

CAEP Guide to Pronunciation*

This package has been designed using the packages, *Pronunciation Power* and *Pronunciation Power II* to help Chinese speakers improve their English Pronunciation.

There are three parts to this package:

- 1) CAEP Pronunciation Guide to Vowels
- 2) CAEP Pronunciation Guide to Consonants
- 3) CAEP Pronunciation Guide to Consonant Clusters

Insert either *Pronunciation Power* or *Pronunciation Power II* into your computer and follow these instructions:

- 1) Go to “Lessons” and pick the appropriate sound. Watch the video and learn how to create the correct mouth movement – use a small mirror! It will help!
- 2) Go to “Exercises” and start with “Sample Words.” After finishing this section go to “Comparative Words,” “Listening Discrimination,” “S.T.A.I.R (*Pro. Power II* only), and then “Sentences.”
- 3) Record yourself at each step. When recording it is important to record yourself over and over until you sound the same as the model! It may take many times before you get it perfect. BUT don’t worry, keep going, and soon you will be a much better speaker of English!

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CAEP Pronunciation Guide to VOWELS

There are more VOWEL contrasts in English than in Chinese, so English VOWELS (A, E, I, O, and U) are closer to each other in terms of mouth position. That is, Chinese speakers must put in more effort to make the mouth position necessary to make each VOWEL.

So, here are some recommendations:

- 1) The sounds /i:/ (as in *eat* or *bean*) and the sound /I/ (as in *it* or *bin*) have no equivalent in Chinese so they can be difficult to identify.

Solution: Start with sound #1 (/i:/) and sound #2 (/I/).

- 2) The sounds /u:/ (as in *fool* or *Luke*) and the sound /ʊ/ (as in *full* or *look*) have no equivalent in Chinese so they can be difficult to identify.

Solution: Start with sound #7 (/u:/) and sound #8 (/ʊ/).

- 3) The sound /æ/ does not exist in Chinese. Learners tend to make it a nasal sound. Often the sound /æ/ (as in *cap*, *trap*, *happy*) is made to sound like *carp* (/kɑ:p/); *cup* (/kʌp/); or even 'kep'

Solution: Go to sound #5 (/æ/).

- 4) The sound /ɒ/ does not occur in Chinese. So a word like *Shot* might be pronounced *short*, *shout*, or /ʃʊt/

Solution: Go to sound #10 (/ɒ/).

- 5) The sound /ə/ is often replaced by /a/. So the words *fund* or *must* may be pronounced *Fond* or "mahst"

Solution: Go to sound #6 (/ə/).

CAEP Pronunciation Guide to CONSONANTS

1) There are three pairs of consonants in English called “plosives.” The pairs are as follows;

- 1) /p/ and /b/
- 2) /t/ and /d/
- 3) /k/ and /g/

In these pairs the last sounds /b/, /d/ and /g/ are voiced in English but are usually voiceless in Chinese. In other words Chinese speakers need to stress these consonants.

Solution:

Start with sound #19 (/p/) and sound #20 (/b/).

Start with sound #21 (/t/) and sound #22 (/d/).

Start with sound #23 (/k/) and sound #24 (/g/).

2) /v/ is absent from most Chinese dialects. Usually, Chinese speakers will pronounce this sound with an /f/ or even a /w/ sound. Live may be mispronounced ‘lif’ and invite may be mispronounced ‘inwite.’

Solution: Go to sound #29 (/v/) – compare this sound with sounds #28 (/f/) and #32 (/w/).

3) Many Chinese dialects do not distinguish /n/ and /l/. Learners speaking English may mispronounce words; “night” and “light” may be often mispronounced.

Solution: Start with sound #26 (/n/) and sound #30 (/l/).

CAEP Pronunciation Guide to CONSONANTS (cont.)

- 4) The sounds /θ/ and /ð/ do not occur in Chinese and are difficult to produce accurately for most Chinese speakers.

The sound /θ/ is likely to be replaced by /t/, /f/ or /s/. Thus, the word thin may be pronounced tin, fin or sin

The sound /ð/ is often replaced by /d/ or /z/. So, this may be pronounced 'dis' or 'zis.'

Solution: Start with sound #40 (/θ/) and sound #41 (/ð/).

- 5) The sound /z/ does not occur in most Chinese dialects. The usual error is to substitute with /s/. Thus, 'rise' is mispronounced 'rice.'

Solution: Go to sound #33 (/z/) – compare this with sound #35 (/ʒ/).

- 6) Often the consonants /l/ and /r/ are difficult to distinguish.

Solution: Start with sound #30 (/l/) and sound #31 (/r/).

CAEP Pronunciation Guide to Consonant Clusters

- 1) Initial consonant clusters such as “th” (#40 & 41), “thr” (#42), and ‘sp” (#44) are lacking in Chinese and cause problems. The common error is to slip in an extra vowel between the consonants, so that ‘spoon’ will be mispronounced ‘sagoon.’

Solution: Start with sounds “th” (#40 & 41), “thr” (#42), and ‘sp” (#44)

- 2) Final consonants are usually a problem for Chinese speakers. Usual mistakes are either adding an extra vowel at the end or dropping the consonant.

When speakers add an extra vowel words, like ‘duck’ are mispronounced as ‘ducka.’

When speakers drop the final consonant ‘duck’ is mispronounced ‘duh.’

Solution: Start with sounds #46, #47, #48, #49, #50, #51, and #52