Improving english pronunciation pdf

I'm not robot!

All the tips below actually fall into one of these three steps you need to take to pronounce words and what mistakes you make, working on improving your pronunciation. #1 Use the IPA First things first, you need to start by learning how words are pronounced. You all know how to pronounce English words, but it is often just the accumulation of listening experience. With time and the more you practice your English taking part in conversations, you get how to pronounce the words. This way is risky as you never know if you got it right when you heard a native English speaker talking. This is why I suggest learning to use the IPA, the International Phonetic Alphabet. It is a tool to help you understand how to say the words rather than spell them. It uses different symbols and letters that distinguish the sounds, allowing you to get it right 100%. If you use a dictionary, it most probably includes how each word is pronounced based on the IPA. A word written like this /bi/ in the dictionary is what you are looking for. #2 Discover your mistakes Now that you know how to do your homework with the IPA's help, you are ready to start exploring how well you do it. You need the theory but also real examples, like watching how native speakers pronounce English words. For example, watch a TV show or a TED talk on YouTube with a native English speaker do the talking. Notice how they make their mouth and lips when they pronounce certain sounds in words. Maybe their lips are stretched open, or they are round. Of course, you can't see how they use their tongue or throat but noticing how they form their lips is a surefire way to get it right. Then stand in front of a mirror and practice sounds and words. Combine the IPA sounds and how the native speakers you watched do it. Try to imitate them. If you fancy, record yourself with your mobile phone (video is way better than just audio). Then play it and check if you do it the right way (and the words come out of your mouth the correct way) or do something wrong. Rinse and repeat. Discovering your mistakes is the foundation for improvement. And don't forget to give a friendly pat on your back for the words you pronounce well. Self-motivation always helps. #3 Break down words into sounds Now comes the fun part: practising and improving your pronunciation. A good way to start is to break down words into sounds. Rather than pronounce the whole word at once, often mumbling if it is a long word, break it down into syllables and the syllables life, breaking down large goals or projects into smaller, more manageable and actionable steps is an approach that can help you nail it. If you have specific words or sounds you experience trouble pronouncing, focus on them. For extra help, write down the words in syllables, putting a line between each syllable in a word. Here is an extra tip! If you don't know how many syllables a word consists of, try this: put your finger just under your chin touched your finger, it's a new syllable. Try the word "syllable" itself. "Syl-la-ble". Your chin touched your finger three times, Isn't it much easier now? #4 Visualise OK, now, this is tricky yet handy. If you have studied how you should pronounce a word that you find difficult, try to picture it. Close your eyes and visualise how you must put your tongue and lips to make the sound. If you have watched how native English speakers pronounce the difficult phoneme "sh", like in the word "English", visualise that you need to make your lips round and project them a little bit forward. Then say the word while executing the moves. Remember, it's all about practising your muscles, and practice makes perfect. I suggest doing this exercise often and with your eyes open may make it more challenging as you are more easily distracted by visual stimuli from the environment. #5 Exaggerate the sounds I know exaggeration is not mindful, but you can use it to your benefit when it comes to pronunciation. Let me explain with a real-life example. In theatre, actors use exaggeration a lot. Since theatre is a form of art where oral speech and facial expressions add to the actors' mastery, the director often shouts to them during the rehearsals, "Exaggerate! Make it bigger!". If the actors must laugh, their laugh must be loud, louder, taken to the extremes. This is precisely what drama is all about, in the sense of the ancient Greek word. The same goes for your pronunciation. Of course, you don't need to get dramatic, but you can exaggerate the sounds that make your life hard. Let me put it another way. There are two options: option one is to make the sounds bigger and louder, even to the point that you feel a little bit awkward. Option 2 is to be shy and sound even shyer by pronouncing the words and sounds with low volume and confidence. Which one would you choose? I advise you to opt for #1. There is no reason to feel like a clown. On the contrary, sounding loud and confident with the complex sounds gives you extra points. Plus, natives won't even notice as they will find it natural. #6 Shadow native speakers It is a relatively new term, but this exercise is top-notch. So what's shadowing, and what does it have to do with improving your pronunciation? It is a technique where you listen to someone talking in English (or any other language) and repeat what they say right after them. Like a shadow or an echo to their speech. You may find it funny or wonder if it works. It does, especially with pronunciation. I would not recommend it to learn a new language or improve your English, but you can use it to practice in a close to a real-life situation. As I mentioned before, it's about muscles and the more you train them, fast, as the native speaker does, the more rapid the improvement. Another exciting thing is that shadowing can also be valuable in perfecting how you talk in English in general, not just with pronunciation but also with stress and intonation. The two latter are also important parts of speaking English naturally and confidently, so it's worth trying it. The way to do it is simple: Choose your favourite Netflix movie or series or even a YouTube video or podcast. Turn on the English subtitles or have the transcript handy. As they speak, repeat along, trying to keep the pace. It may not be easy initially, but you will find it easier to follow the pace as you improve. #7 Read aloud I have been caught in several seemingly awkward situations where I read a text in another language aloud while waiting for the doctor or the subway. That was my way of practising my muscles. It would help if you did it, too. Once you have mastered the first six tips I am sharing with you today and feel more confident, you can expand your reading the texts aloud. You will learn new vocabulary, but most importantly, you will practice your pronunciation, in a private environment, without any judgement. That being said, don't be too hard on yourself. Even if you still make mistakes or struggle with specific sounds, you will have to keep working on them until you nail them. Acknowledge all the sounds you have mastered so far and keep practising mindfully. Make it a daily routine and plan to spend 15 minutes every day reading English texts aloud. If you feel uncertain about pronouncing a word, don't hesitate to look for it in a dictionary and find out how it's spoken with the IPA letters' help. If still in doubt, have a native English speaker monitor you and correct your mistakes. Should you not find one, an English professional coach can also help. #8 Go slow Most English learners believe that the faster they speak, the more proficient they appear. I got news! It's not the case. Good English communication skills include aligning mind and body. Speaking too fast will make you sound and look worse than your may expect, and your brain will struggle. Speaking in a language other than your native one is not the easiest thing to do, and talking fast can guickly overwhelm you. The less relaxed the mind, the less comfortable your body, too. So, your muscles (including those you use to pronounce words) will be tense and stiff. Have you seen actors, singers or presenters doing specific exercises (look more like hilarious facial expressions) with their mouth? They do it to relax their muscles and help their voice come out smoothly and gently. The same goes for you. There is no need to put yourself into this when you can opt for a slower talking speed in the first place. Talking slower also helps with breathing, and these short pauses help you recharge instantly and focus not only on how you speak English but also on your message. #9 Practice with tongue twisters Now comes the entertaining part! I chose to end this tips list with two fun ways to improve your pronunciation. Your learning experience doesn't have to be so formal and rigid. You need to include ways to have fun and enjoy the process. One of them is to practice with the famous tongue twisters. Believe it or not, they can help you tremendously. Most of them have similar sounds squeezed together, making it a stretch for you to pronounce them. Also, some of them use the so-called "minimal pairs", two words that are pronounced the same except for one sound (like tap/top or beat/bit). Start practising the tongue twisters slowly, then increase speed as you feel more in control. Here are some of the most popular ones to get started: She sells seashells by the seashore. How can a clam cram in a clean cream can? If a dog chews shoes, whose shoes does he choose? You can find a lot of them online, so google it. #10 Sing along Do you like music? Which is your favourite singer or band? Choose the best songs, listen to them on your phone or laptop and sing along! You know the lyrics, so it's easy for you to do it. If you don't remember the exact lyrics, google it, and I am sure you will find them. Singing (even if you have a crap voice like me) can be fun, relaxing and entertaining while practising your English at the same time. A win-win situation! It works because it takes away the burden of finding the right words and constructing sentences. So, you can focus solely on the words the best way possible. Just like the singer does! It's a mix of shadowing and reading texts aloud. This 2-in-1 fun exercise can take the pressure or fear you feel when speaking English and let you practice freely, without subjecting yourself to doubt, shyness or lack of confidence. Because you deserve it, and you have what it takes to nail your English communication skills! Which one of these tips resonates with you the most? Which ones will you try today? Just keep in mind that they are not instant fixes, and you need to commit time and energy to make them work. But if you do so, they can work wonders. Remember, your pronunciation goal is to be as close to the standard as possible so that everyone understands you and appreciates your input. Here at ProEnglish. this is also my end goal. To empower non-native, highly- skilled professionals like you to claim what they deserve in their career by breaking down the language blockage in a safe, kind and trustful environment. I am Vera Daskalaki, your mindful English coach. You, being here and reading this, really means a lot to me. Let me know if anything above hit a nerve, and feel free to send me any questions. If you want to receive more tips like these, join the ProEnglish community below. No spam, no sales. Just pure value. It's a promise.

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