

Chapter 3  
Part 2



Phonetics  
Engl 328

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# How combining with other sounds affects pronunciation of consonants

The Phonological rules determine the way in which the consonants should be pronounced depending on the combination with other consonants.

What do we mean by Phonological rules?

The changes that are determined by the rules of the language.

What do the phonological rules tell us?

- what sounds can occur in which positions.
- What sounds can combine with what other sounds
- How the sounds are pronounced when they combine with other sounds.

# How combining with other sounds affects pronunciation of consonants

What are the phonological rules of English?

1. **All the consonants can occur in all positions: initial, middle and final except /ʒ/ and /ŋ/ which cannot be found in the initial position.**

E.g. Angle /æŋgəl/, sing /sɪŋ/  
pleasure /plʌʒz/, garage /gəɾɑʒz/

2. **The pronunciation of some sounds differs depending on the position in which they occur.**

- The voiceless plosives /p/, /t/, and /k/ are aspirated when occur in the initial, but the voiced plosives /b/, /d/, and /g/ are not.

E.g. pack /pæk/, back /bæk/  
tin /tɪn/, din /dɪn/  
cap /kæp/, gap /gæp/

- There is no aspiration in middle and final positions even with voiceless plosives.

E.g. copy /kɑpi/, city /sɪti/, skinny /skɪni/

- The plosives are not released in the final position.

E.g. lip /lɪp/, meet /mi:t/, food /fu:d/

- It is sometimes difficult to differentiate between the final consonants when plosives occur in the final position.

E.g. seat /si:t/ and seed /si:d/

# How combining with other sounds affects pronunciation of consonants

What are the phonological rules of English?

### 3. The pronunciation of the plural suffix –s / -es or the marker of the third person singular verb in the present tense depends on the final sound.

- If it is a voiceless consonant other than /s/, /ʃ/, and /tʃ/ the suffix –s or –es is pronounced as /s/.  
E.g. books /bʊk<sup>s</sup>/, eats /i:t<sup>s</sup>/, laughs /læf<sup>s</sup>/
- If it is a voiced consonant other than /z/, /ʒ/, and /dʒ/ the suffix –s or –es is pronounced as /z/.  
E.g. bags /bæg<sup>z</sup>/, bills /bɪl<sup>z</sup>/, saves /seɪv<sup>z</sup>/
- If it is /s/, /ʃ/, /tʃ/, /z/, /ʒ/, or /dʒ/ the suffix –s or –es is pronounced as /ɪz/.  
E.g. catches /kætʃ<sup>ɪz</sup>/, pushes /pʊʃ<sup>ɪz</sup>/, judges /dʒʌdʒ<sup>ɪz</sup>/

### 4. The pronunciation of the past tense suffix –d or –ed depends on the final sound.

- If it is a voiceless consonant other than /t/ the suffix –d or –ed is pronounced as /t/.  
E.g. grouped /gru:p<sup>t</sup>/, laughed /læf<sup>t</sup>/, pushed /pʊʃ<sup>t</sup>/
- If it is a voiced consonant other than /d/ the suffix –d or –ed is pronounced as /d/.  
E.g. loved /lʌv<sup>d</sup>/, robbed /rɒb<sup>d</sup>/, called /kɔld<sup>d</sup>/
- If it is /t/ or /d/ the suffix –d or –ed is pronounced as /ɪd/.  
E.g. shouted /ʃaʊt<sup>ɪd</sup>/, pleaded /pli:d<sup>ɪd</sup>/

# How grammar affects the pronunciation of consonants

**When nouns end in a voiceless fricative such as /s/, /θ/ or /f/ the verbs will end with voiced fricatives such as /z/, /ð/ or /v/. So it differs whether they are nouns or verbs in the pronunciation of the final consonant.**

E.g.

Use → /ju:s/ (n), /ju:z/ (v)

Excuse → /ɪkskjʊ:s/ (n), /ɪkskjʊ:z/ (v)

Breath → /bri:θ/ (n), /bri:ð/ (v)

Mouth → /maʊθ/ (n), /maʊð/ (v)

Safe → /saɪf/ (n), /seɪv/ (v)

Proof → /pru:f/ (n), /pru:v/ (v)

# How spelling affects the pronunciation of consonants

**1- There are some letters in English that have different pronunciation depending on the spelling. These letters are C, G, Q, X, N, and S.**

## **(C)**

It is pronounced /s/ when it occurs before the letter E, I, or Y. Otherwise it is pronounced /k/.

E.g. Cell /sɛl/, City /sɪti/, Cycle /saɪkəl/

Cream /kri:m/, Climb /klaɪm/, credit /kɹɪdɪt/

## **(G)**

It is pronounced /dʒ/ when it occurs before the letter E, I, or Y. Otherwise it is pronounced /g/.

E.g. Gender /dʒendə/, Gin /dʒɪn/, Gym /dʒɪm/

Guide /gaɪd/, Google /gu:ɡəl/, Good /ɡʊd/

## **(Q)**

Usually it combines with U and is pronounced /kw/ after A, E, I and O

E.g. queen /kwi:n/, equal /i:kwəl/

However sometimes it combines with U but is pronounced /k/, especially in words of foreign origin

E.g. antique /ənti:k/, mosquito /mɒski:tə/

# How spelling affects the pronunciation of consonants

## (X)

It is pronounced /ks/ in middle and final positions.

E.g. box /bɒks/, text /tekst/, extra /ɪkstra/

It is pronounced /gz/ when it occurs between two vowels

E.g. exact /egzækt/, exult /egzʌlt/

It is pronounced /z/ when it occurs in the initial position

E.g. xerox /zi:rɒks/, xenon /zi:nɒn/

## (N)

It is pronounced /n/ in initial, middle, and final positions except when it is followed by /g/ or /k/ where it is pronounced /ŋ/

E.g. sing /sɪŋ/, think /θɪŋk/

## (S)

It has four different pronunciations; /s/, /z/, /ʃ/, and /ʒ/

E.g. /s/ → soon /su:n/

/z/ → please /pli:z/

/ʃ/ → insure /ɪnʃu:r/ (When -SURE, or \_SION follows a consonant letter such as N, S, or L)

/ʒ/ → vision /vɪʒɪn/ (When -SURE, -SION, or SUAL follows a vowel)

# How spelling affects the pronunciation of consonants

2- There are a few consonant letter sequences that are pronounced differently. These are CH, GH, and TH. These sequences, which consist of a pair of letters that represent a single sound is called digraphs.

## (CH)

It is sometimes pronounced /tʃ/

E.g. chat /tʃæt/, each /i:tʃ/

Other times it is pronounced /k/

E.g. technical /teknikəl/, character /kærəktɜː/

In words of French origin it is pronounced /ʃ/

E.g. machine /məʃiːn/

## (GH)

It is pronounced /g/ when it occurs in the initial position

E.g. Ghana /gænə/, ghee /giː/

It is pronounced /f/ when it occurs in the final position

E.g. laugh //læf/, rough /rʌf/

It is silent in words like:

Light /laɪt/, through /θruː/

## (TH)

It is pronounced /θ/ in words like: thank /θæŋk/

It is pronounced /ð/ in words like: than /ðæn/

It is pronounced /t/ in names like: Thompson /tʌmpsn/



# How spelling affects the pronunciation of consonants

**3- There are some consonant letters that are not pronounced and called silent letter. These occur initially, medially, and finally.**

- **Initial position**

When a consonant letter occurs immediately before N, it is not pronounced.

E.g. Knee /**n**i:/, gnat /**n**æt/

When words begin with PS, P is silent

E.g. psyche /**s**aɪk/, psychology /**s**aɪkɒlədʒi/

When words begin with WR, W is silent

E.g. write /**r**aɪt/, wrap /**r**æp/

- **Middle position**

When L occurs after A and immediately before F, V, K, or M it is silent

E.g. half /hɑ:f/, talk /tɔk/

L is silent in the modal verbs

E.g. should /ʃʊd/, could /kʊd/

When G occurs after a vowel and immediately before M or N it is silent.

E.g. design /dɪzain/, paradigm /pəˈrædəɪm/

When T occurs after F or S and before –EN or –LE, it is silent

E.g. often /ɒfɪn/, listen /lɪsɪn/

- **Final position**

When B or N occurs in the final position after M, it is silent

E.g. climb /klaɪm/, damn /dæm/

This is all for today

SEE YOU NEXT WEEK 😊