, homographs and silent letters.

In conclusion, there is a brief section on English words used in Italian that are often mispronounced, and false anglicisms (words used by Italians that do not exist in English).

Frederika Gebhardt
UNIT 1  PHONETIC SYMBOLS AND SOUNDS

International phonetic alphabet symbols

Vowels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Example Words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/ɪ/</td>
<td>pin, English, business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/e/</td>
<td>bed, head, bury, exit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/æ/</td>
<td>cat, bag, apple, black</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ə/</td>
<td>the, a, woman, banana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/u:/</td>
<td>look, put, could, cushion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/o:/</td>
<td>clock, what, because</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Diphthongs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Example Words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/eɪ/</td>
<td>take, pay, wait, ballet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/aɪ/</td>
<td>five, sigh, height, buy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ɔɪ/</td>
<td>noise, boy, lawyer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/au/</td>
<td>no, road, sew, broken</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Consonants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Example Words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/p/</td>
<td>play, stop, speak, power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/b/</td>
<td>bad, baby, big, object</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/t/</td>
<td>ten, later, little, pot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/d/</td>
<td>day, advice, bed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/k/</td>
<td>character, quick, taxi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/g/</td>
<td>got, exam, ignore, finger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/f/</td>
<td>food, laugh, telephone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/v/</td>
<td>vain, over, Stephen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/θ/</td>
<td>thin, earth, method, both</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ð/</td>
<td>they, father, breathe, with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/s/</td>
<td>small, sing, scene, psalm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/z/</td>
<td>zoo, goes, xenophobe</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Exercise 1  Match the phonetic transcriptions with the words.
1. /ʃʌt/  a. later
2. /haːt/  b. joke
3. /θɪŋk/  c. heart
4. /wɜːk/  d. there
5. /leɪtə/  e. doubt
6. /bɔːt/  f. work
7. /pʊ:l/  g. shut
8. /dɔut/  h. think
9. /dʒɔuk/  i. pool
10. /dəθ/  j. bought

Exercise 2  Listen to the following words and circle the sound that you hear.

1. /æ/ /ʌ/
2. /æ/ /e/
3. /ʊ/ /ɒ/
4. /ɪː/ /ɪ/
5. /ɜː/ /ɔː/
6. /eɪ/ /ɪ/ /əɪ/
7. /ʊ/ /uː/
8. /ɪə/ /eə/
9. /θ/ /ð/
10. /ʃ/ /ʒ/

Exercise 3  Complete the transcriptions with one of the following diphthongs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>/eɪ/</th>
<th>/aɪ/</th>
<th>/ɔɪ/</th>
<th>/əʊ/</th>
<th>/ɔʊ/</th>
<th>/ɪə/</th>
<th>/eə/</th>
<th>/ʊə/</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
1. make  /m_ _ k/  6. hear  /h_ _/
2. sure  /ʃ_ _/  7. town  /t_ _ n/
3. bear  /b_ _/  8. home  /h_ _ m/
4. island  /- - lənd/  9. sight  /s_ _ t/
5. employ  /ɪmpl_ _/  10. know  /n_ _ /

Exercise 4  Write out the correct spelling of these place names.
1. /kæntəbrɪ/  2. /ɡrɛntʃ/  3. /lɛstə/  4. /edɪnb्रə/  5. /wɔrɪk/
Some difficult sounds for Italian speakers of English

/ə/
This is the most frequent vowel sound in spoken English, which can also represent several letters or syllables. It can be found in unstressed function words such as *a, am, an, but, can, of,* in prefixes and suffixes such as *in-, suc-, to-, ad-, -ible, -able, -ment,* in words such as *according, lemon, minute, purpose, second* etc.

Exercise 5 Listen to the teacher and underline the /ə/ sound in the following sentences.
1. We went to the theatre yesterday.
2. He can speak Russian and German.
3. Susan is famous for her Christmas cake.
4. The pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary are difficult.
5. We could ask them if they have reached a decision.
6. A man and a woman were waiting at the station.
7. They’re going to the mountains on Saturday.
8. The private sector is all economic activity other than government.
9. Where are the spoons and forks?
10. There were seven or eight hundred people present at the conference.

/ɜː/
A difficult sound to reproduce for Italian speakers: *world – /wɜːld/, third – /θɜːd/.*

Exercise 6 Tick the words that contain the /ɜː/ sound.
1. Thursday 2. does 3. skirt 4. short
5. Tuesday 6. work 7. ear 8. nurse
9. birthday 10. turn 11. bun 12. weren’t
13. ball 14. hurt 15. early 16. ward

/ʌ/
There are several letter combinations that produce this sound: *mother – /mʌðə/, country – /ˈkʌntri:/, flood – /flʌd/.*

Exercise 7 The teacher will read out the following sentences. Underline the alternative that you hear.
1. Which *county/country* did you say he lived in?
2. She *rubbed/robbed* the silver to make it shinier.
3. There are a lot of colourful *rags/rugs* on the floor.
4. Can I borrow your cup/cap?
5. We were wondering/wandering where she was.
6. She has a heart/hut of gold.
7. Put the batter/butter in the fridge.
8. Did you say he run/ran away?
9. There was a big cart/cut in the wood.
10. He tripped over the stump/stamp on the ground.

/ɪ/
Italian does not have this sound: fill – /ftl/, ship – /ʃɪp/.

Exercise 8 Say whether the pairs of words you hear are the same (S) or different (D).

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

/ð/ and /θ/
These sounds do not exist in Italian, so they may be transformed in /t/, /f/ or /d/.

Exercise 9 Write the following words under the correct phonetic sound.
there three breathe thin moth whether although nothing throw either

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>/θ/</th>
<th>/ð/</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

/w/
This sound tends to be pronounced by Italian speakers as /v/.

Exercise 10 The teacher will read out the following sentences. Underline the alternative that you hear.

1. There was only a little vine / wine left.
2. Where is the vest / west?
3. I saw a long whale / veil in the distance.
4. What was under the wheel / veal?
5. Her poetry has become worse / verse.
/dʒ/
When written with a ‘J’, Italian speakers tend to pronounce this sound as /j/. The letter ‘G’ can also produce this sound: *general, storage*, as can the combination -dge and -age: *edge, storage*.

**Exercise 11  Tick the words that contain the /dʒ/ sound.**
1. gin 5. yam 9. jet 13. damage
2. large 6. soldier 10. gear 14. mayor
3. goat 7. guilty 11. just 15. collage
4. injury 8. gum 12. get 16. college

/h/
This sound tends to be omitted by Italian speakers. However, the h is not pronounced in such words as *hour, honour, heir* and *honest*, in some words and place names: *exhibit, Totten(h)am*, or in rapid speech: *Tell (h)im we’ll be late.*

**Exercise 12  The teacher will read out sentences. Tick the word that you hear.**
1. ill  6. old  11. heir  16. edge
2. eye  7. heir  12. hair
3. art  8. all  13. hate
4. air  9. eight  14. hedge
5. ear  10. edge  15. mix

/s/
Apart from the letter ‘S’, the /s/ sound can be represented by a number of consonant combinations, which differ in pronunciation from the Italian: *psyche, cellar, science, listen.*

**Exercise 13  Tick the words that contain the /s/ sound.**
1. song 5. face 9. issue 13. disciple
2. Islam 6. city 10. months 14. sugar
3. vision 7. message 11. castle 15. mix
4. science 8. houses 12. fascism 16. psychology
Exercise 14  Underline the word that the transcription represents.

1. bɔːn  burn  born
2. θɪŋ  thing  thin
3. fr:linz  fillings  feelings
4. vain  vine  wine
5. meɪdʒə  major  mayor
6. ræm  rum  ram
7. wɜːd  word  worried
8. fəget  forget  forged
9. ɑɪs  eyes  ice
10. huːz  whose  house

Tongue Twisters  Quickly say the following sentences.

1. She sells sea shells on the sea shore.
2. Thirty-three thrilling thespians thought throughout Thursday.
3. I wish to wash my Irish wristwatch.
4. In Hertford, Hereford and Hampshire, hurricanes hardly ever happen.
5. A skunk sat on a stump.

UNIT 2  ENGLISH SPELLING AND SOUNDS

English spelling is a particular obstacle to non-native speakers. This is due to the fact that during the course of its history it has been influenced by numerous languages, especially by German, Latin, French and the Scandinavian languages. Thus, for example, the sound /ʃ/ is to be found in the following letter combinations: shut, champagne, nation, expansion, conscience, issue, and sugar.

Sometimes words do not sound alike despite their similar spellings (homographs): bow – /bəʊ/ and /bɔː/, close – /kləʊz/ and /kləʊs/, live – /lɪv/ and /laɪv/. Other words sound alike, but are spelled differently (homophones): aren’t / ɑːnt/ , bare / bear – /bɛə/, and seen / scene – /ˈsiːn/. 
It was already noted over 400 years ago that English used more letters than necessary to spell many of its words, and during the 17th century numerous redundant letters were removed, the emergent standard spellings tending to prefer one of the shorter forms among the alternatives previously in use. For example, in the 16th century the word *bit* was sometimes spelt *byte*. Many words were reduced like *byte* by the loss of a silent final -E, the replacement of Y by I, and the simplification of doubled consonants. But many other words have kept unnecessary letters, for instance the B in *debt*, the E in *have* or the P in *receipt*.

After the 17th century this process of simplification of English spelling slowed down, thanks to the standardizing influence of printing and the spread of dictionaries. The American lexicographer Noah Webster took the process of simplification a step further in the early 19th century, and Americans today use some distinctive spellings of the type his dictionary recommended, such as center, traveling, favor, defense, realize (Br.Eng. centre, travelling, favour, defence, realise).

**Difficult vowel combinations**  Practice saying the following words

- **u**: /ʌ/ - bun, /ʊ/ - put, /ɪ/ - busy, /e/ - bury, /u:/ - rude, /ju:/ - huge, /ə/ - focus, /ɜ:/ - burn.
- **ea**: /ɪ:/ - beach, /e/ - bread, /ei/ - break, /ea/ - bear, /ɛə/ - dear.
- **au**: /aʊ/ - aunt, /ɔː/ - author, /ɔ/ - because, /ei/ - gauge.
- **ei**: /ɛɪ/ - eight, /ɪ/ - receive, /ɪ/ - counterfeit, /e/ - leisure, /æɪ/ - height
- **oa**: /əʊ/ - road, /ɔː/ - broad.
- **ow**: /əʊ/ - now, /əʊ/ - know, /ɔ/ - knowledge.
- **augh**: /ɔː/ - taught, /aːf/ - laugh.
Difficult consonant combinations  Practice saying the following words


**cc:** /ks/ – success, /k/ – account, /tʃ/ – cappuccino.

**gn:** /n/ – sign, /gn/ – recognise.

**ng:** /ŋ/ – sing, /ŋg/ – finger, /ndʒ/ – danger.

**Exercise 15**  Circle the word that is pronounced differently from the other three words.

1. accident  access  accommodate  accept
2. sheep  beer  field  people
3. angry  jungle  English  spring
4. shout  now  round  mould
5. cheese  chip  machine  attach
6. signature  foreign  Gnostic  tongue
7. suit  fruit  cruise  biscuit
8. though  rough  enough  tough
9. floor  poor  flood  door
10. author  caught  laughter  daughter

**Suffixes**

–s suffix

The morpheme –s of the 3rd person singular (he works), of the noun plural (books), of the genitive (John’s) and of the contraction of is or has (he’s) is pronounced in three different ways depending on the sound of the preceding consonant:

/ɪz/ after sibilant consonants: /s/ /ʃ/ /tʃ/ /dʒ/

- slices /slaɪsɪz/
- churches /tʃɜːtʃɪz/

/s/ after unvoiced consonants: /f/ /k/ /p/ /t/

- packs /pækz/
- laughs /laːfs/

/æ/ /eɪtʃ/ /tæps/
/z/  in other cases

boys /bɔɪz/  girls  /ɡɜːlz/
clothes /klaʊðz/  John’s  /dʒɔnз/  

Some unvoiced sounds, /θ/ and /f/, become voiced when the –s suffix is added.

Compare:

bath /baːθ/  baths  /baːðz/
knife /naɪf/  knives  /naɪvз/

Exercise 16  Write the sound /s/, /z/ or /ɪз/ next to the following words.

1. judges  ______  6. watches  ______
2. lives  ______  7. attends  ______
3. plates  ______  8. tapes  ______
4. classes  ______  9. books  ______
5. breathes  ______  10. wives  ______

–ed suffix

The morpheme –ed of the past tense (or past participle) is also pronounced in three different ways depending on the preceding consonant:

/ɪd/  after t and d

painted /ˈpeɪntɪd/  founded /ˈfaʊndɪd/
wanted /ˈwɒntɪd/  rounded /ˈraʊndɪd/  

/t/  after unvoiced consonants: /f/  /k/  /p/  /s/  /tʃ/  /ʃ/

clapped /ˈklæpt/  brushed /ˈbruːʃt/
laughed /ˈlaːft/  wished /ˈwɪʃt/  

/d/  in other cases

earned /ɜːnd/  carried /ˈkær ɪd/
changed /tʃeɪndʒd/  harmed /haːmd/
Exercise 17  Pronounce the past form of these regular verbs paying attention to the –ed suffix.
1. study _____  6. answer _____
2. judge _____  7. test _____
3. listen _____  8. invent _____
4. miss _____  9. research _____
5. work _____  10. enjoy _____

–e suffix
Sometimes the addition of the –e suffix to a noun to form a verb changes the quality both of the vowels sound and of the final –th:

- a bath /baːθ/ to bathe /beɪð/
- a breath /breθ/ to breathe /briːð/

Exercise 18  Listen to the teacher and circle the word you hear.
1. Breath/Breathe in deeply and then out again.
2. Suits were usually made of wool cloth/clothe.
3. I really loath/loathe the fashion of the 1980s.
4. The medicine soothes/sooths the pain of the inflammation.
5. The baby’s teeth/teethe are coming through.

Homographs
Some examples of homographs:

to lead /ˈlɛd/ lead /ˈlɛd/  
to read /rɪd/ read /red/  
to live /laɪv/ live /laɪv/  

The sound may also change according to the where the stress is on the word:

to record /ˈrɪˈkɔːd/ record /ˈrekɔːd/  
to present /prɪˈzent/ present /ˈpreznt/  

Exercise 19  Listen to the sentences and circle the transcription that you hear.
1. /hɑʊz/ /haus/  
2. /teə/ /tɪə/  
3. /kləʊz/ /kləʊz/  
4. /wɪnd/ /waɪnd/  
5. /ˈkɒntrækt/ /kən ˈtrækt/
Homophones
Some examples of homophones:
son / sun /sʌn/
allowed / aloud /ələʊd/
minor / miner /ˈmaɪnər/

Exercise 20  Listen to the teacher and circle the word that you hear in its context.

1. whose / who’s
2. there / their
3. sale / sail
4. rode / road
5. steel / steal
6. right / write
7. hear / here
8. rain / reign
9. bare / bear
10. by / buy

Silent letters
a) Some consonants are written but not pronounced. This is either because they were once pronounced (knock) or come from a foreign language (psychology).

Initial position
cz – czar
dk – knock, knee, knight, knife
gn – gnat, gnaw, gnome
kn – knock, knee, knight, knife
pn – pneumonia
ps – psychology, psychiatry, pseudo
pt – Ptolemy
wr – write, wrong, wring, wrist
wh – who, whom, whose, whole

End position
mb – lamb, climb, thumb
ng – king, thing, song, wing
gm – paradigm, diaphragm
gn – sign, reign, foreign, resign (but signature, resignation)
mn – condemn, autumn, column
pt – receipt (but reception)

Other positions
doubt muscle castle whistle isle viscount sword Norwich
b) Sometimes vowels are written but not pronounced.
Some examples:

- government
- garden
- family
- reason
- chocolate
- evil

Exercise 21  Mark the silent letters in the following words.

1. answer 6. castle 11. subtle 16. island
2. Greenwich 7. design 12. vegetable 17. mustn’t
3. interest 8. know 13. generous 18. Wednesday
5. written 10. honest 15. cupboard 20. hoped

This poem illustrates the various English spelling complexities. Read it aloud.

Beware of heard, a dreadful word
That looks like beard and sounds like bird.
And dead, it’s said like bed, not bead–
for goodness’ sake don’t call it 'deed’!
Watch out for meat and great and threat
(they rhyme with suite and straight and debt).

A moth is not a moth in mother,
Nor both in bother, broth, or brother,
And here is not a match for there,
Nor dear and fear for bear and pear,
And then there's doze and rose and lose–
Just look them up– and goose and choose,
And cork and work and card and ward
And font and front and word and sword,
And do and go and thwart and cart–
Come, I've hardly made a start!
UNIT 3  STRESS PATTERNS IN WORDS

In Italian, a syllable-timed language, uniform stress is given to different syllables. English, on the contrary, is a stress-timed language in which there exists a distinction between strong (toniche) and weak (atone) syllables.

Syllable division
A syllable consists of a vowel sound or a vowel sound + consonant(s). The system for syllable division is generally a phonetic one. Most words have the same number of syllables in the written form as in the pronunciation. However, there are a few rules to help divide words up into syllables.

a) Each syllable has only one vowel sound. When a consonant separates two vowels, divide the word after the first vowel and before the consonant:
   student  result  exa-mine

b) When the vowel is at the end of a syllable, it has a long sound, called an open syllable:
   may  be-low  anec-dote

c) When the vowel is not at the end of a syllable, it has a short sound, called a closed syllable:
   mad  subject  convent

d) Syllables are divided between doubled consonants, unless the doubled consonant is part of a syllable that is a base word: dinner  swimming  teller

e) Monosyllabic prefixes and suffixes are not divided:
   illeagal  uncom-ment  uncom-mon  cou-ra-geous

f) Plurisyllabic prefixes and suffixes are divided:
   anti-war  un-der-take
   velo-city  hypo-the-cal

Exercise 22  Divide the following words into syllables.

1. mirror  5. calendar
2. sunshine  6. global
3. poem  7. fitness
4. wonderful  8. December
Stress patterns in words

The strong or primary stress on one syllable has the effect of weakening the pronunciation of the secondary syllables. It is therefore important to be able to determine the stress pattern of words.

Symbols used to indicate stress:
ˈ the following syllable has primary stress
ˌ the following syllable has secondary stress

Suffixes

Suffixes do not generally have primary stress.

Compare:

ˈage /eɪdʒ/ ˈcourage /ˈkʌrdʒ/ 
to be 'able /ˈeɪbl/ 'capable /ˈkeɪpəbl/
ˈate /eɪt/ 'graduate (n)/ˈɡrædʒuət/ 
ˈfull /fʊl/ 'beautiful /ˈbjuːtɪfl/ 
ˈless /ˈles/ 'hopeless /ˈhəʊpləs/

In only a few cases the main stress falls on the suffix, generally with suffixes of foreign, especially French, origin.

Some examples are:

-oo kangar'oo -elle gaz'elle
-ee employ'ee -ette cigar'ette
-eer engine'eer -ese Chin'ese

Some suffixes determine the position of the primary stress.

The following suffixes determine the primary stress on the syllable preceding the suffix:
**Nouns**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>-ity, -ety</th>
<th>cap'acity</th>
<th>oppor'tunity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Note the shift in stress:

| 'public | pub'licity |
| 'social | soc'iety |
| to 'vary | var'iety |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>-ion</th>
<th>dis'cussion</th>
<th>at'tention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Note the shift in stress:

| to pre'pare | prepar'a tion |
| to pro'nounce | pronunci'a tion |
| to 'realise | realis'a tion |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>-ian</th>
<th>am'phibian</th>
<th>phy'sician</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Note the shift in stress:

| hu'manity | human'i tarian |
| 'library | lib'rarian |
| 'history | his'torian |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>-ics</th>
<th>'physics</th>
<th>'ethics</th>
<th>mathe'matics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Verbs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>-ify, -ish</th>
<th>to 'magnify</th>
<th>to a'bolish</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Note the shift in stress:

| 'person | to pers'onify |

**Exercise 23 Mark the primary stress in the following words.**

1. village 6. passion
2. society 7. anxiety
3. talkative 8. universal
4. suffragette 9. career
5. classify 10. economics

**Adjectives**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>-ic, -ible, -igible</th>
<th>his'toric</th>
<th>in'visible</th>
<th>'eligible</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Note the shift in stress:

| e'conomy | eco'nomic |
| to ne'glect | 'negligible |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>-ious, -eous, -uous</th>
<th>'glorious</th>
<th>ar'boreous</th>
<th>con'tinuous</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
-ial, -ual  'social'  'usual'

Other suffixes do not alter the stress pattern of the word.

-able  'comfort'  'comfortable'
-cy  'vacant'  'vacancy'
-dom  'king'  'kingdom'
-er/-or  'visit'  'visitor'
-ful  'wonder'  'wonderful'
-ish (adj.)  'baby'  'babyish'
-ism  to 'criticise'  'criticism'
-ize/-ise (v.)  e'conomy  to e'economize
-less  'care'  'careless'
-ly (adv.)  'rapid'  'rapidly'
-man (n.)  po'lice  po'liceman
-ment  to 'govern'  'government'
-ship  'owner'  'ownership'
-ty  'unit'  'unity'
-y  to in'quire  in'quiry

Exercise 24  Mark the shift in stress in the following pairs of words.
1. economy  economics
2. experiment  experimental
3. history  historian
4. nation  nationality
5. philosophy  philosophical
6. psychiatry  psychiatric
7. science  scientific
8. examine  examination
9. idiot  idiotic
10. demonstrate  demonstration

Prefixes
Two-syllable words with no prefix usually have the primary stress on the first syllable: 'follow'  'carry'  'govern'  'cancel
Two-syllable words with a separable prefix (often written with a hyphen) have equal stress on the prefix and the main word:

ˈex-ˈwife  ˈpre-ˈbook  ˈre-ˈwrite  ˈself-ˈhelp

Two-syllable VERBS with an inseparable prefix generally have the primary stress on the second syllable: to exˈplain  to preˈsent  to deˈny  to proˈduce

Two-syllable NOUNS with an inseparable prefix generally have the primary stress on the first syllable: ‘expert  ‘present  ‘deluge  ‘proverb

Some exceptions to this are: adˈvice  deˈfence  exˈcuse  reˈlief

The stress in three-syllable words can vary from word to word. Compare:

‘telegraph  reˈmoval  ‘vegetable  deˈcision

If the prefix – separable or inseparable – is bisyllabic, there is secondary stress on the first syllable of the prefix and primary stress on the third syllable:

ˌunderˈstand ˌinterˈvene ˌsuperˈsede ˌoverˈride

Exercise 25  Mark the primary stress in the following pairs of nouns and verbs.

1. to conduct    conduct
2. to desert     desert
3. to present    present
4. to subject    subject
5. to conflict   conflict
6. to decrease   decrease
7. to object     object
8. to produce    produce
9. to suspect    suspect
10. to rebel     rebel

Exercise 26  Find the word in each group that the primary stress located on the different syllable from the other three.

1. a) con-fi-dent    b) del-i-cate    c) po-et-ic    d) sen-si-tive
2. a) ad-mi-ra-ble    b) app-ro-priate   c) com-pli-cated    d) nec-es-sar-y
3. a) or-i-gin    b) oc-cur    c) lim-it    d) of-fer
4. a) in-stru-ment    b) cal-en-dar    c) at-mos-phere    d) ad-vise
5. a) ca-nal  b) de-moc-ra-cy  c) char-ac-ter  d) suc-cess
6. a) mu-si-cian  b) ne-ces-si-ty  c) au-thor-i-ty  d) pho-to-graph
7. a) man-age  b) con-nect  c) o-blige  d) re-veal
8. a) a-tom-ic  b) dif-fer-ent  c) se-ri-ous  d) vi-ol-ent
9. a) ac-ci-dent  b) ma-chin-e-ry  c) res-tau-rant  d) tel-e-phone
10. a) mar-riage  b) mys-ter-y  c) ben-e-fit  d) ex-is-tence

**Compound nouns**

Most compound nouns have the primary stress on the first element. Compare this to the equal stress of adjective and noun:

ˈdining-room  ˈtextbook  ˈblackbird
ˈdark ˈroom  ˈlibrary ˈbook  ˈblack ˈbird

**Compound adjectives**

The stress generally falls on the second element with the –ed participle and –ing participle: bad-ˈtempered  old-ˈfashioned  good-ˈlooking

However, if one of the elements of the compound adjective is a noun, stress will fall on the noun, even if it is the first element: ˈlaw-abiding  ˈrecord-breaking

**Compound verbs**

The stress generally falls on the second element: outˈrun  overˈrate  underˈline

**Exercise 27** Mark the stress on the following words.

1. blackboard  6. train-ˈspotting
2. mobile phone  7. football
3. well-ˈdressed  8. bus stop
4. highlight  9. out-ˈdated
5. swimming pool  10. over-ˈripe

**Exercise 28** Rewrite the sentences forming compound adjectives and mark the primary stress.

1. The letter was written by hand  The letter was ..........................
2. We grew the vegetables at home.  The vegetables are ......................
3. We went on holiday at the last minute.  It was a .......................holiday.
4. Jane works very hard.  Jane is .................................
5. Tom looks really good.  Tom is .................................
UNIT 4 STRESS PATTERNS IN PHRASES

Function words such as prepositions, conjunctions, pronouns, determiners, and auxiliary verbs are generally weaker in stress within a sentence.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>prepositions</th>
<th>conjunctions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>at /æt/</td>
<td>that /ðæt/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>for /fə/</td>
<td>as /æz/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>from /fræm/</td>
<td>than /ðæn/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of /əv/</td>
<td>and /ən/, /n/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to /tə/</td>
<td>but /bət/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>per /pə/</td>
<td>or /ər/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>pronouns</th>
<th>determiners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>he /hɪ/</td>
<td>his /ɪz/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>him /ɪm/, /əm/</td>
<td>her /hə/, /ə/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>her /hə/</td>
<td>our /ər/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>us /əs/</td>
<td>your /jə/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>them /ðəm/</td>
<td>a, an /ə, /ən/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>some /səm/</td>
<td>the /ðə/, /ðiː/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Exercise 29 Underline the weak function words in the following sentences.

1. I'd love a cup of tea.
2. When are you going to Spain?
3. He goes to the cinema three or four times a month.
4. I'll have some bread and butter, please.
5. We'd rather stay at home than go to the restaurant.
6. You'll have to study harder if you want to pass the exam.
7. They drove at 50 kilometres per hour.
8. Did you give him the books?
9. He said that he'd go home as soon as possible.
10. I told them they were going to fall.

Articles

| a, an | The indefinite article a is reduced to /a/ before consonants (or consonant sounds): a book a table a university a one-year plan |

It becomes an /æn/ before vowels (or vowel sounds):

an apple an event an hour an heir
- The definite article *the* is reduced to /ðə/ before consonants (or consonant sounds): *the mother* *the table* *the university* *the one–year plan*

It is pronounced /ðɪː/ before vowels (or vowel sounds): *the apple* *the event* *the hour* *the heir*

**Exercise 30** Write *a* or *an* in the following sentences.

1. It took me _____ hour to write the letter.
2. Would you like _____ orange?
3. She is _____ Anglo–Italian.
4. It is _____ European law.
5. Jane is _____ university student.
6. I hope to study for _____ M.A. degree next year.
7. It was _____ one–hour lesson.
8. The concert was _____ extraordinary event.
9. You’ll have to have _____ X–ray for that leg.
10. It was _____ enjoyable evening.

**Exercise 31** Say whether the following pronunciation of the definite article is /ðə/ or /ðɪː/.

1. _____ heir.
2. _____ universe.
3. _____ apple.
4. _____ ugly house.
5. _____ U.S.A.
6. _____ hotel.
7. _____ historian.
8. _____ jewels.
9. _____ hour–glass
10. _____ one–man band.

**Auxiliary verbs**

*be* and *have* are generally pronounced as a single syllable:

- I’m /aɪm/          I’ve /aɪv/
- he’s /hɪz/          he’s /hɪz/
- she’s /ʃɪz/          she’s /ʃɪz/
- it’s /ɪts/          it’s /ɪts/
- we’re /wʌr/          we’ve /wʌv/
- you’re /ʒuər/          you’ve /ʒuːv/
they’re /ðeə/     they’ve /ðeɪv /
there’s /ðeəz/      there are /ðeərə/

Be and have have a weak pronunciation in Wh– questions:
Where has /hæz/ he ’gone?  What’s /s/ his name?
They have strong (or semi–weakened) forms:
(a) in yes/no questions:
    ’Have /hæv/ you got a car?  ’Is /ɪz/ he on time?
(b) in the negative form with the contracted not:
    I ’haven’t /hævnt/ been there yet.
(c) in tag questions and short answers:
    She hasn’t arrived, ’has /hæz/she?  Yes, she ’has /hæz/.
The auxiliary do (does) has a weak pronunciation in Wh– questions:
Where does /dəz/ he ’live?  What do /də/ you ’do?
It has a strong (or semi–weakened) form:
(a) in other questions:
    ’Do /duː/ you like cheese? ’Does /dəz/ he live here?
(b) in the negative form with the contracted not:
    I ’don’t /dənt/ want to come.
(c) in tag questions and short answers:
    He doesn’t /dənt/ live here, ’does /dəz/ he?  Yes, he ’does /dəz/.

Modal auxiliary verbs
Modal auxiliary verbs have weak pronunciation in the affirmative and interrogative:
I can /kn/ ’go.  They could /kəd/ ’come.  Should/ʃəd/ he ’leave?
They have a strong form:
(a) in the negative with the contracted not:
    I ’can’t /kɑːnt/ go.  They ’won’t / wɑːnt / come.
(b) in tag questions and short answers:
    He can’t swim, ’can /kæn/ he?  Yes he ’can /kæn/.

Exercise 32   Underline the weak function words in the following sentences.
1. He could have told you if you had asked.
2. Don’t you want to know?
3. I should have known he was joking.
4. She can apply for the job, can’t she?
5. Who does she think she is?
6. He was at school when the fire broke out.
7. Where does he say he was going?
8. That is the place he has renovated.
9. I certainly won’t do that job again.
10. You don’t have to stay if you don’t want to.

**Exercise 33**  Mark the stressed syllables in the following passages. Practise reading them with attention to the weak forms (auxiliaries, articles, pronouns, prepositions etc).

**TEXT 1**

Of all the changes that swept over Europe in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the most widely influential was an epistemological transformation that we call the “scientific revolution”. In the popular mind, this revolution is associated with natural science and technological change, but the scientific revolution was, in reality, a series of changes in the structure of European thought itself: systematic doubt, empirical and sensory verification, the abstraction of human knowledge into separate sciences, and the view that the world functions like a machine. These changes greatly altered the human experience of every other aspect of life. This modification in world view can also be charted in painting, sculpture and architecture, where it can be seen that people are looking at the world very differently.

**TEXT 2**

Today English is a world-wide language. About 300 million people speak it as their mother-tongue, and there are as many – if not more – for whom it is an additional language. The unparalleled status of English as an international language reflects the economic and technological power of the English-speaking countries, predominantly the United States. A radical shift in power would undoubtedly result in the eventual displacement of English as the paramount international language. Even so, it will remain the national language of many countries where the majority of the population now speak it as their first or second language.
In the last century the Italian language has adopted and adapted a wide range of English words, especially when they refer to new products and trends. For example, browser, welfare, and pullover, to name but a few. Other influences concern direct translations from English into Italian: la maggioranza silenziosa (the silent majority) and le pubbliche relazioni (public relations). Another way to handle foreign words is to adapt the spelling to Italian, so we have ferribot (ferryboat) and nailon (nylon), or else Italian suffixes are added to an English word, such as stoppare and bluffare. There is also a tendency to coin English words that do not in fact exist in English (called ‘false anglicisms’), such as footing (jogging) and fiction (TV series).

Exercise 34  The following words are commonly used in Italian. Make sure you know their correct pronunciation.

1. management
2. performance
3. audience
4. replay
5. know–how
6. check–in
7. server
8. partner
9. desktop
10. cover
11. report
12. hamburger
13. privacy
14. suspense
15. Japan
16. mountain bike
17. wafer
18. flashback
19. club
20. bunker
Exercise 35  Write the original English terms of these translations in Italian.

1. cartone animato
2. diversamente abile
3. informatica
4. parola-chiave
5. parola d’ordine

Exercise 36  Match the false anglicism on the left with its correct term on the right.

1. autogrill a. funfair
2. camping b. juvenile murderer
3. luna park c. toilet
4. stage d. motorway snack bar
5. golf e. pinball machine
6. baby killer f. channel surfing
7. water g. adhesive tape
8. scotch h. hitch-hiking
9. lifting i. internship
10. flipper j. jumper
11. zapping k. campsite
12. autostop l. facelift
ANSWER KEY

UNIT 1

Exercise 1
1. /ʃʌt/ - g. shut  2. /hɑ:t/ - c. heart  3. /θɪŋk/ - h. think  
7. /pʊl/ - i. pool  8. /dɔut/ - e. doubt  9. /dʒəʊk/ - b. joke  
10. /ðəə/ - d. there

Exercise 2
1. cut  /ʌ/  
2. head  /e/  
3. cook  /ʊ/  
4. live  /ɪ/  
5. world  /ɔː/  
6. pine  /aɪ/  
7. shoe  /uː/  
8. hair  /eə/  
9. think  /θ/  
10. gel  /ʒ/  

Exercise 3
1. make  /meɪk/  
2. sure  /ʃʊə/  
3. bear  /bɪə/  
4. island  /aɪlənd/  
5. employ  /ɪmplɔɪ/  
6. hear  /hɪə/  
7. town  /taʊn/  
8. home  /həʊm/  
9. sight  /saɪt/  
10. know  /nəʊ/  

Exercise 4
1. /kæntəbrɪ/  Canterbury  
2. /ɡrɛntʃ/  Greenwich
3. /lestə/ Leicester
4. /edɪnbra/ Edinburgh
5. /warɪk/ Warwick

Exercise 5
1. We went to the theatre yesterday.
2. He can speak Russian and German.
3. Susan is famous for her Christmas cake.
4. The pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary are difficult.
5. We could ask them if they have reached a decision.
6. A man and a woman were waiting at the station.
7. They’re going to the mountains on Saturday.
8. The private sector is all economic activity other than government.
9. Where are the spoons and forks?
10. There were seven or eight hundred people present at the conference.

Exercise 6
10. turn 12. weren’t 14. hurt 15. early

Exercise 7
1. Which county did you say he lived in?
2. She rubbed the silver to make it shinier.
3. There are a lot of colourful rugs on the floor.
4. Can I borrow your cap?
5. We were wondering where she was.
6. She has a heart of gold.
7. Put the batter in the fridge.
8. Did you say he ran away?
9. There was a big cut in the wood.
10. He tripped over the stump on the ground.

Exercise 8
1. sit / seat – D 6. tin / tin – S
2. ship / ship – S 7. live / leave – D
3. bin / bean – D 8. lick / leak – D
4. fill / fill – S 9. chip / chip – S
5. is / ease – D 10. bid / bid – S
Exercise 9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>/θ/</th>
<th>/ð/</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>three</td>
<td>there</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thin</td>
<td>breathe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>moth</td>
<td>whether</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nothing</td>
<td>although</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>throw</td>
<td>either</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Exercise 10
1. There was only a little wine left.
2. Where is the vest?
3. I saw a long whale in the distance.
4. What was under the veal?
5. Her poetry has become worse.

Exercise 11

Exercise 12
1. They went over the hill.
2. The symbol represents the eye of God.
3. At the heart of the issue is the disparity of wealth.
4. Make sure the air circulates.
5. You need something to help you hear.
6. She showed me how to hold a violin.
7. He was the heir to a fortune.
8. Leave some books for me – don’t take them all!
9. They wrote ‘hate’ on the wall.
10. Try not to go near the hedge, Paul.

Exercise 13
1. song  4. science  5. face  6. city  7. message
10. months 11. castle  13. disciple  15. mix  16. psychology
Exercise 14
1. bɔːn born 6. ræm ram
2. əɪŋ thing 7. wə:d word
3. fəːlɪŋz feelings 8. fəget forget
4. vайн vine 9. əɪs ice
5. mərdʒə major 10. hjuːz whose

UNIT 2
Exercise 15
1. accommodate 2. beer 3. spring 4. məʊld 5. məʃine 6. signature

Exercise 16
1. judges /ɪz/ 2. lives /z/ 3. plates /s/ 4. classes /ɪz/
5. breathes /z/ 6. watches /ɪz/ 7. attends /z/ 8. tapes /s/
9. books /s/ 10. wives /z/

Exercise 17
1. study /d/ 2. judge /d/ 3. listen /d/ 4. miss /t/ 5. work /t/
6. answer /d/ 7. test /ɪd/ 8. invent /ɪd/ 9. research /t/ 10. enjoy /d/

Exercise 18

Exercise 19
1. /hauz/ Where did they house the painting?
2. /teə/ Your dress has got a big tear.
3. /kləʊs/ They live very close to us.
4. /waɪnd/ I forgot to wind up my alarm clock last night.
5. /kan ˈtrækt/ We were afraid she might contract some disease in Africa.

Exercise 20
1. Whose book is this? 2. They said their house was in the country. 3. I’d love to sail to Greece. 4. He rode the horse and won the race. 5. The structure is made of steel. 6. Is
that the **right** answer? 7. **Here** is where the battle took place. 8. The monarch’s **reign** was peaceful. 9. He couldn’t **bear** to be seen. 10. This novel is **by** a famous author.

**Exercise 21**

1. answer 6. castle 11. subtle 16. island
2. Greenwich 7 design 12. vegetable 17. mustn’t
3. interest 8. know 13. generous 18. Wednesday
5. written 10. honest 15. cupboard 20. hoped

**UNIT 3**

**Exercise 22**

1. mir-ror 2. sun-shine 3. po-em 4. won-der-ful 5. ca-len-dar
11. fine 12. tongue 13. over-sleep 14. din-ner 15. an-ti-dote

**Exercise 23**

1. 'village 2. so-ciety 3. 'talkative 4. suffra'gette 5. 'classify
6. 'passion 7. an'xiety 8. uni'versal 9. ca'reer 10. eco'nomics

**Exercise 24**

1. e'conomy / eco'nomics 2. ex'periment / experi'mental
3. 'history / hi'storian 4. 'nation / natio'nality
5. phi'losophy / philo'sophical 6. psy'chiatry / psychi'atric
7. 'science / scien'tific 8. ex'amine / exami'nation
9. 'idiot / idi'otic 10. 'demonstrate / demon'stration

**Exercise 25**

1. to 'conduct / con'duct 2. to de'sert / 'desert 3. to pre'sent / 'present
4. to sub'ject / 'subject 5. to con'flict / 'conflict 6. to de'crease / 'decrease
7. to ob'ject / 'object 8. to pro'duce / 'produce 9. to sus'pect / 'suspect
10. to re'bel / 'rebel.

**Exercise 26**

1. c) po-'et-ic 2. d) 'nec-es-sar-y 3. b) oc-'cur 4. d) ad-'vise
5. c) 'char-ək-tər 6. d) 'fəʊ-ə-toğrɑːf 7. a) 'mɑːn-æɡ 8. a) 'tɒm-ɪk
9. b) ma-'chɪn-ərɪ 10. d) 'ɛks-lɪst-əns.

Exercise 27
1. 'blkəbɔːrd 2. 'mɔbɪl ˈfəʊn 3. wəl-'dresd 4. 'hای ˈlɪɡnt

Exercise 28
1. Thə ˈlɛtər wʊz hænd-ˈrɪtən.
2. Thə ˈvɛləɡz ɑr həʊm-ˈɡroʊn
3. It wʊz ə 'lɑːst-ˈmɪnɪt həʊlədəri.
4. ʃən ɪz hɑrd-ˈwɜːkɪŋ.
5. Tɒm ɪz ɡʊd-ˈlʊkɪŋ.

UNIT 4
Exercise 29
1. ɪd ˈlaʊv ə cʌp əv ˈtiː.
2. Wɛn ɑr ʃʊn ɡʊŋ tʊ ˈspæn?
3. Hə ɡʊz tʊ ˈsɪnəmə ˈθɜːr ɔr ˈfɜːr tɪmz ə ˈmʌnθ.
4. ɪl ˈhæv ˈsʌm ˈbɾɛd ənd ˈbʌtər, ˈpliz.
5. We'd rɑðə ˈreɪt ət həʊm ˈteɪn tʊ ˈrɛstərənt.
6. Yʊə'll hæv tʊ ˈsʌdɪ nərdər ɪf ʃʊn ɡʊŋ tʊ ˈpɑːs tʊ ˈeɪkəm.
7. ðeɪ ˈdروʊt ət ˈfʊktəˌmɪəri pər ˈhɔːr.
8. ˈdɪd ʃʊn ˈgɪv ʰɪm ə ˈbʊks?
9. Hæ ˈseɪd ət həʊd ˈgəʊ həʊm əs ˈsʊn əs ˈpɒsəbl.
10. I ˈtɔld əm ə ˈweɪ ˈgʊŋ tʊ ˈfɔːl.

Exercise 30

Exercise 31
1. /dɪə/ ˈhɪər 2. /ðə/ ˈjuːnɜːr 3. /dɪə/ əˈplɛ 4. /dɪə/ ʌɡlɪ ˈhɑʊs
5. /ðə/ ˈjuː.ə. 6. /ðə/ ˈhɔtel 7. /də/ ˈhɪstərɪən 8. /də/ ˈdʒɜːls
Exercise 32

1. He could have told you if you had asked.
2. Don't you want to know?
3. I should have known he was joking.
4. She can apply for the job, can’t she?
5. Who does she think she is?
6. He was at school when the fire broke out.
7. Where does he say he was going?
8. That is the place he has renovated.
9. I certainly won’t do that job again.
10. You don’t have to stay if you don’t want to.

Exercise 33

TEXT 1

Of all the changes that swept over Europe in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the most widely influential was an epistemo'logical transfor'mation that we call the “scien'tific rev'o'lution”. In the popular mind, this rev'o'lution is as'sociated with natural science and techno'logical change, but the scien'tific rev'o'lution was, in re'al'ity, a series of changes in the structure of Euro'pean thought itself: syste'matic doubt, em'pirical and sensory verifi'cation, the ab'straction of human knowledge into separate sciences, and the view that the world functions like a ma'chine. These changes greatly altered the human ex'perience of every other aspect of life. This modifi'cation in world view can also be charted in painting, sculpture and architecture, where it can be seen that people are looking at the world very differently.

TEXT 2

Today English is a world-wide language. About 300 million people speak it as their mother-tongue, and there are as many – if not more – for whom it is an ad'ditional language. The un'paralleled status of English as an inter'national language reflects the eco'nomic and techno'logical power of the English-speak'ing countries, pre'dominantly the U'nited States. A radical shift in power would un'doubtedly result in the e'ventual dis'placement of English as the paramount inter'national language. Even so, it will remain the national language of many countries where the ma'jority of the popu'lation now speak it as their first or second language.
UNIT 5

Exercise 34

1. management /ˈmænɪdʒmənt/
2. performance /pəˈfɔːrməns/
3. audience /ˈɔːdiəns/
4. replay /ˈreɪpl/ 
5. know-how /ˈnəʊhydrəʊ/
6. check-in /ˈtʃekɪn/
7. server /ˈsɜːvər/
8. partner /ˈpɑːtnər/
9. desktop /ˈdeskɪp/
10. cover /ˈkʌvər/
11. report /rɪˈpɔːt/
12. hamburger /ˈhæmbɜːrɡər/
13. privacy /ˈprɪvəsɪ/ 
14. suspense /saˈspens/ 
15. Japan /dʒəˈpæn/ 
16. mountain bike /ˈmaʊntən baɪk/
17. wafer /ˈweɪfər/
18. flashback /ˈflæʃbæk/ 
19. club /ˈklʌb/
20. bunker /ˈbʌŋkər/

Exercise 35

1. cartone animato – cartoon
2. diversamente abile – differently abled
3. informatica – information technology
4. parola-chiave – key word
5. parola d’ordine – password

Exercise 36

1. autogrill – d. motorway snack bar
2. camping – k. campsite
3. luna park – a. funfair
4. stage – i. internship
5. golf – j. jumper
6. baby killer – b. juvenile murderer
7. water – c. toilet
8. scotch – g. adhesive tape
9. lifting – l. facelift
10. flipper – e. pinball machine
11. zapping – f. channel surfing
12. autostop – h. hitch-hiking