



How to become fluent in english in 5 easy steps

Lesson 1

...introduces the 47 sounds that make up the English language. There are 26 consonants, 12 vowels and nine diphthongs. Diphthongs, in can you don't know, are the result of two vowel sounds being put together to create a third sound; for example combine *a* and *e* and you have the sound *ay* as in plate.

We're going to begin with a phonetic alphabet. Pay close attention to the position of my tongue and my lips.

Ay	Ee	Eye	Em	Kew	You	Why
Bee	Eff	Jay	En	Are	Vee	Zed
Cee	Gee	Kay	Oh	Ess	Double-You	
Dee	Aitch	El	Pee	Tee	Eks	

Let's stop a moment and talk about some of these sounds. *T* and *D* need close attention. For both *T* and *D* the tip of your tongue should gently flick the ridge behind your upper teeth. Repeat after me: tee, tee, tee, tee...tu, tu, tu tu....dee, dee, dee, dee...du, du, du, du.

The letters *L*, *N* and *Z* take up similar positions, but the tongue remains in this spot for a fraction longer: repeat after me... el, el, el, el... la, la, la, la. Now the En sound ...en, en, en, en...nar, nar, nar, nar.

At the end of the alphabet we have the Zed sound.

The trick here is to place the tongue near to (BUT NOT TOUCHING) the ridge behind your upper teeth. The sound is hard and the tongue stays in one position. Once again, repeat after me....zed, zed, zed...zee, zee, zee, zee.

For the letters *F* and *V* both lips come together.

The first half of the sound (...e...) begins at the back of the mouth then the lips almost close and the sound is squeezed out like this...eff, eff, eff, eff...fu, fu, fu, fu. The *V* sound can only be made by bringing the lips together like this....vee, vee, vee, vee...vu, vu, vu, vu.

Another difficult sound is the letter *R*. Watch how my tongue moves in my mouth. The sound begins at the top of my mouth and then falls to the bottom of my mouth...like this ra, ra, ra, ra...rar, rar, rar, rar.

The Tee-aitch or *TH* sound is another that bothers many students learning English as a second language.

For this sound to be clear you must place your tongue between your teeth like this...the, the, the, the...they, they, they, they...there, there, there, there...them, them, them, them.



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Now, we are going to turn those sounds and shapes into words. Once again pay close attention to the position of my tongue and my lips.

First are the consonants, as in:

P in	N ews	F all	a Round
B ar	Ki NG	V ery	SH out
T an	L oop	TH em	mea S ure
D eer	ba L L	TH ug	H is
K ind	W ill	S ix	CH ip
G ood	WH ale	Z oo	J ab
M end			Y ear

Next, we have the vowel sounds and the diphthongs, as in

sEE	sm Al l	pl A te	EAr
l Ip	bO ok	gO	w EAr
t En	tw O	kn If e	m O re
b A ck	U p	c O unt	p O or
gl A ss	bIR d	bOY	
n O t	A bove		

In English there are two distinct types of vowel sounds – **hard** vowels and **soft** vowels: The hard vowel sounds are:

AH as in <i>car</i>	AY as in <i>day</i>	EE as in <i>feet</i>
AW as in <i>paw</i>	OH as in <i>go</i>	OO as in <i>too</i>

The soft vowel sounds are:

a as in <i>cat</i>	e as in <i>pet</i>	i as in <i>hit</i>
o as in <i>cot</i>	u as in <i>hut</i>	oo as in <i>look</i>

If only English was that simple. Spelling alone is not necessarily a reliable guide to speaking English correctly. That is because English has STRESSED and UNSTRESSED syllables or, *long* syllables and *short* syllables.

Take the word father. We stress the first syllable *f-a-r*, but the second syllable is short and sounds like 'u' as in *thu*. So instead of saying *f-a-r-th-e-r*, we say *f-a-rth*. Here is another word - *motor*. We do not say *moh-tor*; we say *moh-tu*.

It is important to note that it is not only the first syllable that is stressed. In this next word,



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reminder, it is the second syllable that is stressed. We do not say *ree-mine-der*, we say *re-m-i-n-e da*. The first and last syllables are unstressed. Try it yourself –re-MIND-u.

In our next word- *deprive* - it is the second syllable that is stressed, as in *de-p-r-i-v-e*. As you will have already discovered in English, you do not always SAY what you SEE.

The best way to understand stressed and unstressed vowels is to listen to native speakers of English and follow their example.

This next exercise brings together the various shapes and sounds. Many of the words here are quite silly...they have been created simply to produce the correct shape and sound. And yet again, pay close attention to the position of my tongue and my lips.

Bar Bay Bee Baw Boe Boo Bow Boy Bue
Car Cay Cee Caw Coe Coo Cow Coy Cue
Dar Day Dee Daw Doe Doo Dow Doy Due
Far Fay Fee Faw Foe Foo Fow Foy Feu
Gar Gay Gee Gaw Goe Goo Gow Goy Geu
Har Hay Hee Haw Hoe Hoo How Hoy Heu
Jar Jay Jee Jaw Joe Joo Jow Joy
Lar Lay Lee Law Loe Loo Low Loy
Mar May Mee Maw Moe Moo Mow Moy Meu
Nar Nay Nee Naw Noe Noo Now Noy Neu
Par Pay Pee Paw Poe Poo Pow Poy Peu
Kwar Kway Kwee Kwaw Kwoe Kwoo Kwow Kwoy
Rar Ray Ree Raw Roe Roo Row Roy
Sar Say See Saw Soe Soo Sow Soy Seu
Tar Tay Tee Taw Toe Too Tow Toy Teu
Var Vay Vee Vaw Voe Voo Vow Voy Veu
Wah Way Wee Waw Woe Woo Wow Woy
Yar Yay Yee Yaw Yoe Yoo Yow Yoy Yeu



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Zar Zay Zee Zaw Zoe Zoo Zow Zoy Zhschoo

Practise all of the shapes and sounds in Lesson 1 until they LOOK and SOUND like mine.

Lesson 2

Now we can begin to build on our knowledge of shapes and sounds. These phrases should be practised in front of a mirror. Remember, pay attention to the position of both the tongue and the lips.

Big bright beams

Clear clean clouds

Dull drowsy dunces

Fifteen failing farmers

Great glowing globes

Help happy hermits

Jolly joking jugglers

Kind kiosk keepers

Lovely loyal ladies

Moody mellow managers

Ninety noisy nerds

Pretty playful pirates

Query quaint quotes

Rowdy royal radio

Sing sweet songs

Ten tempting tastes



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Very vivid vegetables

Willing workers wave

Young yelling yankee

Zany zoo zebra

CH ... Cherish cheerful chaps

SH ... Show shaking shark

ZH ... Measure pleasurable leisure

WH ... Whimper when whipped

TH ... Those thick threads

THR ... Three thrilling threats

NG ... Bring spring songs

BR ... Brave breathing breeder

CR ... Crafty creeping crawler

DR ... Drained dreary drunk

FR ... Freezing fresh freight

GR ... Great green grass

Practise all of the shapes and sounds in Lesson 2 until they LOOK and SOUND like mine.

In Lesson 3 ...

We are going to take some of these words and shapes and put them into sentences:

Bob built the bridge because he was a bridge builder

A quick pick is rather slick

Soon it will be too late to see the moon



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Toil and oil keep the world on the boil

What a wonderful day to play in the woods

Our dog is not fond of some foods

Please pick a pile of pebbles

Ears allow us to hear near and far

A valiant victory is valued highly

A curt alert saved Bert from hurt

The great ghost groaned and gurgled

The soldiers were sent to secure the six zebras which had escaped from the central zoo, and whose escapades had jeopardised the safety of the citizens

The rare dairy fairy was wary

Lomax lingered long and lovingly when asked to take his farewell from the lovely valley and to return to his home

The course allows you to create some credits

Silly people sacrifice anything to satisfy their greed

He pleaded to be heeded when he turned sixteen

Terrible tempers only add to their torment

Send twenty pairs to every ten men

The court was told there were no oars on board

Famous follies appeal to the viewer

Practise all of the shapes and sounds in Lesson 3 until they LOOK and SOUND like mine.

Lesson 4 is about the colour of words

Here we are going to create another level of difficulty. As well as enunciating the words I also want you to add light and shade to those same words. Imagine that every word you speak



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has a colour ... bright colours for happy words and dark colours for sad or angry words.

Let me give you an example. The phrase “*The Merry Miss*” is a bright colour and bright colours are generally spoken with a smile...just like mine now. However, if I say “*The angry man*” I am using a dark colour and dark colours are generally spoken with a face that looks angry. Look at me... “*The angry man*”. All right, let us now speak these new phrases.

The merry miss	A rippling brook
The dancing diva	Brown rustling leaves
The horrible child	Tiny tinkling trinkets
The delicious food	A resounding claps of thunder
The dreary day	Soft muffled drums
The moaning and groaning	Bribery is a crime
The raging storm	A sudden sharp cry!
The angry man	Spiky holly leaves
The cheerful shopper	Soft soothing music
Three thirsty birds	Fluffy baby chicks
The whispering wind	A searing scream
The howling wolves	A sparkling display
The wary animals	Tiny tigers tumbling
The ferocious giant	What a high skyscraper!
The rushing river	It's such a lovely surprise!
The tremendous explosion	Where have you been?

Finally, in **Lesson 5** we are going to take the shapes and sounds and words that we have learned and put them into everyday speech.

Reading exercises

1.- Hello. I trust you are well. I have been looking forward to meeting you for such a long time. We have so many things to talk about. I like people with bright and bubbly personalities and people who enjoy a good joke. People with dull personalities are not so agreeable. They tend to be grey and dull and I think of them as being clumsy and dreamy.



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- 2.- When I was on holidays I saw a collision between two motorbikes. They must have been travelling very fast because the impact ripped the front wheel off one of the bikes. People walking past stopped and helped the injured riders. It did not appear as if either rider was seriously injured.
- 3.- In my experience rich people are usually very shrewd and take great pleasure in counting their money. Some even own bricks of gold that can weigh as much as one kilogram. They choose to buy gold to protect their capital when events such as the Global Financial Crisis occur. I just wish that I had some gold. I expect you do, too.
- 4.- The merry maid enjoyed dancing in the sunbeams, but she was not so happy when a resounding clap of thunder rolled across the sky. A lovely day had suddenly turned into a dreary day and the raging storm caused her to get very wet. She heard a sudden shrill cry and looked up to see her mother waving for her to come in out of the rain. She ran as fast as she could through the rippling brook and was soon inside her house, where it was warm and dry.
- 5.- I was stroking my chin the other day and thinking about all the things I wanted to do. I decided that first of all I should read another chapter from my book. It is a small book about birds. I love the sound of chirping birds almost as much as I love the sound of rushing water and listening to soft soothing music.

Congratulations! You have completed the tutorial. It's hard work learning another language, isn't it? But as with most things in life, you only get back what you put in; which means you must continue to practise at every opportunity. The more you practise, the more comfortable you will become with the shapes and sounds of the English language. Thank you and goodbye for now.