

Pronunciation (British English)

L R /l/ /r/

V F <> W /v/ /f/ /w/

ZH SH <> S /ʒ/ /ʒ/ /z/

TH <> S /θ/ /ð/ /s/

Finishing Syllables

A-like Vowel Sounds

/ʊ/ /ʌ/ /ɑ/ /ə/

E-like Vowel Sounds

/æ/ /eə/ /i:/ /eɪ/ /ɪə/

O-like Sounds

/ʊ/ /u:/ /əʊ/ /ɔ:/ /ʊə/

The “L” and “R” Sounds

/l/ /r/

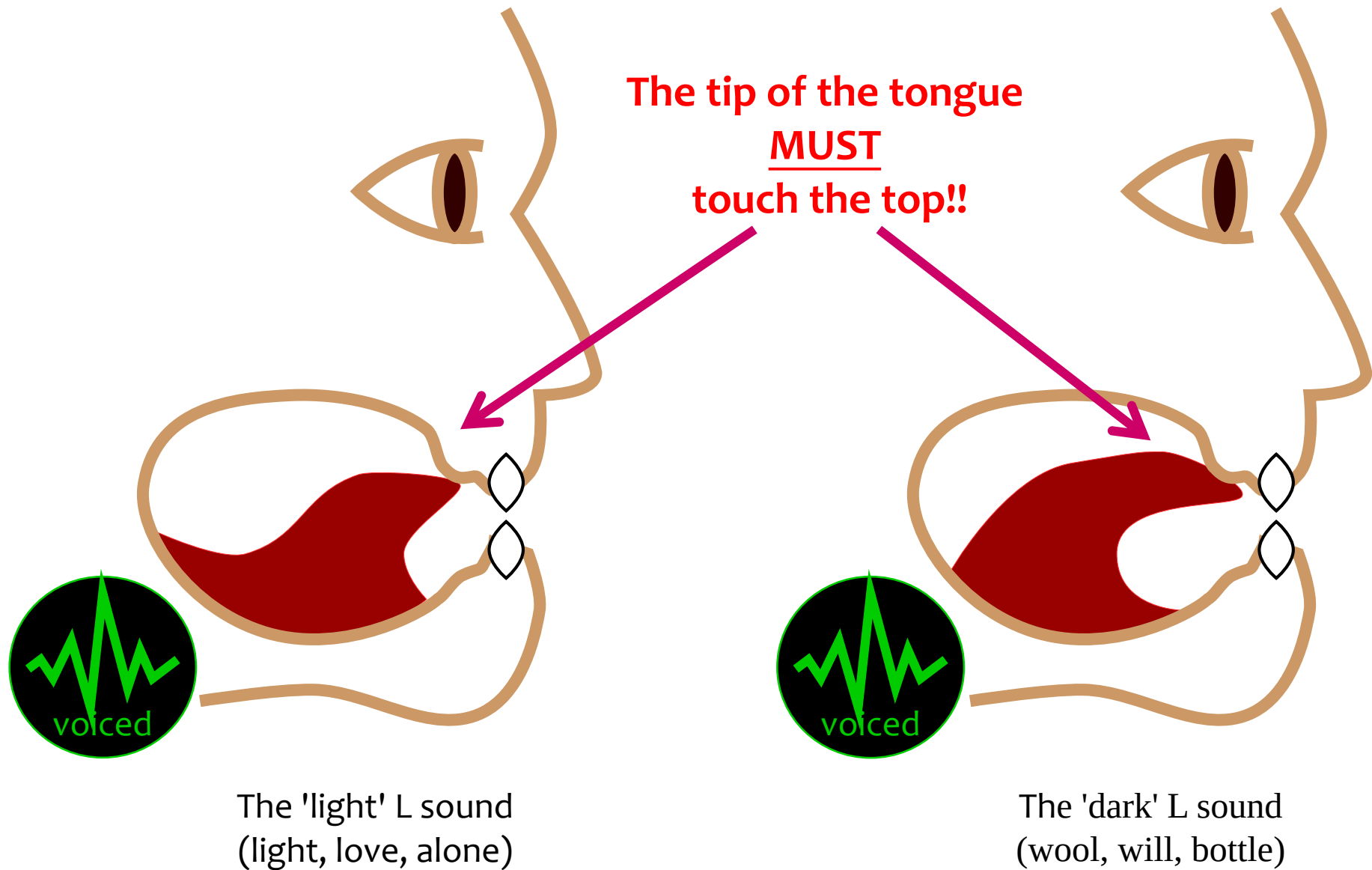
Videos:

Pronunciation Tips - 26 - Consonants L+R

Pronunciation Tips - 43 - Consonant L

Pronunciation Tips - Consonants 44 - R+L

The “L” Sound /l/



Tongue Twisters

L

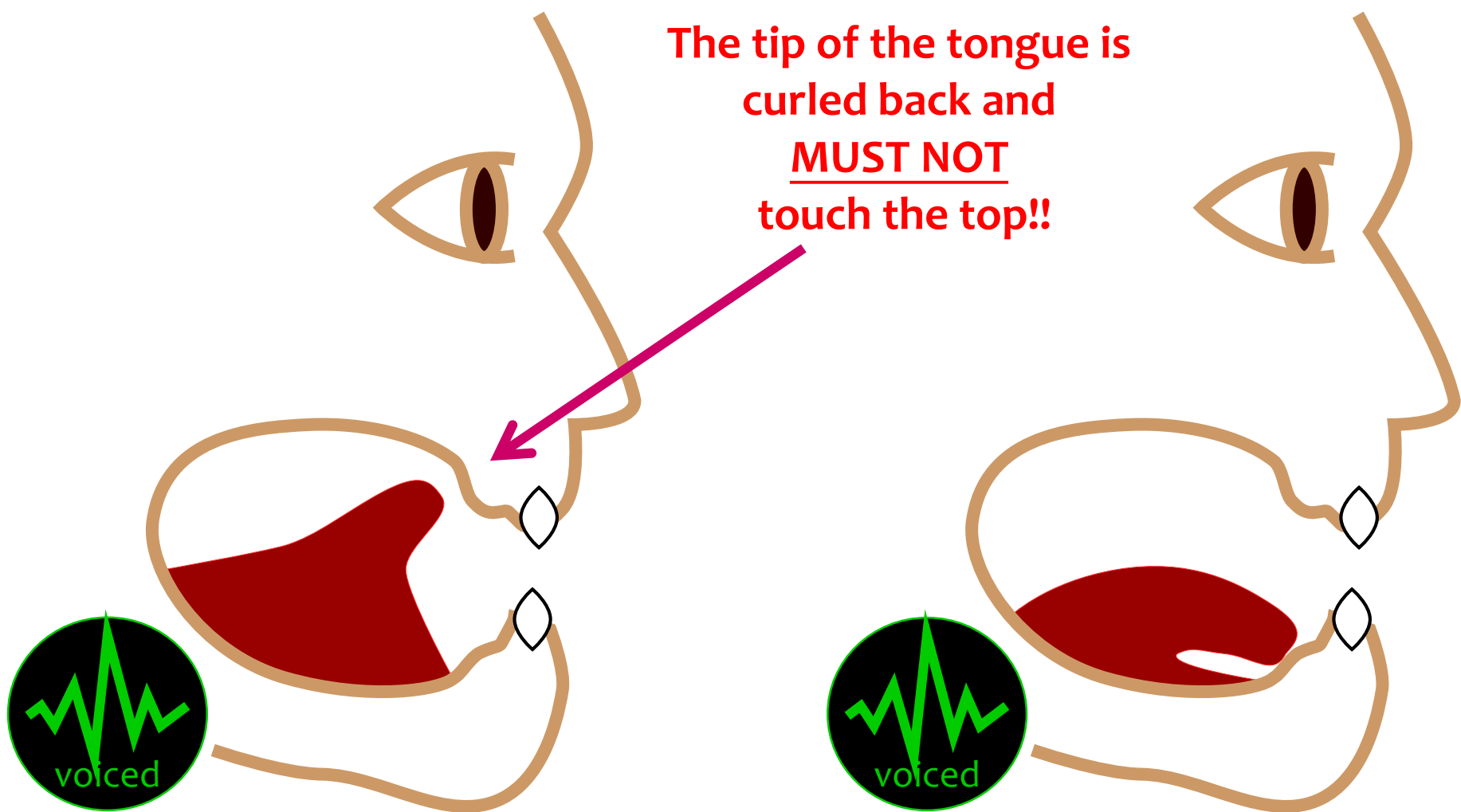
Listen closely: Lilly's lovely lullaby. (light)

The hall was full of wool. (dark)

A little bottle of cool lemonade. (light+dark)

All lonely ladies feel love call late in life. (light+dark)

The “R” Sound /r/



The R sound before a vowel
(road, red, write, parade)

The R sound after a vowel
in British English is not pronounced
(car, poor, market)

Tongue Twisters

R /r/

Rossini wrote three recitals requiring brass. (before)

Where were your four horses born? (after)

Car races are far from great in pouring rain. (mix)

Brewing beer remains our readers' traditional craft. (mix)

The rear row was thrilled to rest for thirty three hours. (mix)

Tongue Twisters

L+R /l/ /r/

Clearly lying for reasons only Leo recalls, Roland tried to control the poor jury.

Thrilled by her radiant aura, he fell in love.

Your caller read lots of market reports.

The wrinkly lady threw her red pills on the floor.

The crow flew over the river with a lump of raw liver.

A loyal warrior will rarely worry why we rule.

Race winners really want red wine right away!

A lusty lady loved a lawyer and longed to lure him from his laboratory.

Green glass globes glow eerily.

The “V”, “W” and “F” Sounds

/v/ /f/ /w/

Videos:

Pronunciation Tips - 24 - Consonants F+V

Pronunciation Tips - 35 - Consonants V+F

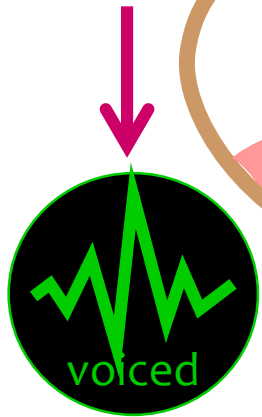
Pronunciation Tips - 45 - Consonants W+V

The “V”, “W” and “F” Sounds /v/ /f/

/w/

Do not pronounce the
“v” /v/ as a “w” /w/:
The lower lip touches
the upper teeth and
the lips are not puckered.

Voice turned
on.



The V sound /v/
(volt, believe, strive)



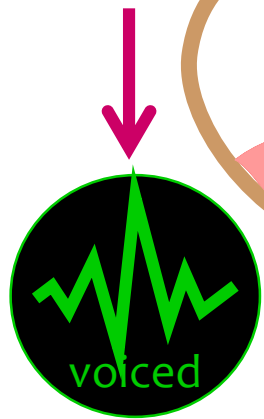
The W sound /w/
(wet, vowel, how?)

The “V”, “W” and “F” Sounds /v/ /f/

/w/

The tongue is not used
to make these sounds

Voice turned
on.



The V sound /v/
(volt, believe, strive)

Voice turned off:
only air



The F sound /f/
(fault, belief, strife)

Tongue Twisters

V /v/

Vladivostok wives love Slavic verbs.

The only verdict is vengeance.

Have you ever voiced Victor's vow?

Over and over the lovers turned over the covers.

Vivian visualised Dave's moves very vividly.

Tongue Twisters

F /f/

Forty-four officers were fired before their friend...
tough!

A fly and a flea flew into a flue,
Imprisoned they were, what could they do?
Said the flea: “let us fly.”
Said the fly: “let us flee.”
So they flew through a flaw in the flue.

Fred fed Ted bread, and Ted fed Fred bread.

Tongue Twisters

V+F+W /v/ /f/ /w/

I love watching the reef fish while diving.

The rover's flaw was visible at over fifty-five volts.

Do you have favourite flavours of vintage wine?

French farmers often use very fine wool.

Of all the felt I ever felt I never felt felt that felt like
that felt felt.

The “SH”, “ZH”, and “S” Sounds

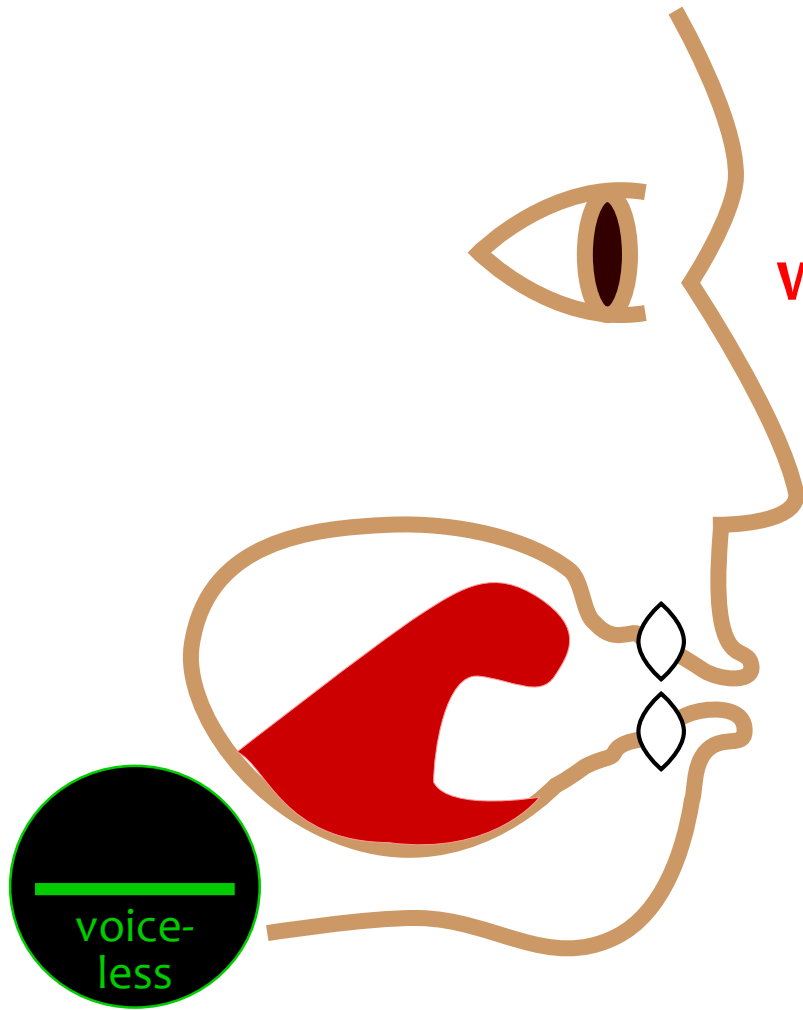
/ʃ/ /ʒ/ /z/

Videos:

Pronunciation Tips - 28 - Consonants SH+S
Pronunciation Tips - 38 - Voiced Consonant ZH

The “SH” and “S” Sounds /ʃ/ /s/

Do not pronounce the
“sh” as an “s”:
When speaking “sh”,
the lips are puckered,
When speaking “s” they are
Pulled back.

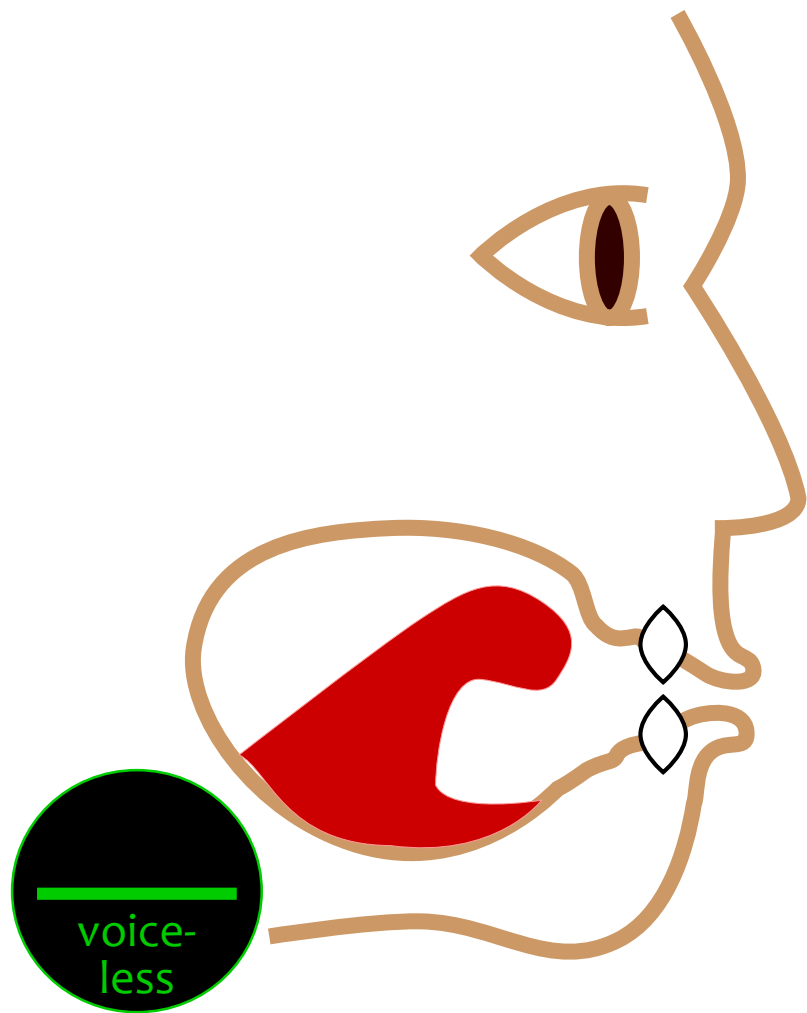


The SH sound /ʃ/
(ship, cashier, fish)

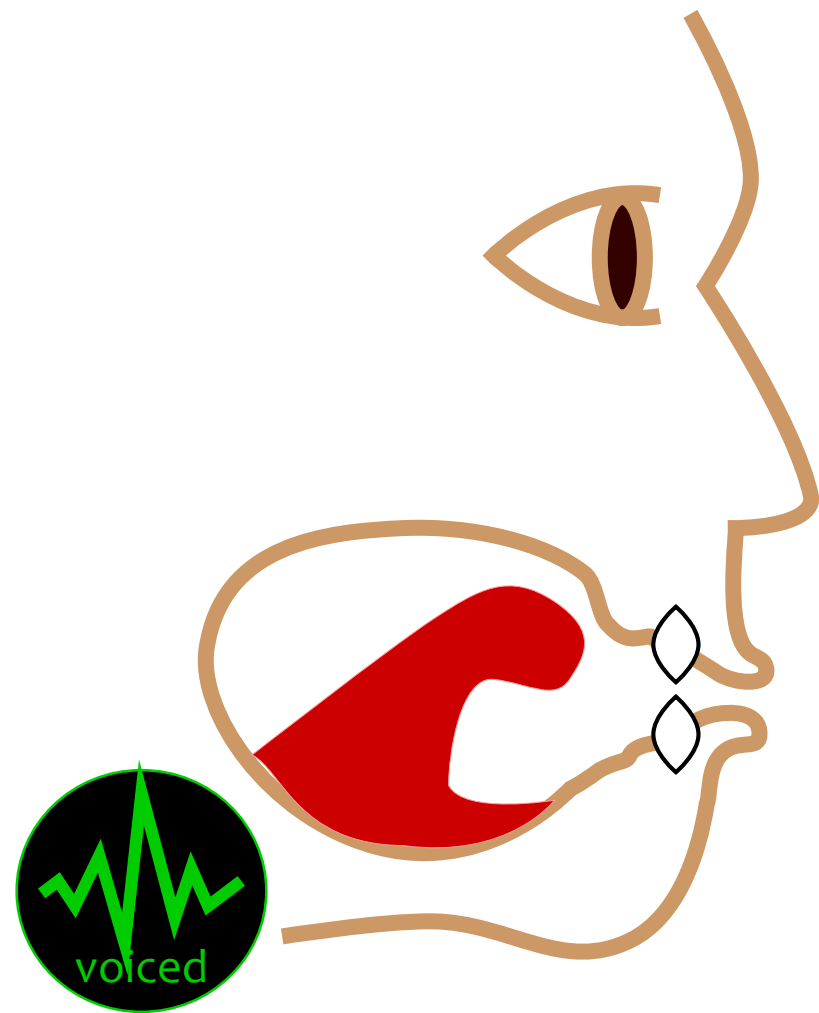


The S sound /s/
(sip, hassle, plus)

The “SH” and “ZH” Sounds /ʃ/ /ʒ/



The SH sound /ʃ/
(ship, hassle, plus)



The ZH sound /ʒ/
(leisure, beige)

Tongue Twisters

SH+S /ʃ/ /s/

The ship searched off-shore for sea shells.

Cash was stashed in shallow sacks.

Shush, these posh Russians don't rush.

She sells sea shells on the sea shore.

Tongue Twisters

ZH+S+Z /ʒ/ /s/ /z/

He visualised a leisurely life of pleasure.

I measure sixteen bronze treasures.

She seized several beige jackets.

Tongue Twisters

ZH+SH+S+Z /ʃ/ /ʒ/ /s/ /z/

The capsized ship lost its treasure.

The beige horse's race shut down the show.

It's his pleasure guessing the shrewd shrimp's measures.

Just visualise Sheherazade's crimson clothes.

The pasha shrugged, displeased with his servant's seizure.

The “TH”, “S”, and “Z” Sounds

/θ/ /ð/ /s/ /z/

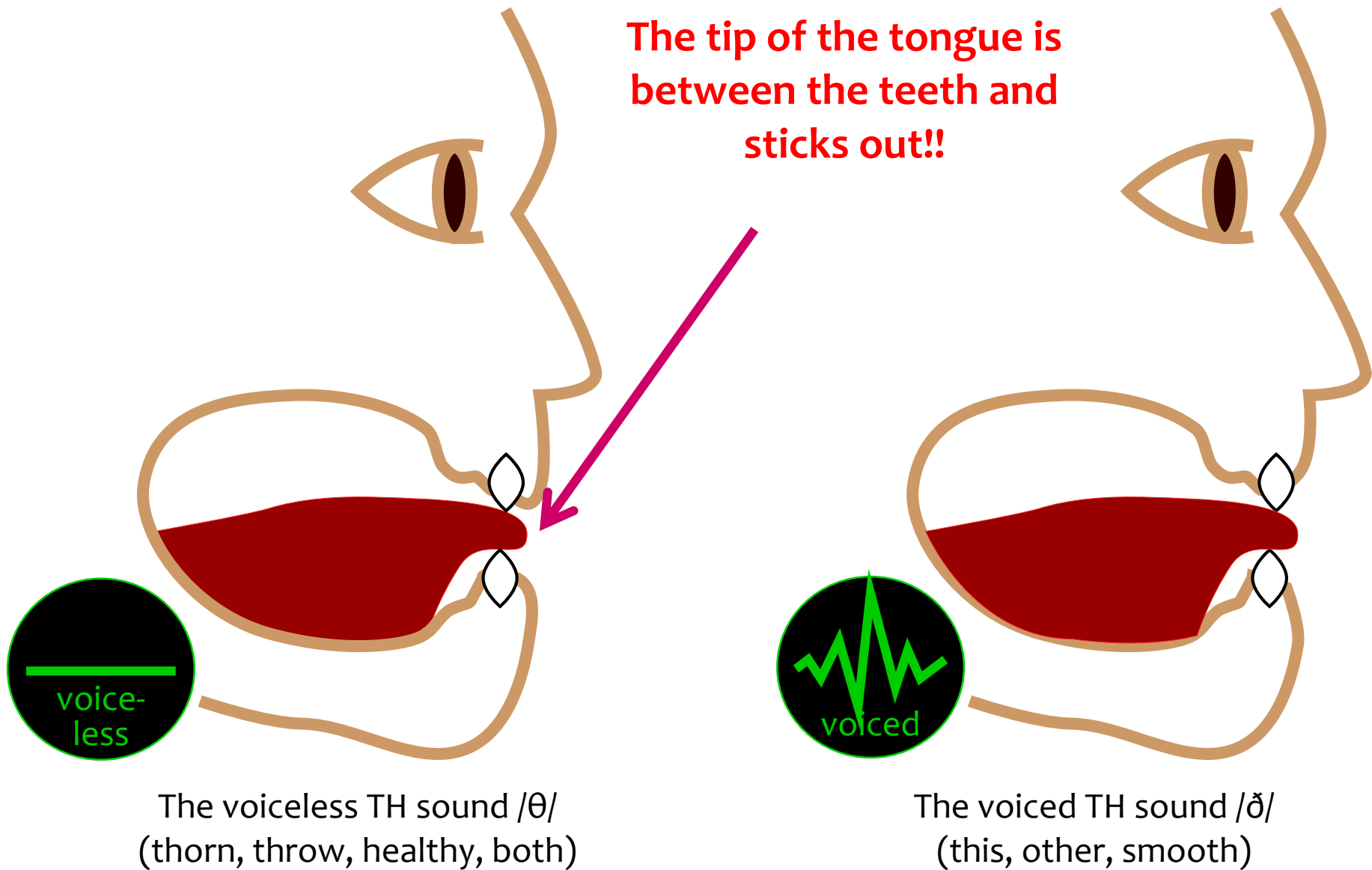
Videos:

Pronunciation Tips - 25 - Voiceless Consonant TH

Pronunciation Tips - 36 - Voiced Consonant TH

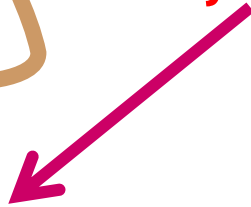
Pronunciation Tips - 27 - Consonants S+Z

The “TH” Sounds /θ/ /ð/



The “TH” Sounds /θ/ /ð/ compared with /s/ and /z/

Do not pronounce the
“th” as an “s” or “z”:
These are formed by biting
the teeth together and
widening the mouth, a
very different sound.



The S sound /s/
(sip, lacy, bus)



The Z sound /z/
(zip, lazy, buzz)

Tongue Twisters

TH /θ/ /ð/

Thousand thinkers were thinking. (voiceless only)

His mother soothed and bathed the others together.
(voiced only)

Did the other three thieves go through?

The cloth this smooth thug threw through the booth
was rather thick.

Tongue Twisters

TH /θ/ /ð/

Something in a thirty-acre thermal thicket of thorns and thistles thumped and thundered, threatening the thoughts of Matthew the thug, although, theoretically, it was only the thirteen-thousand thistles and thorns through the underneath of his thigh that the thirty year old thug thought of that morning.

Tongue Twisters

S+Z /s/ /z/

I saw Susie sitting in a shoe shine shop.
Where she sits she shines, and where she shines she
sits.

Denise sees the fleece,
Denise sees the fleas.
At least Denise could sneeze
and feed and freeze the fleas.

Tongue Twisters

TH+S+Z /θ/ /ð/ /s/ /z/

Three short sword sheaths.

Wash these saucers as soon as Elizabeth's birthday is past.

These Cheshire cats cast soothing smiles.

Sue threw those sixty-three rather zesty citrons in this sink.

Finishing Syllables

Videos:

Pronunciation Tips - 40 - Consonants N+NG

Finishing Syllables

In English, letters that are written are also pronounced, including letters at the end of a syllable.

Unlike Chinese, the end of a syllable can have many sound combinations, and must be pronounced correctly until the end. Especially the letters “n” and “ng” but also “s” and “t” or “d” cause problems.

Finishing Syllables

Examples:

“Ivan can be a mean man.”

In Chinese, “n” and “ng” at the end of a syllable is not really pronounced; the vowel sound is just lowered a bit towards the end of words like 看, 慢慢, 两. In English, however, the “n” sound at the end of a word is the same as at the beginning, and the “ng” sound at the end of a word is a thick sound pressing the back of the tongue against the top.

Practice:

Compare 南溪 with **“Nancy”**: the two “n”s in Nancy are the same!

Compare 龙宫 with **“long gone”**: the “ng” and “g” are both pronounced!

Finishing Syllables

Examples:

“The sand has a little bit of mass.”

For Chinese speakers, there are some problems here:

In Chinese, these sounds do not occur at the end of a syllable. To say “s” and “t” and the end of a syllable, you were taught to add a syllable which has an unstressed “e” sound (was: wa-se, bit: bi-te) but this sounds strange to a native speaker. You must practice to drop the unstressed “e” completely.

In Chinese, all vowel endings are voiced, but in English many are voiceless. “t” is voiceless. “d”, however, is voiced and has an unstressed “e” after it. Compare “bid” and “bit”.

An “s” at the end is sometimes a voiced “z” sound (has, was) and sometimes a voiceless “s” sound (mass, bus, race, boots).

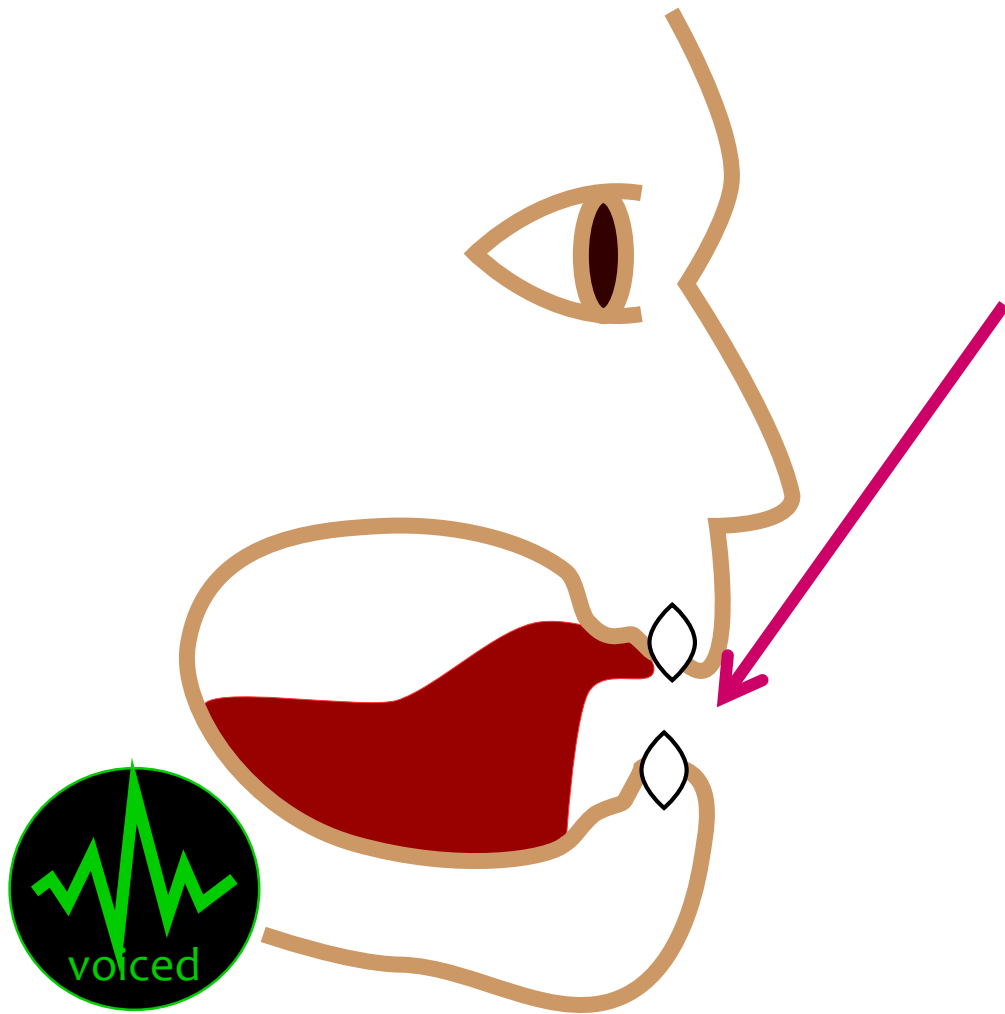
Voiceless: '-ss' (mass), '-s' with other consonants (boots), '-ce' (place),
-se after a consonant (nurse).

Voiced: 's' on its own after 'i' or 'a' (his, was). '-se' after any vowel (rose).

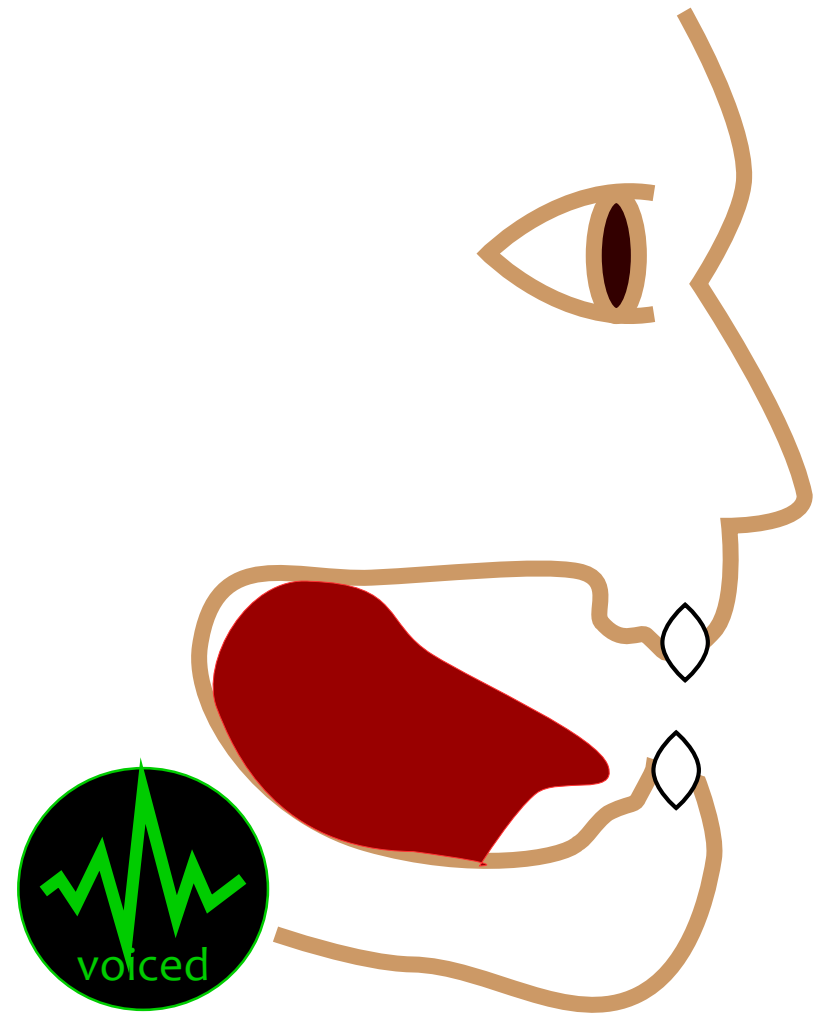
Practice:

Hat <> Had (voiceless <> voiced); Bus <> Buzz (voiceless <> voiced)

The “N” and “NG” Sounds /n/ /ŋ/



The “N” /n/
(sun)



The “NG” sound /ŋ/
(sung)

Tongue Twisters

Finishing Syllables

Brad was proud to have caught a fat trout.

His boss's bliss was his nurse's curse.

The buzzer caused increasing levels of fuss.

The weird lizard had a bit of a bite.

Odd: insects stress less over intimate friends.

A thousand little bottles of fizz and froth.

Tongue Twisters

Finishing Syllables

Another thin man can sing a long song.

Don't moan and learn that tone.

A thing a ping pong bat hit.

Chad had a chat with an innocent brat.

Pete, where Brad had had “had had”, had had
“had”. “Had had” had had the teacher's approval.

1st Semester Assessment

Practice the following sentences. The assessment is to say them in front of the teacher, who will give you a grade.

I had an unusually short chat with the others.

1. Differentiate between /d/ in "had" and the /t/ in "chat".
2. Pronounce both the /t/ in "short" and the /tʃ/ in chat.
3. Differentiate between /θ/ in "with" and /ð/ in "others".
4. Correctly pronounce "unusually" (/ʌnˈjuːʒʊəli/): /ʒʊə/ is difficult for Chinese.
5. Differentiate between the /ʃ/ in "short" and the /tʃ/ in "chat".

Any fool can sing that song.

1. Dark /l/ in fool.
2. Finish the words "can" (/n/), "sing" (/ŋ/) and "song" (/ŋ/).

A very wide view with a tall church tower.

1. /v/ followed by /w/ and vice versa: "very wide view".
2. Dark /l/ in "tall".

Vowels

Videos:

- Pronunciation Tips - 02 - Short Vowel U
- Pronunciation Tips - 03 - Short Vowel A
- Pronunciation Tips - 04 - Short Vowel O
- Pronunciation Tips - 05 - Short Vowel E Unstressed
- Pronunciation Tips - 06 - Short Vowel E Stressed
- Pronunciation Tips - 07 - Short Vowel AE
- Pronunciation Tips - 08 - Long Vowel EE
- Pronunciation Tips - 09 - Long Vowel OO
- Pronunciation Tips - 10 - Long Vowel A(r)
- Pronunciation Tips - 11 - Long Vowel O(r)
- Pronunciation Tips - 12 - Long Vowel U(r)

Diphthongs

Videos:

Pronunciation Tips - 13 - Diphthong IE
Pronunciation Tips - 14 - Diphthong UE
Pronunciation Tips - 15 - Diphthong AI
Pronunciation Tips - 16 - Diphthong OI
Pronunciation Tips - 17 - Diphthong OU
Pronunciation Tips - 18 - Diphthong AI(r)
Pronunciation Tips - 19 - Diphthong OW

A-like vowel sounds

/ʊ/ /ʌ/ /ɒ/ /ə/

Videos:

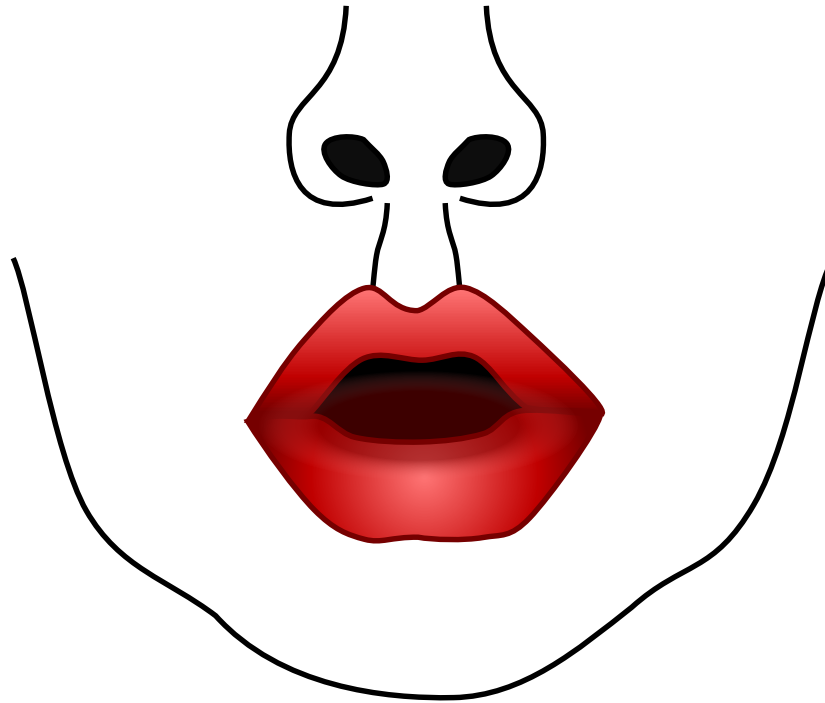
Pronunciation Tips - 04 - Short Vowel O

Pronunciation Tips - 02 - Short Vowel U

Pronunciation Tips - 03 - Short Vowel A

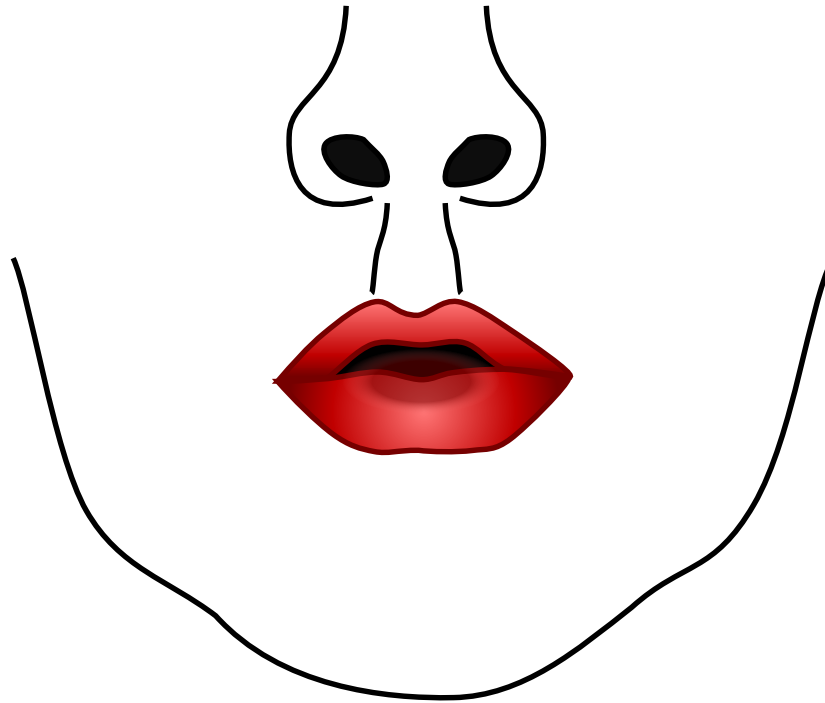
Pronunciation Tips - 05 - Short Vowel E Unstressed

The /ɒ/ Sound



Short vowel sound heard in ‘pot’, ‘lot’, ‘shot’.
Lips are puckered and mouth is big and rounded.

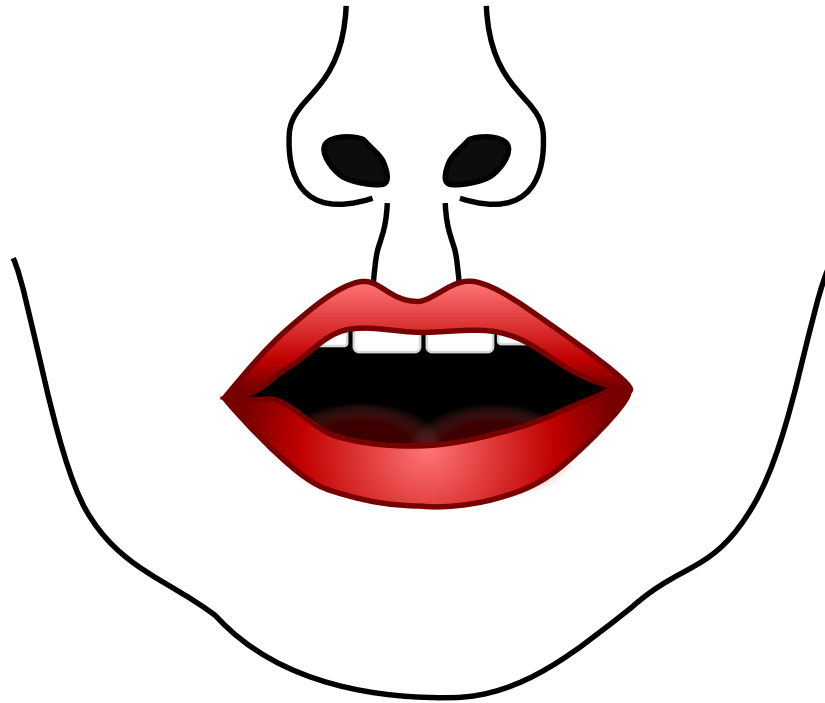
The /ʊ/ Sound



Short vowel sound heard in ‘put’, ‘foot’, ‘cute’.

Lips are puckered and mouth is rounded but smaller than for the /ɒ/ sound (‘lot’).

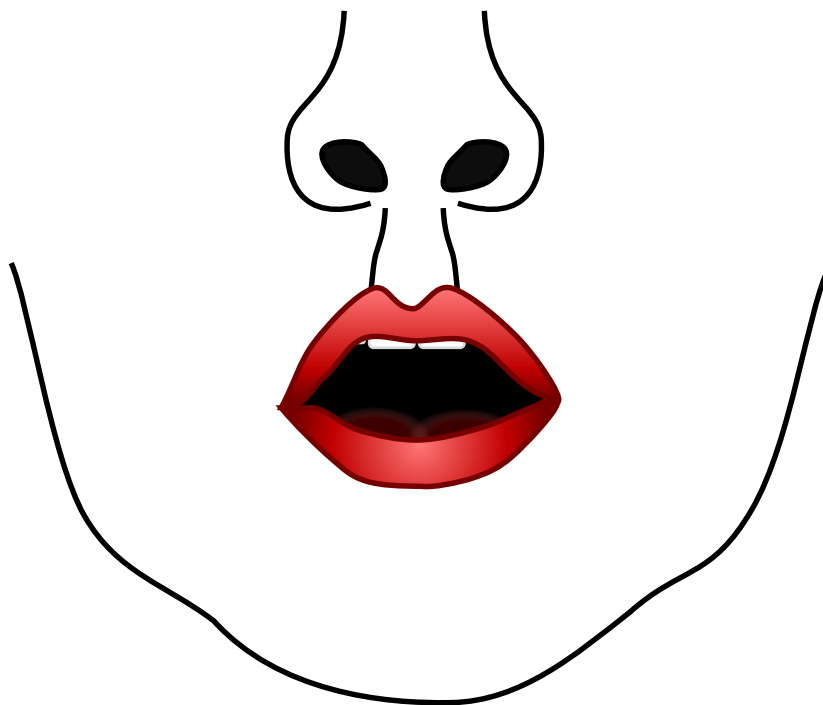
The /ʌ/ Sound



Short vowel sound heard in ‘mud’, ‘love’, ‘blood’.

Mouth is open but not quite as wide as for the /ɑ:/ sound
(‘car’).

The /ə/ Sound (“schwa”)



Short vowel sound heard in ‘**a**bout’, ‘teach**e**r’.

Mouth is just relaxed, and not forced open as with /ʌ/
(‘mud’).

Tongue Twisters

/ʊ/ /ʌ/ /ɒ/ /ə/

Bud put his good foot in a lot of mud.

I shot a pot to shards with a common gun.

Who looked for a cute dog to love mum?

Loving hotpot is common for lots of folks from Mongolia.

Pat put pots in Pete Pitt's place.

Todd loves toad-in-the-hole a lot.

E-like Vowel Sounds

/æ/ /eə/ /iː/ /eɪ/ /ɪə/

Videos:

Pronunciation Tips - 07 - Short Vowel AE

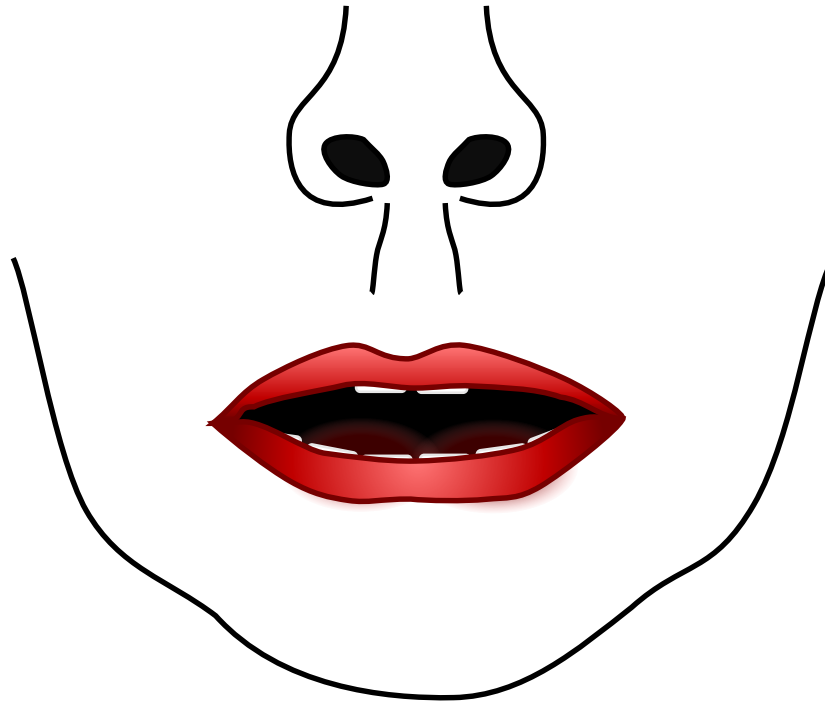
Pronunciation Tips - 18 - Diphthong AI(r)

Pronunciation Tips - 08 - Long Vowel EE

Pronunciation Tips - 13 - Diphthong IE

AY (Surprise video)

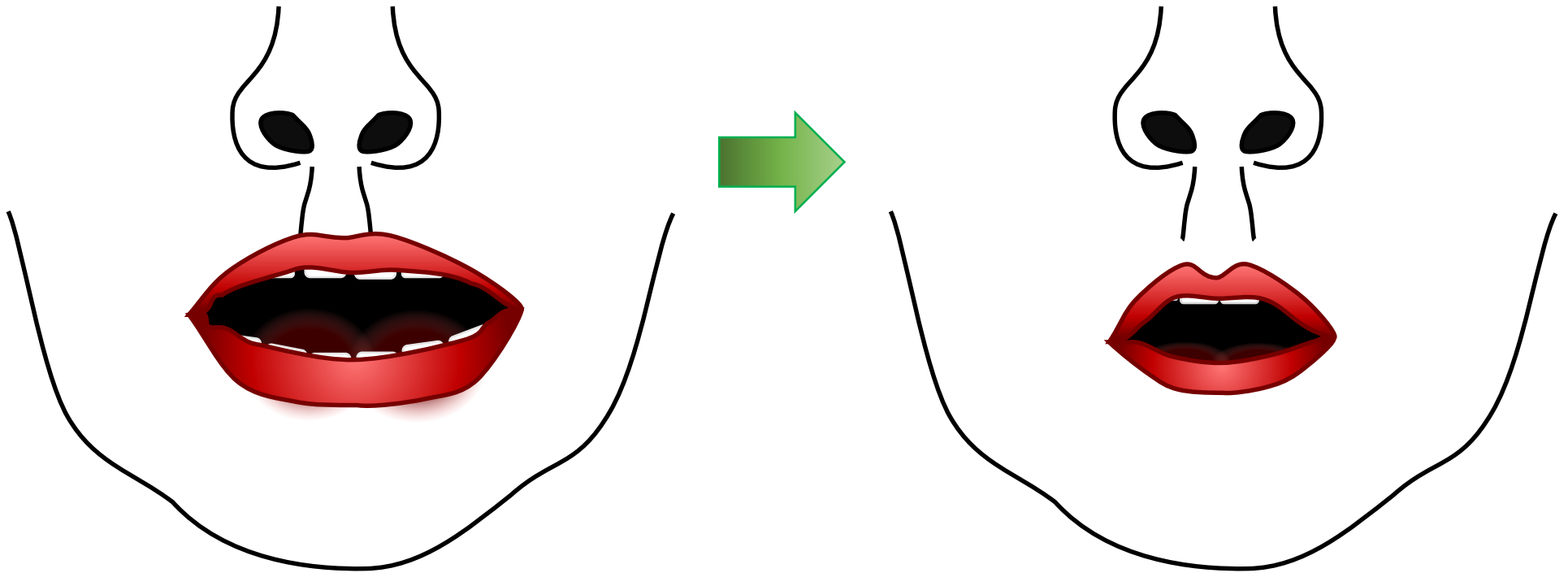
The /æ/ Sound



Short vowel sound heard in ‘trap’, ‘stamp’, ‘back’.

Lips are wide and mouth is open.

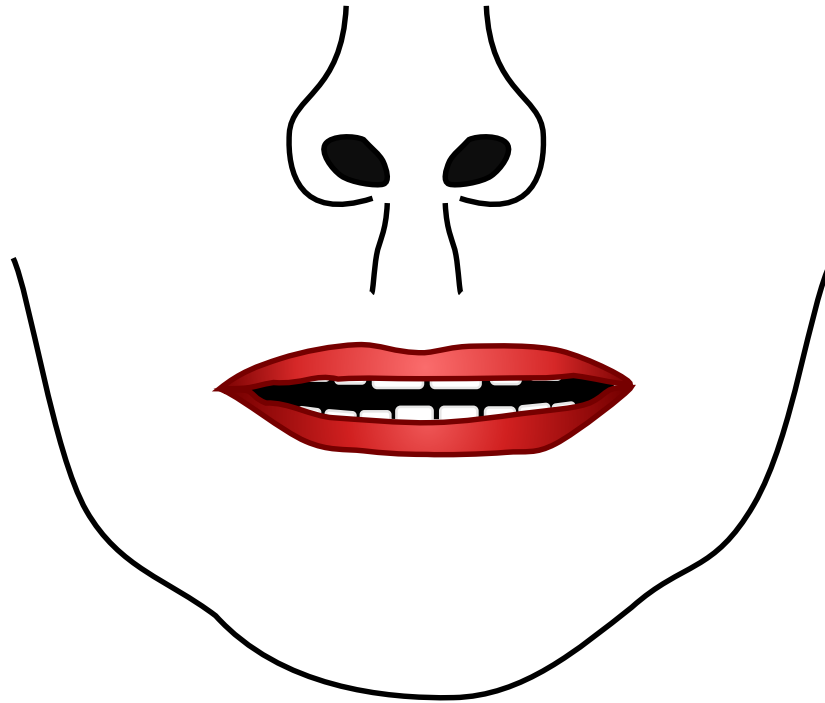
The /eə/ Sound (Diphthong)



Diphthong sound heard in ‘square’, ‘fair’, ‘pair’.

Mouth goes from square and wide open to relaxed (schwa).

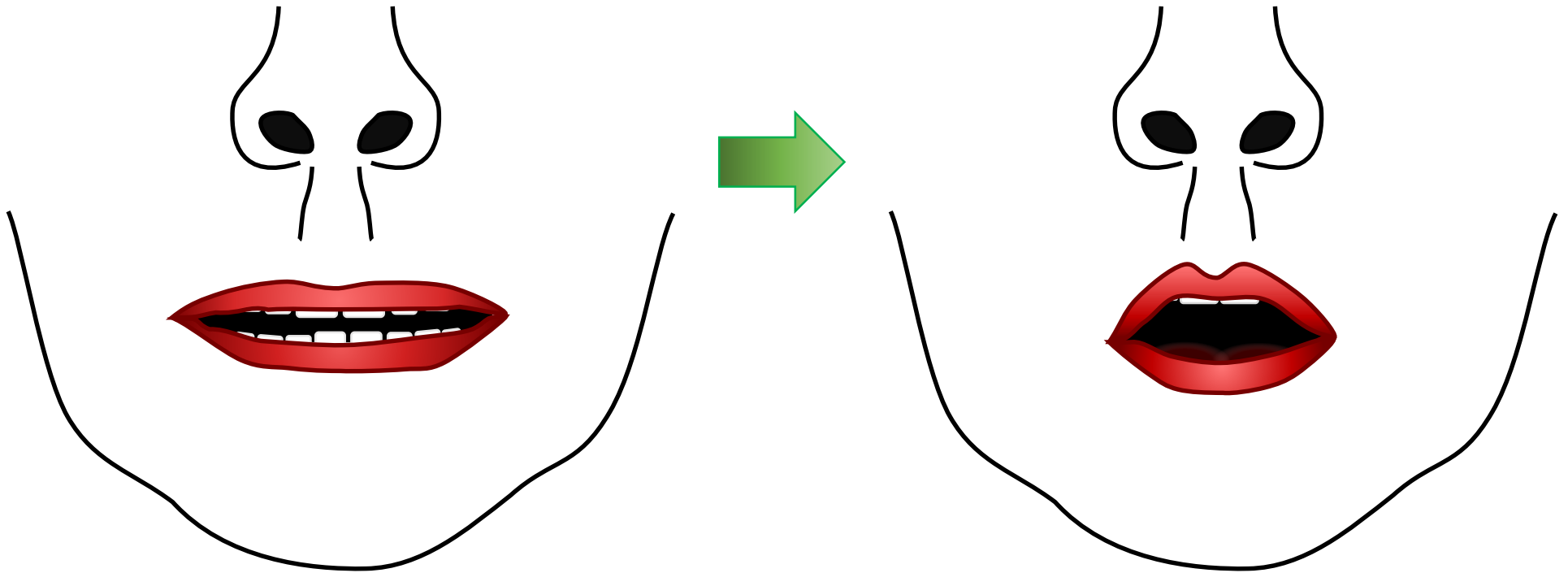
The /i: / Sound



Long vowel sound heard in ‘sea’, ‘flea’, ‘machine’.

Mouth is very wide. Teeth close together but lips are apart.

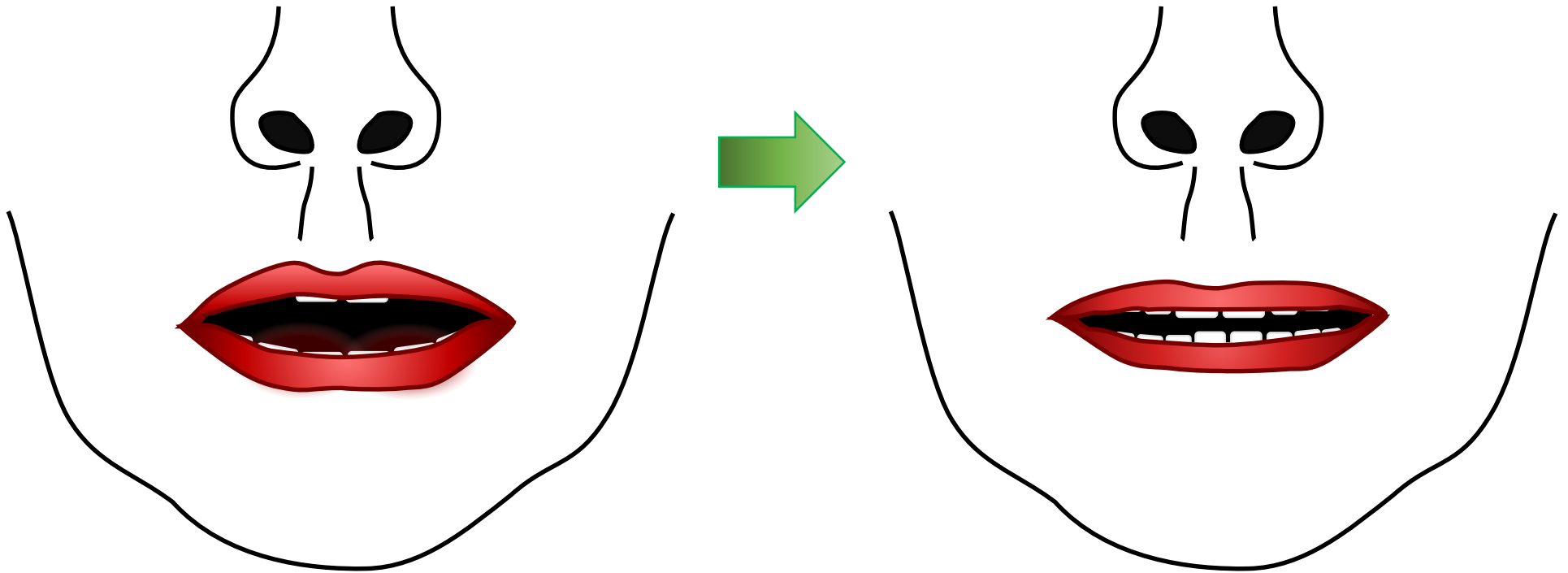
The /ɪə/ Sound (Diphthong)



Diphthong sound heard in 'ear', 'here', 'weary'.

Mouth starts wide as in /i:/, then relaxes to /ə/ (schwa).

The /eɪ/ Sound (Diphthong)



Diphthong sound heard in ‘rain’, ‘plane’, ‘wait’.

Mouth opens quickly as in /æ/ sounds, then widens to /i:./.

Tongue Twisters

/æ/ /eə/ /iː/ /ɪə/ /eɪ/

The ^{/iː/}fleas in the ^{/ɪə/}deer's ^{/ɪə/}ears ^{/ɪə/}hear the ^{/iː/}sea.

Pat's trap can catch fat rats.

The rain in Spain stays mainly on the plains.

He fears these dreary meetings.

The square fairy queen's face appeared near here.

O-like Sounds

/ʊ/ /uː/ /əʊ/ /ɔː/ /ʊə/

Videos:

Pronunciation Tips - 02 - Short Vowel U

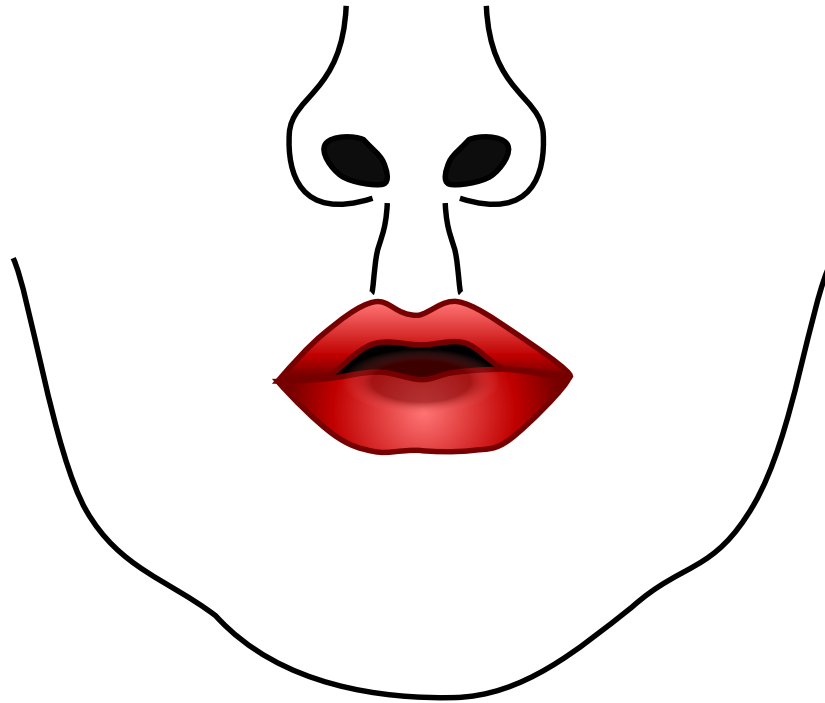
Pronunciation Tips - 09 - Long Vowel OO

Pronunciation Tips - 17 – Diphthong OU

Pronunciation Tips - 11 – Long Vowel O(r)

Pronunciation Tips - 14 - Diphthong UE

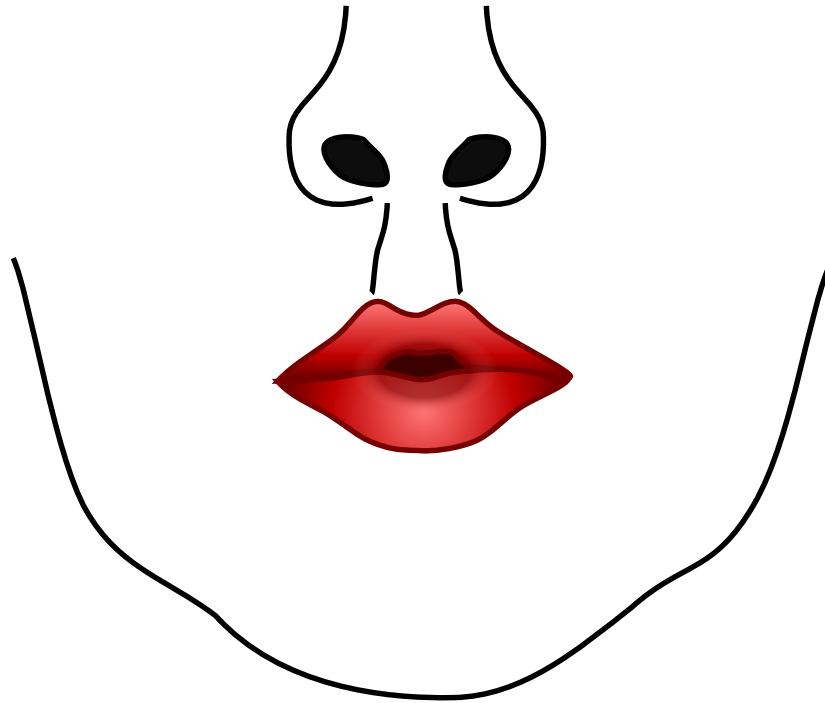
The /ʊ/ Sound



Short vowel sound heard in ‘put’, ‘foot’, ‘cute’.

Lips are puckered and mouth is rounded but smaller than for the /ɒ/ sound (‘lot’).

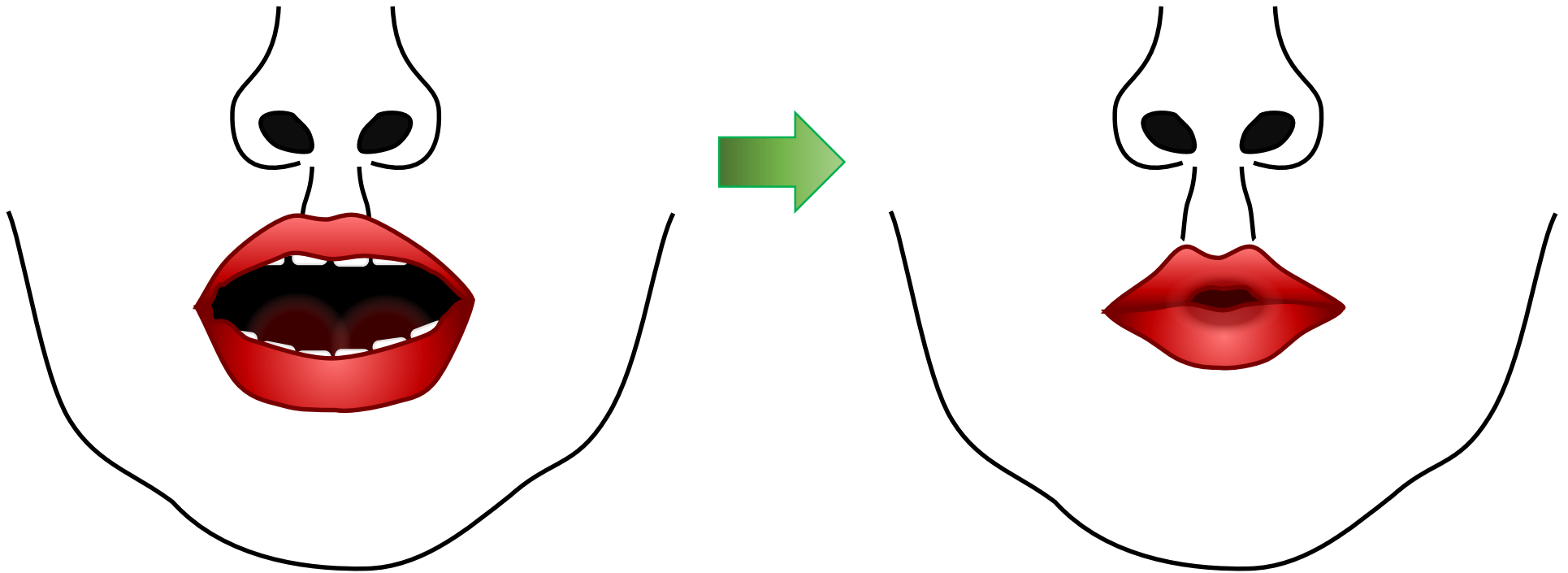
The /uː/ Sound



Long vowel sound heard in ‘choose’, ‘two’, ‘blue’.

Lips are extremely puckered and mouth is rounded but even smaller than for the /ʊ/ sound (‘foot’).

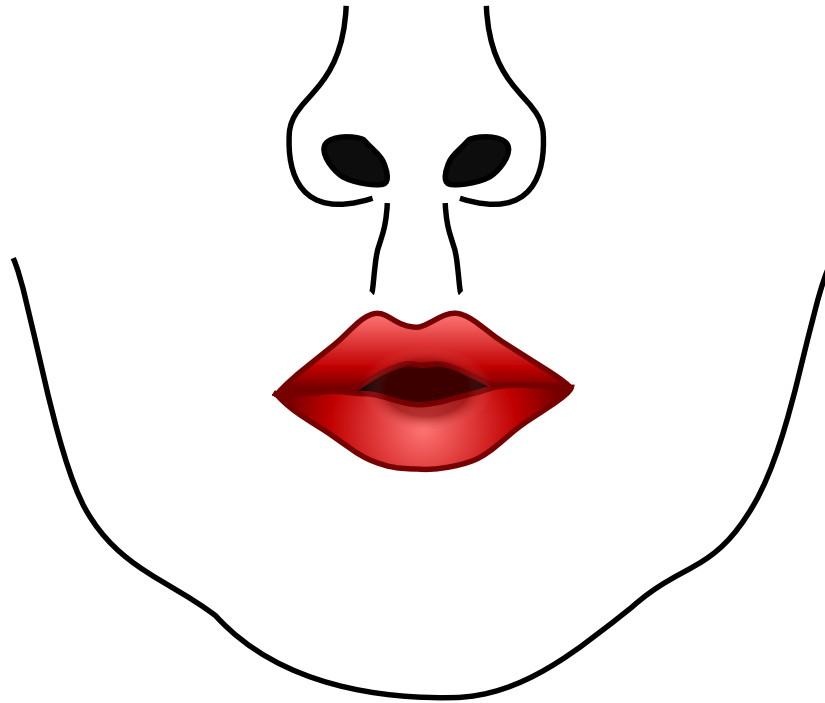
The /əʊ/ Sound (Diphthong)



Diphthong sound heard in ‘boat’, ‘know’, ‘show’.

Mouth starts wide open, then puckers to /uː/ (‘two’).

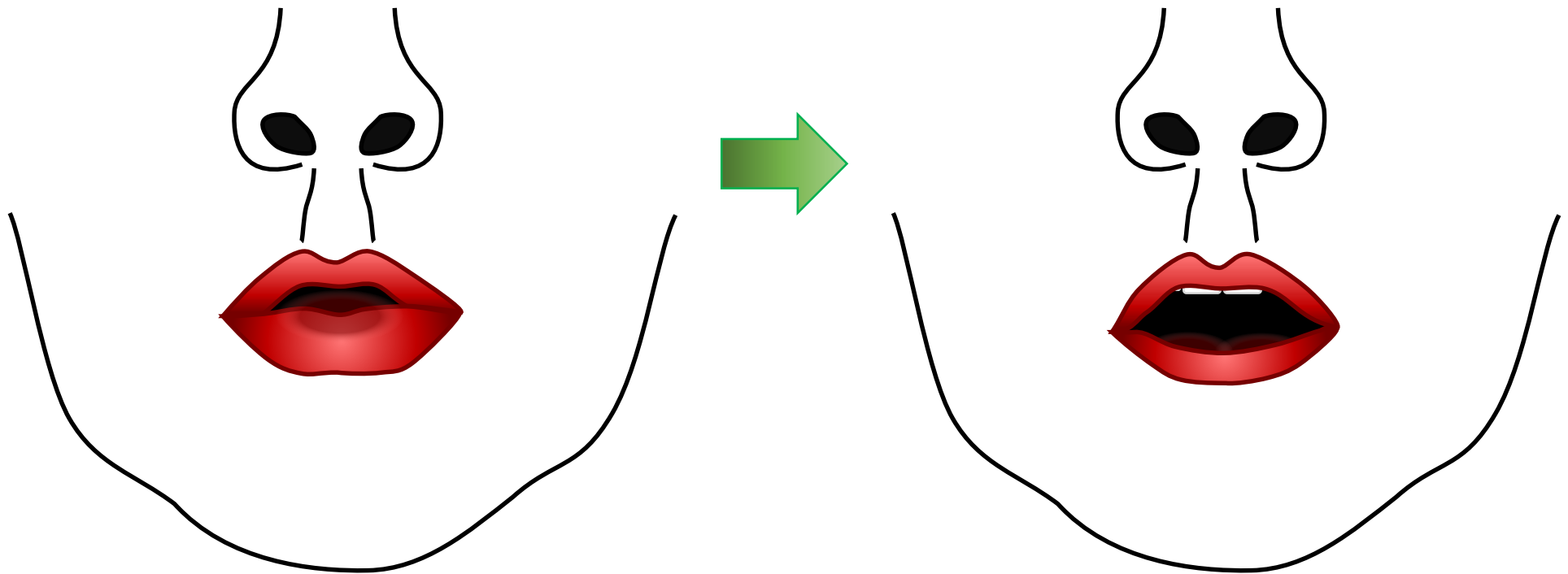
The /ɔː/ Sound



Long vowel sound heard in ‘thought’, ‘law’, ‘north’.

Lips are puckered and mouth is rounded and smaller than for the /ʊ/ sound (‘foot’) but not quite as small as for the /uː/ sound (‘two’).

The /ʊə/ Sound (Diphthong)



Diphthong sound heard in ‘tour’, ‘pure’, ‘cure’.

Mouth starts puckered with the /ʊ/ sound (‘foot’), then relaxes (schwa).

Tongue Twisters

/ʊ/ /u:/ /əʊ/ /ɔ:/ /ʊə/

I thought the tour through to the end.

Do you choose the blue shoes?

The laws of the north are thought to be pure.

The hood put the loot in two blue suitcases.

^{/u:/}You ^{/u:/}are ^{/ʊ/}a ^{/u:/}fool ^{/əʊ/}to ^{/ʊə/}choose a boat tour.

2nd Semester Assessment

Practice the following sentences. The assessment is to say them in front of the teacher, who will give you a grade.

I hear casual pairs usually choose blue jewellery.

1. /ɪə/ sound in “hear”.
2. /ʒʊə/ sound in “casual” and “usual”.
3. /eə/ sound in “pairs”.
4. /uː/ sounds in “choose blue jewellery (/ˈdʒuːəlrɪ/)”.

I thought the rain in Spain stayed mainly on the plains.

1. /ɔː/ in “thought”.
2. /eɪ/ sound.

Hot-blooded folks love loads.

1. Differentiate between the various o sounds.
2. /əʊ/ in “loads”.

End of Semester Assessment

Practice the following sentences. The assessment consists of saying them in front of the teacher, who will give you a grade.

I can sing that unusually short song with the others.

1. /æ/ in "can" and "that".
2. Finish the words "can" (/n/) and "sing" (/ŋ/).
3. Correctly pronounce "unusually" (/ʌn'ju:zʊəli/).
4. Differentiate between the /ʃ/ in "short" and the /s/ in "song".
5. Pronounce both the /θ/ in "with" and /ð/ in "the".
6. Differentiate between /θ/ in "with" and /ð/ in "the" and "others".

I thought loads of hot-blooded pairs, mainly viewed in Spain, chose cool ear jewellery.

1. Difficult vowels and diphthongs: /ɔ:/ in "thought"; /əʊ/ in "loads" and "chose"; /eə/ sound in "pairs"; /eɪ/ sound in "Spain" and "mainly"; /u:/ sound in "chose" "cool" and "jewellery" (/ˈdʒu:əl(ə)rɪ/); /ɪə/ in "ear".
2. /ˈdʒu:/ in "jewellery".
3. Differentiate between the various o sounds in "hot-blooded", "chose" and "cool".
4. /v/ followed by /w/ and pronunciation of the voiced /d/ at the end of "viewed".
5. Differentiate between /t/ in "hot", "viewed", and /d/ in "blooded".
6. Differentiate between light /l/ in "loads" and dark /l/ in "cool".