Make your audience listen *to you*

1. Word pronunciation

On the next page, you can find a complete table of English sounds, but here are some particularly tricky sounds and common pronunciation mistakes.

- Schwa **/ə/** and its variant

- 🇬🇧 **/p/ /t/ /k/** ≠ 🇫🇷 **/p/ /t/ /k/**

- **/θ/** and **/ð/**

- **/h/**

- Short vs. long vowels **(:)**

- **"o"** diphthongs /əʊ/
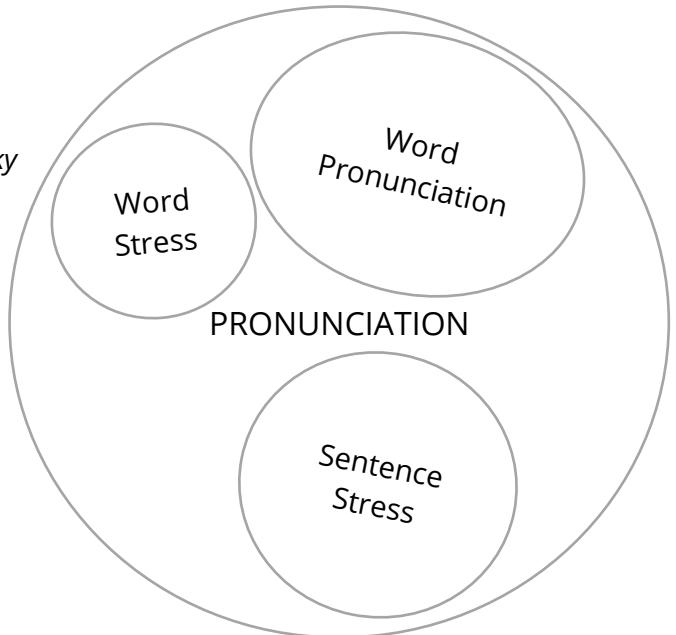
- **Silent letters**

  island, knee, knife, know, knowledge, knuckle, wrong, wrought, castle, listen, bomb, psychology, pneumatic, cupboard, answer, handsome, half, calm, Christmas, architect, mortgage, receipt, climb, doubt, debt, subtle, fault, could, should, talk, walk, salmon, card, park, farm, burn, work, storm, honest, hour, heir, chocolate, vegetable, interesting, weigh, who, whole, miserable, comfortable, restaurant, parliament, eventually, actually, prisoner, favourite, temperature, literature, column, debris, gauge, design, align, resign, business, plumber, fasten, listen...

Word Stress

Word Pronunciation

PRONUNCIATION

Sentence Stress

Vowels		
IPA	**Examples**	
/i/	happ**y**	
/iː/	**ea**se, s**ee** (GB)	
/ɪ/	c**i**ty, b**i**t	
/ɛ/	b**e**d, b**e**t	
/æ/	b**a**d, c**a**t	
/ə/	**a**bout, circ**u**s, ed**i**ble, gall**o**p, it**e**m	
/ɜː/	f**ur**, b**ir**d (GB)	
/uː/	b**oo**t, s**oo**n, l**o**se (GB)	
/u/	int**o**	
/ʊ/	p**u**t, f**oo**t, b**oo**k	
/ʌ/	r**u**n, en**ou**gh, **u**p, c**u**t	
/ɔː/	s**aw**, c**augh**t (GB)	
	m**ore** (GB)	
/ɑː/	f**a**ther, c**ar** (GB)	
/ɒ/	h**o**t (GB)	

Diphthongs & triphthongs		
IPA	**Examples**	
/aɪ/	r**i**se, m**y**	
/aʊ/	h**ou**se, n**ow**	
/ɔɪ/	n**oi**se, b**oy**	
/eɪ/	s**a**me, pl**ay**, b**ai**t	
/əʊ/	b**oa**t, n**o**se (GB)	
/ɪə/	d**eer**, n**ear**, h**ere** (GB)	
/ɛə/	p**ear**, th**ere** (GB)	
/ʊə/	p**oor** (GB)	
/aɪə/	f**ire** (GB)	
/aʊə/	fl**ower** (GB)	

You can write your own code in the 3rd column

Consonants		
IPA	**Examples**	
/b/	**b**ut, ca**b**	
/tʃ/	**ch**air, pic**t**ure	
/d/	**d**o, woo**d**	
/dʒ/	**j**udge, **g**in	
/f/	**f**ool, enou**gh**	
/g/	**g**o, ba**g**	
/h/	**h**am	
/k/	**c**at, **k**ill,	
/l/	**l**eft, p**l**ain	
/m/	**m**an, hi**m**	
/n/	**n**o	
/ŋ/	si**ng**er, ri**ng**	
/p/	**p**en, to**p**	
/ɹ/	**r**un, ve**r**y	
/ɹ/	he**re**, poo**r**, mo**re**, fi**re**, flow**er** (US)	
/s/	**s**ee, pa**ss**, **c**ity	
/ʃ/	**sh**e, **s**ure, emo**ti**on	
/t/	**t**o, ma**t**	
/θ/	**th**ing, no**th**ing	
/ð/	**th**is, fa**th**er, clo**the**s	
/v/	**v**oice	
/w/	**w**e	
/j/	**y**es	
/z/	**z**oo, ro**s**e**s**	
/ʒ/	plea**s**ure	

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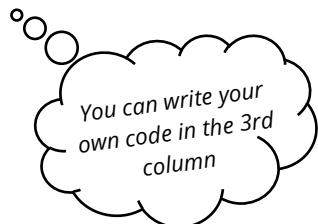
2. Word stress

In French, the stressed syllable is almost always the last one, but in English, it varies!

Stressed syllables have 3 main characteristics.
They are pronounced:

Louder   Longer   with a higher intonation

[Game]
Complete the maze by connecting the words that share the same pattern: Oo

Start	remove	city	even	climate	advice
guitar	measure	event	area	result	ocean
about	recipe	although	email	product	machine
become	again	problem	become	prefer	attempt
report	special	provide	enjoy	future	reply
repeat	dessert	homework	happy	amount	English
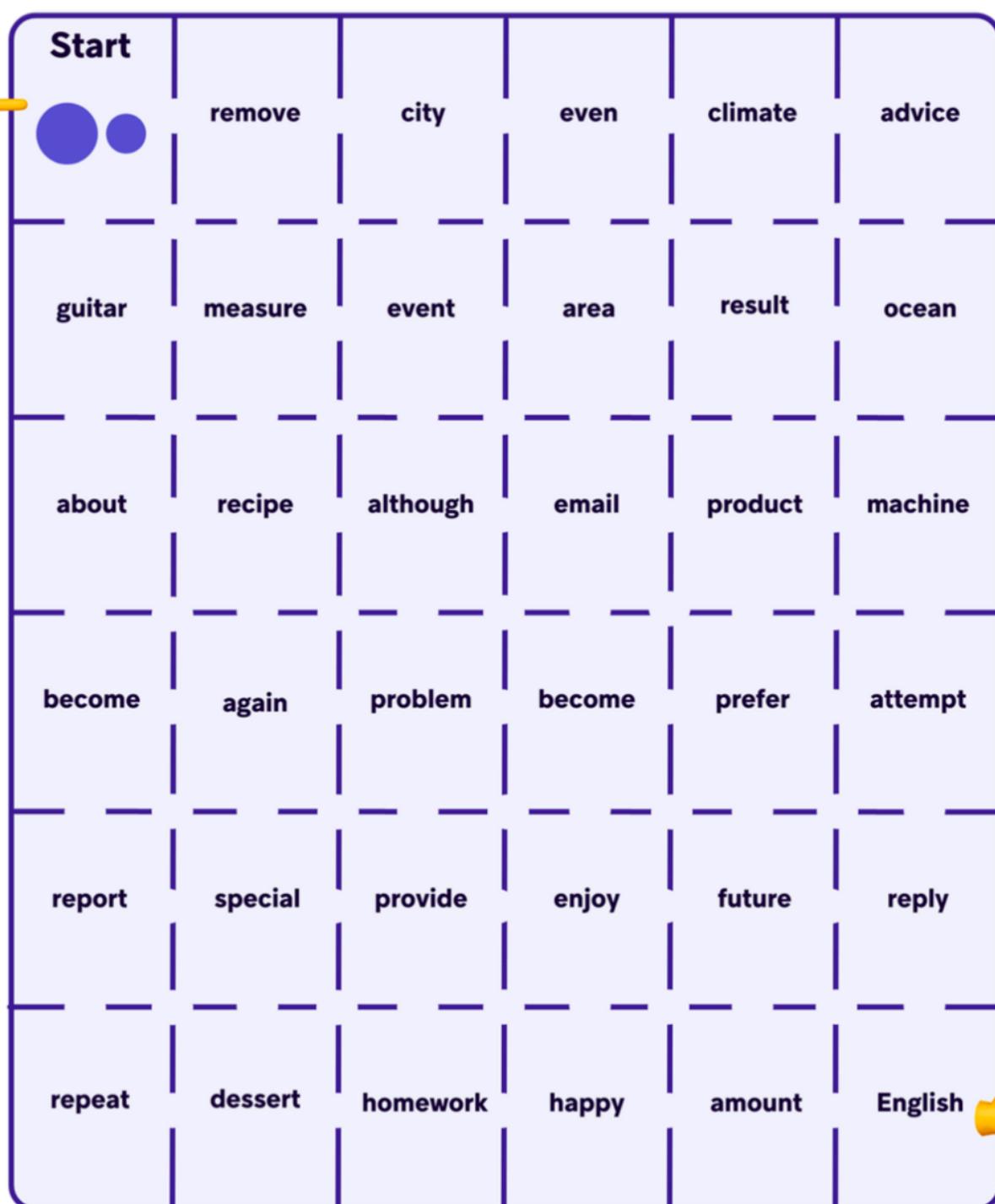
FINISH

Start	develop	spaghetti	marketing FINISH	media	adventure
romantic	scientist	examine	encourage	imagine	ambulance
progression	important	management	recycle	library	remember
understand	natural	eleven	amazing	november	industry
tomorrow	equation	analyse	computer	graduate	tomato
fantastic	december	beginning	government	united	republic

Start					
••••	information	scientific	romantic	presentation	development
management	certificate	professional	population	university	economic
progression	innovation	environment	consequence	sustainable	artificial
understanding	photograph	ukulele	application	geographic	ecological
independant	vegetable	psychology	analysis	conclusion	adventurous
fantastic	geometric	television	energetic	congratulations	government

FINISH

3. Sentence stress and focus words

In English sentences, some words are pronounced louder than others with a stronger intonation. We call them "**focus words**". They give rhythm to our sentences and help people understand us better. ***They are the secret to public speaking!***

« Types of focus words »
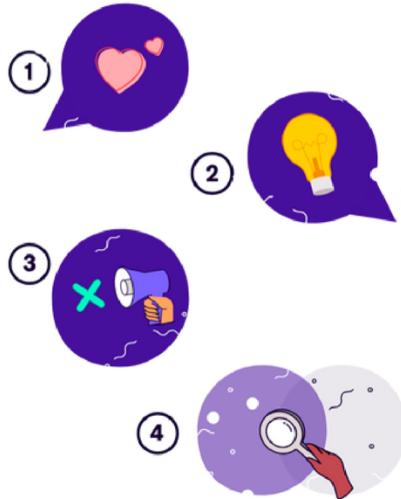
There are 4 main types of focus words:

Type 1 is used to express emotion.
   e.g. This is the BEST pizza ever!

Type 2 is used to highlight new or important information. It makes the message clearer.
   e.g. Have you seen my PHONE? I can't find it.

Type 3 is used to correct wrong information from the previous sentence.
   e.g. Do you live in Sydney?
      No, I live in LONDON.

Type 4 is used to make a contrast between two options or things.
   e.g. Is today Monday or Tuesday?

« Content words », you said?

How do we know which words are focus words?

Most of the time, focus words are « content words ». Content words are words that carry real meaning = the important information that we need to understand each sentence.

As you may have noticed, content words are usually nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs.

More examples:
I really enjoyed the show!
Would you like some tea or coffee?
I would love to go to Ireland!

Example:

Where's the best place to have coffee?

Rachel
What are your plans for the holidays?

You
I would love to go **TO** Ireland!

What do you mean?
You would love to go to Ireland **TOO**? Who else is going?

Let's focus … on the right words

Did you know?
Focus words can change the meaning of a sentence.

If you don't stress the right word, people will not understand what you're saying.

In the example on the left, Tim insisted on the word « to » instead of « love ».

Tim should have said :
I would LOVE to go to Ireland !

When you prepare a presentation, or simply talk to a friend… Remember to focus on the right words.

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/!\ Auxiliary verbs /!

Auxiliary verbs in English (e.g. be, do, have, will, can) are often unstressed in positive sentences (e.g. Can she **sing**?) but are focus words in negative sentences (e.g. **Can't** she **sing**? **No**, she **can't**.)

Can you <u>wait</u>?   <u>Can't</u> you <u>wait</u>?
She can <u>drive</u>.   <u>Can't</u> she <u>drive</u>?
Do you <u>know</u>?   <u>Don't</u> you <u>know</u>?
Will you <u>come</u>?   <u>Won't</u> you <u>come</u>?
Are you <u>coming</u>?   <u>Aren't</u> you <u>coming</u>?