



*Back up the CD to the last paragraph just read and repeat again. This time, however, read from the paragraph below. The intonation is marked for you in boldface. Use your rubber band on every stressed word.*

**H**ello, **m**y **n**ay miz \_\_\_\_\_. **I**'m takingə merica **n**æccent(t)raining. There zə **l**ättə learn, bæ dəi **h**ope t' ma ki desen **j**oyablez passible. I shüd pi **k**əpän the<sup>(y)</sup>əmerica nintənash'n pæddern prid<sup>(y)</sup>**e**zily, although thee<sup>(y)</sup>**o**nly waydə **g**eddidiz t' prækti sällöv th' time. I<sup>(y)</sup>use thee<sup>(y)</sup>**u**p'n down, or **p**eak s'n valley zintənashən more thə näi **u**sed to. Ivbn payingə tenshən t' **p**itch, **t**oo. Itsläi **k**wälking dow nə **s**taircase. Ivbn **t**alking to<sup>(w)</sup>ə läddəvə **m**erican zla<sup>(t)</sup>ely, 'n they tell me the däimeezier to<sup>(w)</sup>**u**nderstænd. **A**nway, I could go<sup>(w)</sup>**ä** nə nän, bu<sup>(t)</sup>thee<sup>(y)</sup>**i**mportant thingiz t' **l**isənwellən soun<sup>(d)</sup> **g**ood. Well, whəddyü think? Do<sup>(w)</sup>**I**?

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## Exercise 2-14: Additional Liaison Practice

## CD 3 Track 2

T Use these techniques on texts of your own and in conversation.

(1) Take some written material and mark the *intonation*, then the *word groups*, and finally the *liaisons*.

(2) Practice saying it out loud.

(3) Record yourself and listen back.

V In conversation, think which word you want to make stand out, and change your pitch on that word. Then, run the in-between words together in the valleys. Listen carefully to how Americans do it and copy the sound.

## Exercise 2-15: Colloquial Reductions and Liaisons

## CD 3 Track 3

*In order for you to recognize these sounds when used by native speakers, they are presented here, but I don't recommend that you go out of your way to use them yourself. If, at some point, they come quite naturally of their own accord in casual conversation, you don't need to resist, but please don't force yourself to talk this way. Repeat.*

I have got to **go**.

I have got a **book**.

Do you want to **dance**?

Do you want a **banana**?

Let me **in**.

Let me **go**.

I'll let you **know**.

Did you **do** it?

Not **yet**.

I'll meet you **later**.

What do you **think**?

What did you **do** with it?

How did you **like** it?

When did you **get** it?

Why did you **take** it?

Why don't you **try** it?

What are you **waiting** for?

What are you **doing**?

How is it **going**?

Where's the **what**-you-may-call-it?

Where's **what**-is-his-name?

How **about** it?

He has got to **hurry** because he is **late**.

I could've been a **contender**.

I've gotta **go**.

I've gotta **book**.

Wanna **dance**?

Wanna **banana**?

Lemme **in**.

Lemme **go**.

I'll letcha **know**.

Dija **do** it?

Nä **chet**.

I'll meecheu **layder**.

Whaddyu **think**?

Whajoo **do** with it?

Howja **like** it?

When ju **geddit**?

Whyju **tay** kit?

Why don chu **try** it?

Whaddya **waitin'** for?

Whatcha **doin'**?

Howzit **going**?

Where's the **whatchamacallit**?

Where's **whatsizname**?

How **'bout** it?

He's gotta **hurry** 'cuz he's **late**.

I coulda bina **contender**.

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## Exercise 2-15: Colloquial Reductions and Liaisons *continued* CD 3 Track 3

Could you speed it <b>up</b> , please?	Couldjoo spee di <b>dup</b> , pleez?
Would you mind if I <b>tried</b> it?	Would joo mindifai <b>try</b> dit?
Aren't you Bob <b>Barker</b> ?	Arnchoo Bab <b>Barker</b> ?
Can't you see it <b>my</b> way for a change?	Kænchoo see it <b>my</b> way for a change?
Don't you <b>get</b> it?	Doancha <b>geddit</b> ?
I should have <b>told</b> you.	I shoul <sup>da</sup> <b>toljoo</b> .
Tell her (that) I <b>miss</b> her.	Teller I <b>miss</b> er.
Tell him (that) I <b>miss</b> him.	Tellim I <b>miss</b> im.
Did you <b>eat</b> ?	<b>Jeet</b> ?
No, did <b>you</b> ?	No, <b>joo</b> ?
Why don't you <b>get a job</b> ?	Whyncha <b>getta job</b> ?
I don't know, <b>it's</b> too <b>hard</b> .	<b>I</b> dunno, stoo <b>hård</b> .
Could <b>we</b> go?	Kwee <b>gou</b> ?
Let's <b>go</b> !	<b>Sko</b> !

### Spoon or Sboon?

An interesting thing about liaisons is that so much of it has to do with whether a consonant is voiced or not. The key thing to remember is that the vocal cords don't like switching around at the midpoint. If the first consonant is voiced, the next one will be as well. If the first one is unvoiced, the second one will sound unvoiced, no matter what you do. For example, say the word *spoon*. Now, say the word *sboon*. Hear how they sound the same? This is why I'd like you to always convert the preposition *to* to *də* when you're speaking English, no matter what comes before it. In the beginning, to get you used to the concept, we made a distinction between *tə* and *də*, but now that your schwa is in place, use a single *d'* sound everywhere, except at the very beginning of a sentence.

After a voiced sound:	He had to do it.	[he hæ <sup>(d)</sup> d' du <sup>(w)</sup> 't]
After an unvoiced sound:	He got to do it.	[he gä <sup>(t)</sup> d' du <sup>(w)</sup> 't]
At the beginning of a sentence:	To <b>be</b> or <b>not</b> to be.	[t' bee <sup>(y)</sup> r nä <sup>(t)</sup> d'bee]

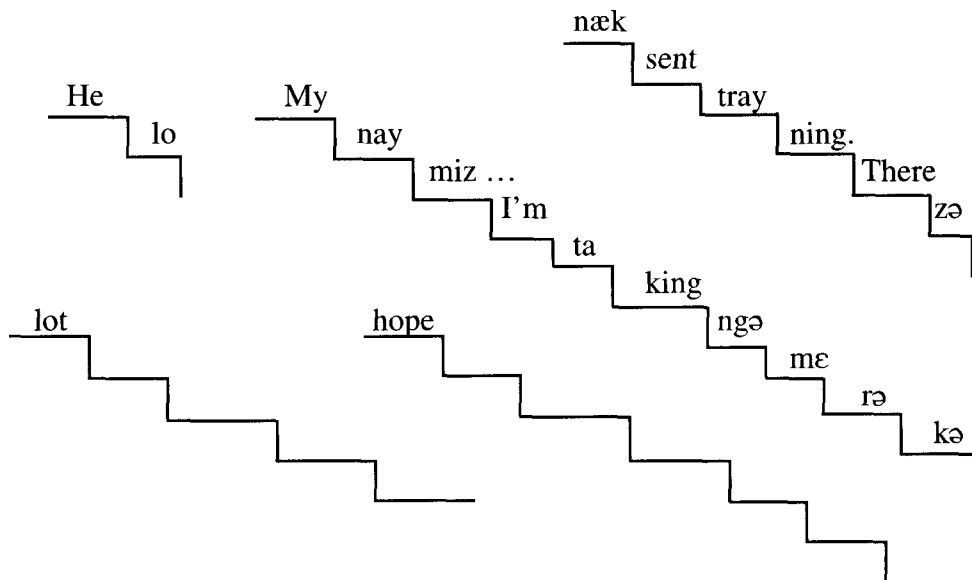
To have your liaisons tested, call (800) 457-4255.

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## Exercise 2-16: Liaison Staircases

## CD 3 Track 4

*You are going to make staircases again from me paragraph below—pretty much as you did in Exercise 1-17 on page 16. This time, instead of putting a whole word on each stairstep, put a single sound on each step. This is also similar to the second pan of the Dogs Eat Bones Exercise 1-38 on page 36. Use the liaison techniques you have just learned to connect the words; then regroup them and place one sound unit on a step. As before, start a new staircase every time you stress a word. Remember, new sentences don't have to start new staircases. A staircase can continue from one sentence to another until you come to a stressed word. Pause the CD.*



**Note** *The liaison practice presented in this chapter was the last of the basic principles you needed to know before tackling the finer points of pronunciation introduced in the next.*

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## Chapter 3. Cat? Caught? Cut?

## CD 3 Track 5

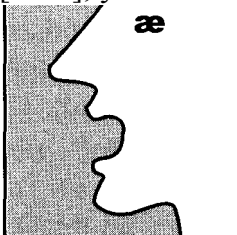
After laying our foundation with intonation and liaisons, here we finally begin to refine your pronunciation! We are now going to work on the differences between [æ], [ä], and [ə], as well as [ō], [ā], and [ē]. Let's start out with the [æ] sound.

### The [æ] Sound

Although not a common sound, [æ] is very distinctive to the ear and is typically American. In the practice paragraph in Exercise 3-2 this sound occurs five times. As its phonetic symbol indicates, [æ] is a combination of [ä] + [ε]. To pronounce it, drop your jaw down as if you were going to say [ä]; then from that position, try to say [ε]. The final sound is not two separate vowels, but rather the end result of the combination. It is very close to the sound that a goat makes: *ma-a-a-a!*

Y Try it a few times now: [ä] f [æ]

If you find yourself getting too nasal with [æ], pinch your nose as you say it. If [kæt] turns into [kææt], you need to pull the sound out of your nose and down into your throat.



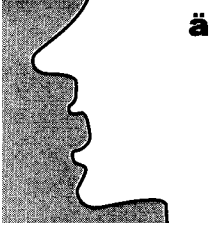
**Note** *As you look for the [æ] sound you might think that words like **down** or **sound** have an [æ] in them. For this diphthong, try [æ] + oh, or [æo]. This way, **down** would be written [dæon]. Because it is a combined sound, however, it's not included in the Cat? category. (See Pronunciation Point 4 on page ix).*

### The [ä] Sound

The [ä] sound occurs a little more frequently; you will find ten such sounds in the exercise. To pronounce [ä], relax your tongue and drop your jaw as far down as it will go. As a matter of fact, put your hand under your chin and say [mä], [pä], [tä], [sä]. Your hand should be pushed down by your jaw as it opens. Remember, it's the sound that you make when the

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doctor wants to see your throat, so open it up and *dräp your jäw*.



## The Schwa [ə] Sound

Last is the schwa [ə], the *most common* sound in American English. When you work on Exercise 3-2, depending on how fast you speak, how smoothly you make liaisons, how strong your intonation is, and how much you relax your sounds, you will find from 50 to 75 schwas. Spelling doesn't help identify it, because it can appear as any one of the vowels, or a combination of them. It is a neutral vowel sound, *uh*. It is usually in an unstressed syllable, though it can be stressed as well. Whenever you find a vowel that can be crossed out and its absence wouldn't change the pronunciation of the word, you have probably found a schwa: *photography* [ph'togr'phy] (the two apostrophes show the location of the neutral vowel sounds).

Because it is so common, however, the wrong pronunciation of this one little sound can leave your speech strongly accented, even if you Americanized everything else.

**Note** *Some dictionaries use two different written characters, [ə] and [ʌ], but for simplicity, we are only going to use the first one.*

## Silent or Neutral?

A schwa is neutral, but it is not silent. By comparison, the silent E at the end of a word is a signal for pronunciation, but it is not pronounced itself: *code* is [kod]. The E tells you to say an [o]. If you leave the E off, you have *cod*, [käd]. The schwa, on the other hand is neutral, but it is an actual sound—*uh*. For example, you could also write *photography* as *phuh•tah•gruh•fee*.

Because it's a neutral sound, the schwa doesn't have any distinctive characteristics, yet it is *the most common sound in the English language*.

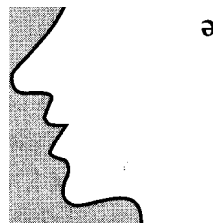
To make the [ə] sound, put your hand on your diaphragm and push until a grunt escapes. Don't move your jaw, tongue, or lips; just allow the sound to flow past your vocal cords. It should sound like *uh*.

Once you master this sound, you will have an even easier time with pronouncing *can* and *can't*. In a sentence, *can't* sounds like [kæn(t)], but *can* becomes [kən], unless it is stressed, when it is [kæn], (as we saw in Exercise 1-43 on p. 41). Repeat.

I can **do** it. [I kən **do** it]

I **can't** do it. [I kæn't **do** it]

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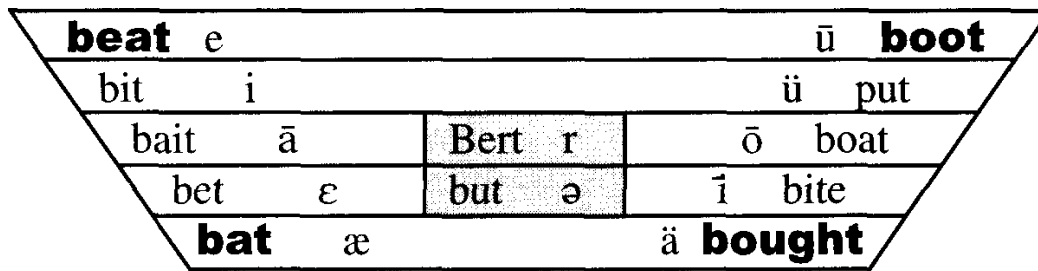


In the vowel chart that follows, the four corners represent the four most extreme positions of the mouth. The center box represents the least extreme position—the neutral schwa. For these four positions, only move your lips and jaw. Your tongue should stay in the same place—with the tip resting behind the bottom teeth.

## Vowel Chart

lips back  
jaw closed

lips rounded  
jaw closed



lips back  
jaw open

lips rounded  
jaw open

1. To pronounce *beat*, your lips should be drawn back, but your teeth should be close together. Your mouth should form the shape of a *banana*.
2. To pronounce *boot*, your lips should be fully rounded, and your teeth should be close together. Your mouth should form the shape of a *Cheerio*.
3. To pronounce *bought*, drop your jaw straight down from the *boot* position. Your mouth should form the shape of an *egg*.
4. To pronounce *bat*, keep your jaw down, pull your lips back, and try to simultaneously say [ä] and [ε]. Your mouth should form the shape of a *box*.

**Note** *Word-by-word pronunciation will be different than individual sounds within a sentence. That, than, as, at, and, have, had, can, and so on, are [æ] sounds when they stand alone, but they are weak words that reduce quickly in speech.*

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### Exercise 3-1 : Word-by-Word and in a Sentence

CD 3 Track

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Stressed		Unstressed		
that	thæt	th't	thət	He said th't it's OK.
than	thæn	th'n	thən	It's bigger th'n before
as	æz	'z	əz	'z soon 'z he gets here...
at	æt	't	ət	Look 't the time!
and	ænd	'n	ən	ham 'n eggs
have	hæv	h'v	həv	Where h'v you been?
had	hæd	h'd	həd	He h'd been at home.
can	cæn	c'n	cən	C'n you do it?

### Exercise 3-2: Finding [æ], [ä], and [ə] Sounds

CD 3 Track 7

*There are five [æ], ten [ä], and seventy-five [ə] sounds in the following paragraph. Underscore them in pen or pencil. (The first one of each sound is marked for you.)*

Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ . I'm taking əmerəcən æccent Training. There's a lät to learn, but I hope to make it as enjoyable as possible. I should pick up on the American intonation pattern pretty easily, although the only way to get it is to practice all of the time. I use the up and down, or peaks and valleys intonation more than I used to. I've been paying attention to pitch, too. It's like walking down a staircase. I've been talking to a lot of Americans lately, and they tell me that I'm easier to understand. Anyway, I could go on and on, but the important thing is to listen well and sound good. Well, what do you think? Do I?

V Next, check your answers with the Answer Key, beginning on page 193. Finally, take your markers and give a color to each sound. For example, mark [æ] green, [ä] blue, and [ə] yellow.

**X** Turn your CD off and read the paragraph three times on your own.



**Note** *It sounds regional to end a sentence with [ustə]. In the middle of a sentence, however, it is more standard: [I ustə live there.]*

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### Exercise 3-3: Vowel-Sound Differentiation

### CD 3 Track 8

*Here we will read down from 1 to 24, then we will read each row across. Give the [ā] sound a clear double sound [ε + ee]. Also, the [o] is a longer sound than you might be expecting. Add the full ooh sound after each "o."*

						
	æ	ä	ə	ou	a	ε
1.	Ann	on	un~	own	ain't	end
2.	ban	bond	bun	bone	bane	Ben
3.	can	con	come	cone	cane	Ken
4.	cat	caught/cot	cut	coat	Kate	ketch
5.	Dan	Don/dawn	done	don't	Dane	den
6.	fan	fawn	fun	phone	feign	fend
7.	gap	gone	gun	goat	gain	again
8.	hat	hot	hut	hotel	hate	het up
9.	Jan	John	jump	Joan	Jane	Jenny
10.	lamp	lawn	lump	loan	lane	Len
11.	man	monster	Monday	moan	main	men
12.	matter	motto	mutter	motor	made her	met her
13.	Nan	non~	none/nun	known	name	nemesis
14.	gnat	not/knot	nut	note	Nate	net
15.	pan	pawn	pun	pony	pain/pane	pen
16.	ran	Ron	run	roan	rain/reign	wren
17.	sand	sawn	sun	sewn/sown	sane	send
18.	shall	Sean	shut	show	Shane	Shen
19.	chance	chalk	chuck	choke	change	check
20.	tack	talk	tuck	token	take	tech
21.	van	Von	vug	vogue	vague	vent
22.	wax	want	won/one	won't	wane	when
23.	yam	yawn	young	yo!	yea!	yen
24.	zap	czar	result	zone	zany	zen

To have your pronunciation tested, call (800) 457-4255.

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### Exercise 3-4: Reading the [æ] Sound

### CD 3 Track 9

#### The Tæn Mæn

A fashionably tan man sat casually at the bat stand, lashing a handful of practice bats. The manager, a crabby old bag of bones, passed by and laughed, "You're about average, Jack. Can't you lash faster than that?" Jack had had enough, so he clambered to his feet and lashed bats faster than any man had ever lashed bats. As a matter of fact, he lashed bats so fast that he seemed to dance. The manager was aghast. "Jack, you're a master bat lasher!" he gasped. Satisfied at last, Jack sat back and never lashed another bat.

**X** Pause the CD and read *The Tæn Mæn* aloud. Turn it back on to continue.



**Exercise 3-5: Reading the [ä] Sound****CD track 10****A Lät of Läng, Hät Walks in the Garden**

John was not sorry when the boss called off the walks in the garden. Obviously, to him, it was awfully hot, and the walks were far too long. He had not thought that walking would have caught on the way it did, and he fought the policy from the onset. At first, he thought he could talk it over at the law office and have it quashed, but a small obstacle\* halted that thought. The top lawyers always bought coffee at the shop across the lawn and they didn't want to stop on John's account. John's problem was not office politics, but office policy. He resolved the problem by bombing the garden.

\* *lobster • a small lobster • lobster • a small obstacle*

\* Pause the CD and read *A Lät of Läng, Hät Wälks in the Gärden* aloud.

**Exercise 3-6: Reading the [ə] Sound****CD 3 Track 11**

*When you read the following schwa paragraph, try clenching your teeth the first time. It won't sound completely natural, but it will get rid of all of the excess lip and jaw movement and force your tongue to work harder than usual. Remember that in speaking American English we don't move our lips much, and we talk though our teeth from far back in our throats. I'm going to read with my teeth clenched together and you follow along, holding your teeth together.*

**What Must the Sun Above Wonder About?**

Some pundits proposed that the sun wonders unnecessarily about sundry and assorted conundrums. One cannot but speculate what can come of their proposal. It wasn't enough to trouble us,\* but it was done so underhandedly that hundreds of sun lovers rushed to the defense of their beloved sun. None of this was relevant on Monday, however, when the sun burned up the entire country. \*[ət wəzənənəf tə trəbələs]

\* Pause the CD and read *What Must the Sun Above Wonder About?* twice. Try it once with your teeth clenched the first time and normally the second time.

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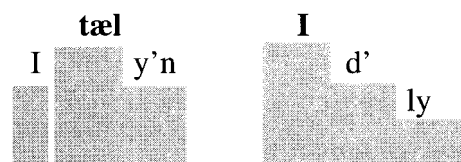
**Chapter 4. The American T****CD 3 Track 12**

The American T is influenced very strongly by intonation and its position in a word or phrase. At the *top* of a staircase T is pronounced T as in *Ted* or *Italian*; a T in the *middle* of a staircase is pronounced as D [Beddy] [Idaly]; whereas a T at the *bottom* of a staircase isn't pronounced at all [ho(t)]. Look at *Italian* and *Italy* in the examples below. The [tæɪ] of *Italian* is at the top of the staircase and is strong: *Italian*. The [də] of *Italy* is in the middle and is weak: *Italy*.

**Exercise 4-1 ; Stressed and Unstressed T****CD 3 Thick 13**

*Repeat after me.*

Italian	Italy
attack	attic
atomic	atom
photography	photograph

**Exercise 4-2: Betty Bought a Bit of Better Butter****CD 3 Track 14**

*In the sentence **Betty bought a bit of better butter**, all of the Ts are in weak positions, so they all sound like soft Ds. Repeat the sentence slowly, word by word: [Beddy ... badə... bidə... bedder ... budder]. Feel the tip of your tongue flick across that area behind your top teeth. Think of the music of a cello again when you say, **Betty bought a bit of better butter**.*

## Betty Bought a Bit of Better Butter

Betty bought a bit of better butter,	Beddy bā də bihda bedder budder.
But, said she,	Bu(t), said she,
This butter's bitter.	This budder' z bidder.
If I put it in my batter,	If I pūdi din my bædder,
It'll make my batter bitter.	Id'll make my bædder bidder.

If you speak any language—such as Spanish, Japanese, Hindi, Italian, or Dutch, among others—where your R touches behind the teeth, you are in luck with the American T. Just fix the association in your mind so that when you see a middle position T, you automatically give it your native R sound. Say, *Beri bara bira ...* with your native accent. (*Not* if you are

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French, German, or Chinese!)

Along with liaisons, the American T contributes a great deal to the smooth, relaxed sound of English. When you say a word like *atom*, imagine that you've been to the dentist and you're a little numb, or that you've had a couple of drinks, or maybe that you're very sleepy. You won't be wanting to use a lot of energy saying [æ•tom], so just relax everything and say [adəm], like the masculine name, Adam. It's a very smooth, fluid sound. Rather than saying, *BeTTy boughT a biT of beTTER buTTER*, which is physically more demanding, try, *Beddy bada bidda bedder budder*. It's easy because you really don't need much muscle tension to say it this way.

The staircase concept will help clarify the various T sounds. The American T can be a little tricky if you base your pronunciation on spelling. Here are five rules to guide you.

1. **T is T** at the beginning of a word or in a stressed syllable.
2. **T is D** in the middle of a word.
3. **T is Held** at the end of a word.
4. **T is Held before N** in *-tain* and *-ten* endings.
5. **T is Silent after N** with lax vowels.

### Exercise 4-3: Rule 1—Top of the Staircase

CD 3 Track 15

*When a T is at the top of a staircase, in a stressed position, it should be a clear popped sound.*

1. In the beginning of a word, T is [t].

*Ted took ten tomatoes.*

2. With a stressed T and ST, TS, TR, CT, LT, and sometimes NT combinations, T is [t].

*He was content with the contract.*

3. T replaces D in the past tense, after an unvoiced consonant sound — f, k, p, s, ch, sh, th — (except T).

*T: laughed [læft], picked [pikt], hoped [houpt], raced [rast], watched [wächt], washed [wäsht], unearthed [uneartht]*

*D: halved [hævd], rigged [rigd], nabbed [næbd], raised [razd], judged [j'jd], garaged [garazhd], smoothed [smoothd]*

**Exceptions:** wicked [wikəd], naked [nakəd], crooked [krükəd], etc.

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### Exercise 4-3; Rule 1—Top of the Staircase *continued*

CD 3 Track 15

*Read the following sentences out loud. Make sure that the underlined (stressed) Ts are sharp and clear.*

1. It took Tim ten times to try the telephone.
2. Stop touching Ted's toes.
3. Turn toward Stella and study her contract together.
4. Control your tears.
5. It's Tommy's turn to tell the teacher the truth.

### Exercise 4-4: Rule 2—Middle of the Staircase

CD 3 Track 16



*An unstressed T in the middle of a staircase between two vowel sounds should be pronounced as a soft D.*

Betty bought a bit of better butter. [Beddy bādə bida bedder budder]

Pat ought to sit on a lap. [pædādə sidänə læp]

*Read the following sentences out loud. Make sure that the underlined (unstressed) Ts sound like a soft D.*

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. What <b>a</b> good <b>idea</b> .                          | [wədə gudai <b>d</b> eeyə]                              |
| 2. Put it in a <b>bottle</b> .                               | [püdidinə <b>b</b> äddl]                                |
| 3. Write it in a <b>letter</b> .                             | [räididinə <b>l</b> eddr]                               |
| 4. Set it on the metal <b>gutter</b> .                       | [sedidän thə medl <b>g</b> æddr]                        |
| 5. Put all the <b>data</b> in the <b>computer</b> .          | [püdäl the <b>d</b> eidə in the c'mpyudr]               |
| 6. Insert <b>a</b> <b>quarter</b> in the <b>meter</b> .      | [inserdə <b>k</b> wɔrdər in the <b>m</b> eedr]          |
| 7. Get a better <b>water</b> heater.                         | [gedə beddr <b>w</b> ädr heedr]                         |
| 8. <b>L</b> et her put a <b>sweater</b> on.                  | [ledr püdə <b>s</b> weder an]                           |
| 9. <b>B</b> etty's at a <b>meeting</b> .                     | [ <b>b</b> eddy's ædə <b>m</b> eeding]                  |
| 10. It's getting hotter and <b>hotter</b> .                  | [its gedding häddr•rən <b>h</b> äddr]                   |
| 11. <b>P</b> atty ought to write a better <b>letter</b> .    | [ <b>p</b> æddy(y)ädə ride a beddr <b>l</b> eddr]       |
| 12. <b>F</b> reida had a <b>little</b> metal <b>bottle</b> . | [ <b>f</b> reedə hædə <b>l</b> iddl medl <b>b</b> äddl] |

### Exercise 4-5: Rule 3—Bottom of the Staircase

CD3 Track 17

*T at the bottom of a staircase is in the held position. By held, I mean that the tongue is in the T position, but the air isn't released. To compare, when you say T as in Tom, there 's a sharp burst of air over the tip of the tongue, and when you say **Betty**, there 's a soft puff of air over the tip of the tongue. When you hold a T, as in **hot**, your tongue is in the position for T, but you keep the air in.*

1. She hit the hot **hut** with her **hat**.
2. We went to that 'Net site to get what we **needed**.
3. **Pat** was quite **right**, **wasn't** she?

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### Exercise 4-5: Rule 3—Bottom of the Staircase *continued*

CD 3 Track

17

4. **What?** Put my **hat** back!
5. hot, late, fat, goat, hit, put, not, hurt, what, set, paint, wait, sit, dirt, note, fit, lot, light, suit, point, incident, tight

### Exercise 4-6: Rule 4—"Held T" Before N

CD 3 Track 18

*The "held T" is, strictly speaking, not really a T at all. Remember [t] and [n] are very close in the mouth (see Liaisons, Exercise 2-5). If you have an N immediately after a T, you don't pop the T—the tongue is in the T position—but you release the air with the N, **not** the T. There is no [t] and no [ə]. Make a special point of not letting your tongue release from the top of your mouth before you drop into the [n]; otherwise, **bu(tt)on** would sound like two words: **but-ton**. An unstressed T or TT followed by N is held. Read the following words and sentences out loud. Make sure that the underlined Ts are held. Remember, there is no "uh" sound before the [n].*

**Note** Another point to remember is that you need a sharp upward sliding intonation up to the "held T," then a quick drop for the N.

written	<b>t</b>	written	kitten
ri(t)n		sentence	patent
		forgotten	mutant
sentence		certain	latent
sen(t)ns		curtain	mountain
		mitten	recently
lately		Martin	lately
la(t)lee		bitten	partly
		button	frequently

1. He's **forgotten** the **carton** of satin **mittens**.
2. She's **certain** that he has **written** it.
3. The cotton **curtain** is not in the **fountain**.
4. The **hikers** went in the **mountains**.
5. **Martin** has gotten a **kitten**.
6. **Students** study **Latin** in **Britain**.
7. **Whitney** has a **patent** on those **sentences**.
8. He has not **forgotten** what was **written** about the **mutant** on the **mountain**.
9. It's not **certain** that it was gotten from the **fountain**.
10. You need to put an **orange** cotton **curtain** on that **window**.
11. We like that certain **satin** better than the **carton** of cotton **curtains**.
12. The intercontinental **hotel** is in **Seattle**.
13. The frightened **witness** had forgotten the **important** written **message**.
14. The child wasn't **beaten** because he had **bitten** the **button**.

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### Exercise 4-7: Rule 5—The Silent T

CD 3 Track 19

*[t] and [n] are so close in the mouth that the [t] can simply disappear. Repeat.*

- |                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| 1. <b>interview</b>     | <b>innerview</b>                              |
| 2. <b>interface</b>     | <b>innerface</b>                              |
| 3. <b>Internet</b>      | <b>innernet</b>                               |
| 4. <b>interstate</b>    | <b>innerstate</b>                             |
| 5. <b>interrupt</b>     | <b>innerrupt</b>                              |
| 6. <b>interfere</b>     | <b>innerfere</b>                              |
| 7. <b>interactive</b>   | <b>inneractive</b>                            |
| 8. <b>international</b> | <b>innernational</b>                          |
| 9. <b>advantage</b>     | <b>ədʋæn'j</b>                                |
| 10. <b>percentage</b>   | <b>percen'j</b>                               |
| 11. <b>twenty</b>       | <b>twenny</b>                                 |
| 12. <b>printout</b>     | <b>prinnout</b> or <b>prin<sup>d</sup>out</b> |
| 13. <b>printer</b>      | <b>prinner</b> or <b>prin<sup>d</sup>er</b>   |
| 14. <b>winter</b>       | <b>winner</b> or <b>win<sup>d</sup>er</b>     |
| 15. <b>enter</b>        | <b>enner</b> or <b>en<sup>d</sup>er</b>       |

### Exercise 4-8: Rule 5—The Silent T

CD 3 Track

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*Read the following sentences out loud. Make sure that the underlined Ts are silent.*

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. He had a great <b>interview</b> .         | [he hædə gray <sup>d</sup> <b>innerview</b> ] |
| 2. Try to <b>enter</b> the information.      | [trydə enner the infrmation]                  |
| 3. Turn the <b>printer</b> on.               | [trn thə <b>prinner</b> ən]                   |
| 4. Finish the <b>printing</b> .              | [f 'n'sh thə <b>prinning</b> ]                |
| 5. She's at the <b>international</b> center. | [sheez' (t)the(y)innernational senner]        |

6.	It's twenty degrees in Toronto.	[ 'ts twenny d'greezin trænno ]
7.	I don't understand it.	[ I doe nänder stæn d't ]
8.	She invented it in Santa Monica.	[ she <sup>(y)</sup> invenəd'din sænə mänəkə ]
9.	He can't even do it.	[ he kæneevən du <sup>(w)</sup> t ]
10.	They don't even want it.	[ they doe neevən wän't ]
11.	They won't ever try.	[ they woe never try ]
12.	What's the point of it?	[ w'ts the poi n'v't ]
13.	She's the intercontinental representative.	[ shez thee <sup>(y)</sup> innercän <sup>(t)</sup> n•nenl repr'zen'd'v ]
14.	Hasn't he?	[ hæzə nee ]
15.	Isn't he?	[ izə nee ]
16.	Aren't I?	[ är näi ]
17.	Won't he?	[ woe nee ]
18.	Doesn't he?	[ dæzənee ]
19.	Wouldn't it?	[ wüdənit ]
20.	Didn't I?	[ didn•näi ]

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### Exercise 4-9: Karina's T Connections 21

CD 3 Track

*Here are some extremely common middle T combinations. Repeat after me:*

	<b>What</b>	<b>But</b>	<b>That</b>
<b>a</b>	wədə	bədə	thədə
<b>I</b>	wədəi	bədəi	thədəi
<b>I'm</b>	wədəim	bədəim	thədəim
<b>I've</b>	wədəiv	bədəiv	thədəiv
<b>if</b>	wədif	bədif	thədif
<b>it</b>	wədīt	bədīt	thədīt
<b>it's</b>	wədīts	bədīts	thədīts
<b>is</b>	wədiz	bədiz	thədiz
<b>isn't</b>	wədizn <sup>t</sup>	bədizn <sup>t</sup>	thədizn <sup>t</sup>
<b>are</b>	wədr	bədr	thədr
<b>aren't</b>	wədärn <sup>t</sup>	bədärn <sup>t</sup>	thədärn <sup>t</sup>
<b>he</b>	wədee	bədee	thədee
<b>he's</b>	wədeez	bədeez	thədeez
<b>her</b>	wədr	bədr	thədr
<b>you</b>	wəchew	bəchew	thəchew
<b>you'll</b>	wəchül	bəchül	thəchül
<b>you've</b>	wəchoov	bəchoov	thəchoov
<b>you're</b>	wəchr	bəchr	thəchr

### Exercise 4-10: Combinations in Context

CD 3 Track 2:

*Repeat the following sentences.*

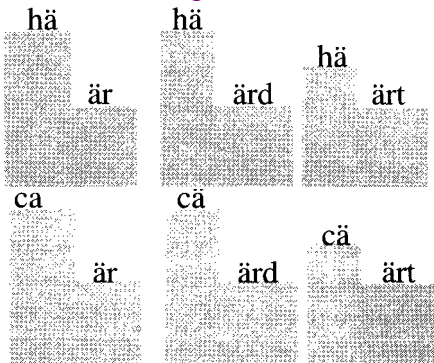
1.	I don't know what it <b>means</b> .	I don <sup>(t)</sup> know wədīt meenz
2.	But it <b>looks</b> like what I <b>need</b> .	bədi <sup>(t)</sup> lük sly kwədäi need
3.	But you <b>said</b> that you <b>wouldn't</b> .	bəchew sed thəchew wüdnt
4.	I <b>know</b> what you <b>think</b> .	I know wəchew think
5.	But I don't <b>think</b> that he <b>will</b> .	bədäi don <sup>(t)</sup> think thədee will
6.	He said that if <b>we can do</b> it, he'll <b>help</b> .	he sed the diff we k'n do <sup>(w)</sup> it, hill help
7.	But isn't it <b>easier</b> this <b>way</b> ?	bədizni deezier thi sway?

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 8. We <b>want</b> something that isn't <b>here</b> .                        | we <b>wänt</b> something thədiznt <sup>t</sup> <b>here</b>   |
| 9. You'll <b>like</b> it, <b>but</b> you'll <b>regret</b> it <b>later</b> . | yül <b>lye</b> kit, bəchül r' <b>gre</b> dit <b>laydr</b>    |
| 10. But he's not <b>right</b> for what <b>I want</b> .                      | bədeez nāt <b>right</b> fr wədäi <b>wänt</b>                 |
| 11. It's <b>amazing</b> what you've <b>accomplished</b> .                   | its <b>amazing</b> wəchoovəccämplisht                        |
| 12. What if he <b>forgets</b> ?   | wədifee frgets   |
| 13. <b>OK</b> , but aren't you <b>missing</b> something?                    | <b>OK</b> , bədärn <sup>t</sup> chew <b>missing</b> səmthing |
| 14. <b>I</b> think that he's <b>OK</b> now.                                 | I think thədeez <b>OK</b> nəo                                |
| 15. She <b>wanted</b> to, but her <b>car</b> broke down.                    | She <b>wänəd</b> to, bədr <b>cär</b> broke dəon              |
| 16. We <b>think</b> that you're taking a <b>chance</b> .                    | We think thəchr taking a <b>chænce</b>                       |
| 17. They don't know what it's <b>about</b> .                                | They don't know wədīt səbæot                                 |

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### Exercise 4-11 : Voiced and Unvoiced Sounds with T

*This exercise is for the practice of the difference between words that end in either a vowel or a voiced consonant, which means that the vowel is lengthened or doubled. Therefore, these words are on a much larger, longer staircase. Words that end in an unvoiced consonant are on a smaller, shorter staircase. This occurs whether the vowel in question is tense or lax.*



<b>har</b>	<b>hard</b>	<b>heart</b>	<b>car</b>	<b>card</b>	<b>cart</b>
<b>H</b>				<b>C</b>	
ha!	hod	hot	caw	cod	cot/caught
har	hard	heart	car	card	cart
hall	hailed	halt	call	called	
her	heard	hurt	cur	curd	curt
hole	hold	holt	coal	cold	colt
hoe	hoed		co-	code	coat

### Exercise 4-12: Finding American T Sounds CD 3 Track 24

*Once again, go over the following familiar paragraph. First, find all the T's that are pronounced D (there are nine to thirteen here). Second, find all the held Ts (there are seven). The first one of each is marked for you. Pause the CD to do this and don't forget to check your answers with the Answer Key, beginning on page 193, when you finish.*

Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ . I'm taking American **Accen(t)** Training. There's a **lo(t)** to learn, but<sup>d</sup> I **hope** to make it as **enjoyable** as possible. I should pick **up** on the American **intonation** pattern pretty **easily**, although the **only** way to **get** it is to **practice** all of the time. I use the **up** and down, or **peaks** and valleys, **intonation** more than I **used** to. I've been paying attention to **pitch**, **too**. It's like **walking** down a **staircase**. I've been **talking** to a lot of **Americans** lately, and they tell me that I'm **easier** to understand. Anyway, I could go **on** and on, but the **important** thing is to **listen** well and sound **good/Well**, what do you **think? Do I?**

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### Voiced Consonants and Reduced Vowels

The strong intonation in American English creates certain tendencies in your spoken language. Here are four consistent conditions that are a result of intonation's tense peaks and relaxed valleys:

### 1. Reduced vowels

You were introduced to reduced vowels in Chapter 1. They appear in the valleys that are formed by the strong peaks of intonation. The more you reduce the words in the valleys, the smoother and more natural your speech will sound. A characteristic of reduced vowels is that your throat muscles should be very relaxed. This will allow the unstressed vowels to reduce toward the schwa. Neutral vowels take less energy and muscularity to produce than tense vowels. For example, the word *unbelievable* should only have one hard vowel: [ʌnbəlēvəbəl].

### 2. Voiced consonants

The mouth muscles are relaxed to create a voiced sound like [z] or [d]. For unvoiced consonants, such as [s] or [t], they are sharp and tense. Relaxing your muscles will simultaneously reduce your vowels and voice your consonants. Think of *voiced consonants* as *reduced consonants*. Both reduced consonants and reduced vowels are unconsciously preferred by a native speaker of American English. This explains why T so frequently becomes D and S becomes Z: *Get it is to ...* [gedidizdə].

### 3. Like sound with like sound

It's not easy to change horses midstream, so when you have a voiced consonant; let the consonant that follows it be voiced as well. In the verb *used* [yuzd], for example, the S is really a Z, so it is followed by D. The phrase *used to* [yus tu], on the other hand, has a real S, so it is followed by T. Vowels are, by definition, voiced. So when one is followed by a common, reducible word, it will change that word's first sound—like the preposition *to*, which will change to [də].

The only way to get it is to practice all of the time.

[They only wei•də•geddidiz•də•practice all of the time.]

Again, this will take time. In the beginning, work on recognizing these patterns when you hear them. When you are confident that you understand the structure beneath these sounds and you can intuit where they belong, you can start to try them out. It's not advisable to memorize one reduced word and stick it into an otherwise overpronounced sentence. It would sound strange.

### 4. R'lææææææææx

You've probably noticed that the preceding three conditions, as well as other areas that we've covered, such as liaisons and the schwa, have one thing in common—the idea that *it's physically easier this way*. This is one of the most remarkable characteristics of American English. You need to relax your mouth and throat muscles (except for [æ], [ä], and other tense vowels), and let the sounds flow smoothly out. If you find yourself tensing up, pursing your lips, or tightening your throat, you are going to strangle and lose the sound you are pursuing. Relax, relax, relax.

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## Chapter 5. The El

## CD 3 Track 25

This chapter discusses the sound of L (not to be confused with that of the American R, which is covered in the next chapter). We'll approach this sound first, by touching on the difficulties it presents to foreign speakers of English, and next by comparing L to the related sounds of T, D, and N.

### L and Foreign Speakers of English

The English L is usually no problem at the beginning or in the middle of a word. The native language of some people, however, causes them to make their English L much too short. At the end of a word, the L is especially noticeable if it is either missing (Chinese) or too short (Spanish). In addition, most people consider the L as a simple consonant. This can also cause a lot of trouble. Thus, two things are at work here: location of language sounds in the mouth, and the complexity of the L sound. ,

### ***Location of Language in the Mouth***

The sounds of many Romance languages are generally located far forward in the mouth. My French teacher told me that if I couldn't see my lips when I spoke French—it wasn't French! Spanish is sometimes even called the smiling language. Chinese, on the other hand, is similar to American English in that it is mostly produced far back in the mouth. The principal difference is that English also requires clear use of the tongue's tip, a large component of the sound of L.

### ***The Compound Sound of L***

The L is not a simple consonant; it is a compound made up of a vowel and a consonant. Like the [æ] sound discussed in Chapter 3, the sound of L is a combination of [ə] and [l]. The [ə], being a reduced vowel sound, is created in the throat, but the [l] part requires a clear movement of the tongue. First, the tip must touch behind the teeth. (This part is simple enough.) But then, the back of the tongue must then drop down and back for the continuing schwa sound. Especially at the end of a word, Spanish-speaking people tend to leave out the schwa and shorten the L, and Chinese speakers usually leave it off entirely.

One way to avoid the pronunciation difficulty of a final L, as in *call*, is to make a liaison when the next word begins with a vowel. For example, if you want to say *I have to call on my friend*, let the liaison do your work for you; say [I have to kälän my friend].

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### ***L Compared with T, D, and N***

When you learn to pronounce the L correctly, you will feel its similarity with T, D, and N. Actually, the tongue is positioned in the same place in the mouth for all four sounds— behind the teeth. The difference is in how and where the air comes out. (See the drawings in Exercise 5-1.)

## **T and D**

The sound of both T and D is produced by allowing a puff of air to come out over the tip of the tongue.

### **N**

The sound of N is nasal. The tongue completely blocks all air from leaving through the mouth, allowing it to come out only through the nose. You should be able to feel the edges of your tongue touching your teeth when you say *nnn*.

With L, the tip of the tongue is securely touching the roof of the mouth behind the teeth, but the sides of the tongue are dropped down and tensed. This is where L is different from N. With N, the tongue is relaxed and covers the entire area around the back of the teeth so that no air can come out. With L, the tongue is very tense, and the air comes out around its sides. At the beginning it's helpful to exaggerate the position of the tongue. Look at yourself in the mirror as you stick out the tip of your tongue between your front teeth. With your tongue in this position say *el* several times. Then, try saying it with your tongue behind your teeth. This sounds complicated, but it is easier to do than to describe. You can practice this again later with Exercise 5-3. Our first exercise, however, must focus on differentiating the sounds.

### **Exercise 5-1 : Sounds Comparing L with T, D, and N**

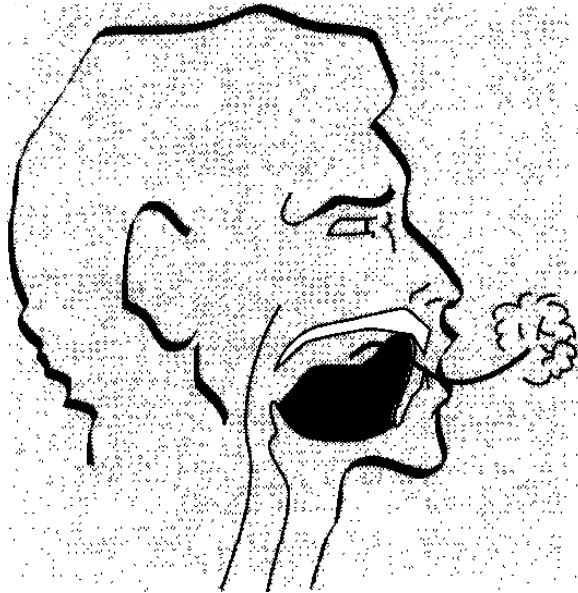
**CD 3 Track 26**

*For this exercise, concentrate on the different ways in which the air comes out of the mouth when producing each sound of L, T, D, and N. Look at the drawings included here, to see the correct position of the tongue. Instructions for reading the groups of words listed next are given after the words.*

#### **T/D Plosive**

A puff of air comes out over the tip of the tongue. The tongue is somewhat tense.





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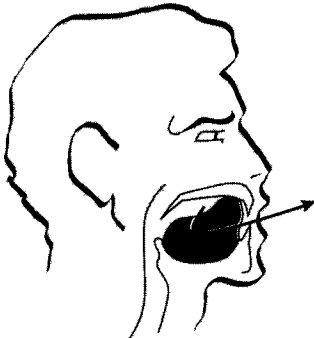
### Exercise 5-1 ; Sounds Comparing L with T, D and N *continued* CD 3 Track 26

**N****Nasal**

Air comes out through the nose. The tongue is completely relaxed.

**L****Lateral**

Air flows around the sides of the tongue. The tongue is very tense. The lips are *not* rounded!



#### 1. At the beginning of a word

law	gnaw	taw	daw
low	know	toe	dough
lee	knee	tea	D

#### 2. In the middle of a word

belly	Benny	Betty
caller	Conner	cotter

- alley     Annie's     at ease
3. At the end of a word
- A hole     hold     hone hoed  
call     called     con cod
- B fill     full     fool fail  
fell     feel     fuel furl

### Exercise 5-2; Sounds Comparing L with T, D, and N

CD 3 Track 27

*Repeat after me, first down and then across.*

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T Look at group 3, B. This exercise has three functions:

1. Practice final *els*.
2. Review vowels sounds.
3. Review the same words with the staircase.

**Note** *Notice that each word has a tiny schwa after the el. This is to encourage your tongue to be in the right position to give your words a "finished" sound. Exaggerate the final el and its otherwise inaudible schwa.*

Y Repeat the last group of words.

Once you are comfortable with your tongue in this position, let it just languish there while you continue vocalizing, which is what a native speaker does.

V Repeat again: fillll, fullll, foollll, faillll, feellll, fuellll, furllll.

### What Are All Those Extra Sounds I'm Hearing?

I hope that you're asking a question like this about now. Putting all of those short little words on a staircase will reveal exactly how many extra sounds you have to put in to make it "sound right." For example, if you were to pronounce *fail* as [fal], the sound is too abbreviated for the American ear—we need to hear the full [fayəl<sup>ə</sup>].

### Exercise 5-3: Final El with Schwa

CD 3 Track

28

*Repeat after me.*

<p><b>1 fill</b></p>	<p><b>2 full</b></p>	<p><b>3 fool</b></p>	<p><b>4 fail</b></p>
<p><b>5 fell</b></p>	<p><b>6 feel</b></p>	<p><b>7 fuel</b></p>	<p><b>8 furl</b></p>

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### Exercise 5-4: Many Final Els

CD 3 Track 29

*This time, simply hold the L sound extra long. Repeat after me.*

<b>1 fill</b>	<b>2 full</b>	<b>3 fool</b>	<b>4 fail</b>
fi əllll	fū əllll	fū (w)əllll	fay (y)əllll
<b>5 fell</b>	<b>6 feel</b>	<b>7 fuel</b>	<b>8 furl</b>
fe əllll	fee (y)əllll	fvū (w)əllll	fr rəllll

**Exercise 5-5: Liaise the Ls****CD 3 Track 30**

As you work with the following exercise, here are two points you should keep in mind. When a word ends with an L sound, either (a) connect it to the next word if you can, or (b) add a slight schwa for an exaggerated [lə] sound. For example:

(a) enjoyable as [enjɔɪəbələz]

(b) possible [pasəbələ]

**Note** Although (a) is really the way you want to say it, (b) is an interim measure to help you put your tongue in the right place. It would sound strange if you were to always add the slight schwa. Once you can feel where you want your tongue to be, hold it there while you continue to make the L sound. Here are three examples:

**Call**

caw [kă] (incorrect)

call [cälə] (understandable)

call [källl] (correct)

You can do the same thing to stop an N from becoming an NG.

**Con**

cong [käng] (incorrect)

con [känə] (understandable)

con [kännn] (correct)

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**Exercise 5-6: Finding L Sounds****CD 3 Track 31**

Pause the CD, and find and mark all the L sounds in the familiar paragraph below; the first one is marked for you. There are seventeen of them; **five are silent**. Afterwards, check Answer Key, beginning on page 193.

Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_. I'm taking American Accent Training. There's a lot to learn, but I hope to make it as enjoyable as possible. I *should* pick up on the American intonation pattern pretty easily, *although* the only way to get it is to practice all of the time. I use the up and down, or peaks and valleys, intonation more than I used to. I've been paying attention to pitch, too. It's like *walking* down a staircase. I've been *talking* to a lot of Americans lately, and they tell me that I'm easier to understand. Anyway, I *could* go on and on, but the important thing is to listen well and sound good. Well, what do you think? Do I?

**Exercise 5-7: Silent Ls****CD3Track32**

Once you've found all the L sounds, the good news is that very often you don't even have to pronounce them. Read the following list of words after me.

1. would      could      should
2. chalk      talk      walk

- |             |         |        |
|-------------|---------|--------|
| 3. calm     | palm    | psalm  |
| 4. already  | alright | almond |
| 5. although | almost  | always |
| 6. salmon   | alms    | Albany |
| 7. folk     | caulk   | polka  |

Before reading about **Little Lola** in the next exercise, I'm going to get off the specific subject of L for the moment to talk about learning in general. Frequently, when you have some difficult task to do, you either avoid it or do it with dread. I'd like you to take the opposite point of view. For this exercise, you're going to completely focus on the thing that's most difficult: leaving your tongue attached to the top of your mouth. And rather than saying, "Oh, here comes an L, I'd better do something with my tongue," just leave your tongue attached *all through the entire paragraph!*

Remember our clenched-teeth reading of **What Must the Sun Above Wonder About?**, in Chapter 3? Well, it's time for us to make weird sounds again.

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### Exercise 5-8: Hold Your Tongue!

### CD 3 Track 33

*You and I are going to read with our tongues firmly held at the roofs of our mouths. If you want, hold a clean dime there with the tongue's tip; the dime will let you know when you have dropped your tongue because it will fall out. (Do not use candy; it will hold itself there since wet candy is sticky.) If you prefer, you can read with your tongue between your teeth instead of the standard behind-the-teeth position, and use a small mirror. Remember that with this technique you can actually see your tongue disappear as you hear your L sounds drop off.*

*It's going to sound ridiculous, of course, and nobody would ever intentionally sound like this, but no one will hear you practice. You don't want to sound like this: llllllllll. Force your tongue to make all the various vowels in spite of its position. Let's go.*

Leave a little for Lola!

### Exercise 5-9: Little Lola

### CD 3 Track 34

*Now that we've done this, instead of L being a hard letter to pronounce, it's the easiest one because the tongue is stuck in that position. Pause the CD to practice the reading on your own, again, with your tongue stuck to the top of your mouth. Read the following paragraph after me with your tongue in the normal position. Use good, strong intonation. Follow my lead as I start dropping h's here.*

Little Lola felt left out in life. She told herself that luck controlled her and she truly believed that only by loyally following an exalted leader could she be delivered from her solitude. Unfortunately, she learned a little late that her life was her own to deal with. When she realized it, she was already eligible for Social Security and she had lent her lifelong earnings to a lowlife in Long Beach. She lay on her linoleum and slid along the floor in anguish. A little later, she leapt up and laughed. She no longer longed for a leader to tell her how to live her life. Little Lola was finally all well.

In our next paragraph about **Thirty Little Turtles**, we deal with another aspect of L, namely consonant clusters. When you have a *dl* combination, you need to apply what you learned about liaisons and the American T as well as the L.

Since the two sounds are located in a similar position in the mouth, you know that they are going to be connected, right? You also know that all of these middle Ts are going to be pronounced D, and that you're going to leave the tongue stuck to the top of your mouth. That may leave you wondering: Where is the air to escape? The L sound is what determines that. For the D, you hold the air in, the same as for a final D, then for the L, you release it around the sides of the tongue. Let's go through the steps before proceeding to our next exercise.

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### Exercise 5-10: Dull versus ~dle

### CD 3Track

35

*Repeat after me.***laid** Don't pop the final D sound.**ladle** Segue gently from the D to the L, with a "small" schwa in-between. Leave your tongue touching behind the teeth and just drop the sides to let the air pass out.**lay dull** Here, your tongue can drop between the D and the L.**lay dull**lay      də  
ay      əl**ladle**

lay      dəl

**Exercise 5-11 : Final L Practice****CD 3 Track 36***Repeat the following lists.*

	<b>üll</b>	<b>äll</b>	<b>æwl</b>	<b>ell</b>	<b>ale</b>	<b>oll</b>	<b>eel</b>	<b>dl</b>
1.	bull	ball	bowel	bell	bale	bowl	Beal	bottle
2.		hall	howl	hell	hail	hole	heel	huddle
3.		hauled	howled	held	hailed	hold	healed	hurtle
4.	pull	pall	Powell	pell	pail	pole	peel	poodle
5.	wool	wall		well	whale	whole	wheel	wheedle
6.	full	fall	foul	fell	fail	foal	feel	fetal
7.	Schultz	shawl		shell	shale	shoal	she'll	shuttle
8.	tulle	tall	towel	tell	tale	toll	teal	turtle
9.		vault	vowel	veldt	veil	vole	veal	vital
10.	you'll	yawl	yowl	yell	Yale		yield	yodel
11.		call	cowl	Kelly	kale	cold	keel	coddle

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To hear the difference between [d<sup>ə</sup>l] and [d<sup>ə</sup>l], contrast the sentences, *Don't lay dull tiles* and *Don't ladle tiles*.

**Exercise 5-12: Thirty Little Turtles In a Bottle of Bottled Water** **CD 3 Track 37***Repeat the following paragraph, focusing on the consonant + əl combinations.***Threedee Lidd<sup>ə</sup>l Terdəl Zinə Bäd<sup>ə</sup>lə Bäd<sup>ə</sup>l Dwäder**

A bottle of bottled water held 30 little turtles. It didn't matter that each turtle had to rattle a metal ladle in order to get a little bit of noodles, a total turtle delicacy. The problem was that there were many turtle battles for the less than oodles of noodles. The littlest turtles always lost, because every time they thought about grappling with the haggler turtles, their little turtle minds boggled and they only caught a little bit of noodles.

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**Exercise 5-13: Speed-reading****CD 3 Track »**

*We've already practiced strong intonation, so now we'll just pick up the speed. First I'm going to read our familiar paragraph, as fast as I can. Subsequently, you'll practice on your own, and then we'll go over it together, sentence by sentence, to let you practice reading very fast, right after me. By then you will have more or less mastered the idea, so record yourself reading really fast and with very strong intonation. Listen back to see if you sound more fluent. Listen as I read.*

Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_. I'm taking American **Accent** Training. There's a **lot** to learn, but I **hope** to make it as **enjoyable** as possible. I should pick **up** on the American **intonation** pattern pretty **easily**, although the **only** way to **get** it is to **practice all** of the time. I use the **up** and down, or **peaks** and valleys, **intonation** more than I **used** to. I've been paying attention to **pitch, too**. It's like **walking** down a staircase. I've been **talking** to a lot of **Americans** lately, and they tell me that I'm **easier** to understand. **Anyway**, I could go **on** and on, but the **important** thing is to **listen** well and sound **good**. **Well**, what do you **think? Do I?**

+ Pause the CD and practice speed-reading on your own five times.

V Repeat each sentence after me.

V Record yourself speed-reading with strong intonation.

## Exercise 5-14: Tandem Reading

CD 3 Track

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*The last reading that I'd like you to do is one along with me. Up to now, I have read first and you have repeated in the pause that followed. Now, however, I would like you to read along at exactly the same time that I read, so that we sound like one person reading. Read along with me.*

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## Voice Quality

CD 3 Track 40

In the next chapter, we'll be working on a sound that is produced deep in the throat—the American R. In Chapter 3, we studied two tense vowels, **æ** and **ä**, and the completely neutral schwa, **ə**. The **æ** sound has a tendency to sound a little nasal all on its own, and when other vowels are nasalized as well, it puts your whole voice in the wrong place. This is an opportune moment, then, to go into the quality of your voice. In my observation, when people speak a foreign language, they tense up their throat, so their whole communication style sounds forced, pinched, strained, artificial, or nasal. The foreign speaker's voice is also generally higher pitched than would be considered desirable. To practice the difference between high pitch and lower pitch, work on **uh-oh**. In addition to pitch, this exercise will let you discover the difference between a tinny, nasal tone and a deep, rich, mellifluous, basso profundo tone. The tilde (~) is used to indicate a nasal sound.

## Exercise 5-15: Shifting Your Voice Position

CD 3 Track 41

*Pinch your nose closed and say **æ**. You should feel a high vibration in your nasal passages, as well as in your fingers. Now, continue holding your nose, and completely relax your throat—allow an **ah** sound to flow from deep in your chest. There should be no vibration in your nose at all. Go back and forth several times. Next, we practice flowing from one position to the other, so you can feel exactly when it changes from a nasal sound to a deep, rich schwa. Remember how it was imitating a man's voice when you were little? Do that, pinch your nose, and repeat after me.*

Nose		Throat				Chest				
ãæ	•>	ãæ	•>	ãä	•>	ä	•>	ə	•>	ə

*Here, we will practice the same progression, but we will stick with the same sound, **æ**.*

Nose		Throat				Chest				
ãæ	•>	ãæ	•>	æ	•>	æ	•>	æ	•>	æ

*As you will see in Chapter 12, there are three nasal consonants, **m**, **n**, and **ng**. These have non-nasal counterparts, **m/b**, **n/d**, **ng/g**. We're going to practice totally denasalizing your voice for a moment, which means turning the nasals into the other consonants. We'll read the same sentence three times. The first will be quite nasal. The second will sound like you have a cold. The third will have appropriate nasal consonants, but denasalized vowels. Repeat after me.*

Nasal	Clogged	Normal
Mãry might need money.	Berry bite deed buddy.	Mary might need money.

*Now that you have moved your voice out of your nose and down into your diaphragm, let s apply it.*

A Lät of Läng, Hät Wälks in the Gärden. John was not sorry when the boss called off the walks



in the garden. Obviously, to him, it was awfully hot, and the walks were far too long. He had not thought that walking would have caught on the way it did, and he fought the policy from the onset.

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## Chapter 6. The American R

## CD 3 Track 42

American English, today—although continually changing—is made up of the sounds of the various people who have come to settle here from many countries. All of them have put in their linguistic two cents, the end result being that the easiest way to pronounce things has almost always been adopted as the most American. R is an exception, along with L and the sounds of [æ] and [th], and is one of the most troublesome sounds for people to acquire. Not only is it difficult for adults learning the language, but also for American children, who pronounce it like a W or skip over it altogether and only pick it up after they've learned all the other sounds.

### The Invisible R

The trouble is that you can't see an R from the outside. With a P, for instance, you can see when people put their lips together and pop out a little puff. With R, however, everything takes place behind almost closed lips—back down in the throat—and who can tell what the tongue is doing? It is really hard to tell what's going on if, when someone speaks, you can only hear the *err* sound, especially if you're used to making an R by touching your tongue to the ridge behind your teeth. So, what should your tongue be doing?

This technique can help you visualize the correct tongue movements in pronouncing the R. (1) Hold your hand out flat, with the palm up, slightly dropping the back end of it. That's basically the position your tongue is in when you say *ah* [ä], so your flat hand will represent this sound. (2) Now, to go from *ah* to the *er*, take your fingers and curl them up slightly. Again, your tongue should follow that action. The sides of your tongue should come up a bit, too. When the air passes over that hollow in the middle of your tongue (look at the palm of your hand), that's what creates the *er* sound.

Try it using both your hand and tongue simultaneously. Say *ah*, with your throat open (and your hand flat), then curl your tongue up (and your fingers) and say *errr*. The tip of the tongue should be aimed at a middle position in the mouth, but never touching, and your throat should relax and expand. R, like L, has a slight schwa in it. This is what pulls the *er* down so far back in your throat.

Another way to get to *er* is to go from the *ee* sound and slide your tongue straight back like a collapsing accordion, letting the two sides of your tongue touch the insides of your molars; the tip of the tongue, however, again, should not touch anything. Now from *ee*, pull your tongue back toward the center of your throat, and pull the sound down into your throat:



Since the R is produced in the throat, let's link it with other throat sounds.

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### Exercise 6-1: R Location Practice

### CD 3 Track 43

*Repeat after me.*

[g], [gr], greek, green, grass, grow, crow, core, cork, coral, cur, curl, girl, gorilla, her, erg, error, mirror, were, war, gore, wrong, wringer, church, pearl

While you're perfecting your R, you might want to rush to it, and in doing so, neglect the preceding vowel. There are certain vowels that you can neglect, but there are others that demand their full sound. We're going to practice the ones that require you to keep that clear sound before you add an R.