

CHAPTER ONE

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THROUGH THICK AND THIN

Voiceless "TH" (θ) at the beginning of a syllable.

I. MAKE THE SOUND.

Protrude your tongue. Touch your tongue lightly with the upper teeth. Blow.

- Be careful:
- (1) Keep your tongue flat.
 - (2) Maintain an even, steady flow of air. If you do not have steady airflow, you are probably either biting your tongue or not protruding your tongue far enough. Your teeth should not touch your tongue during sound production. Check your position in a mirror.
 - (3) If your tongue tends to point downward rather than protrude straight out, point your tongue tip upward.
 - (4) The airflow needs to be sufficiently audible.
 - (5) Don't change position during the sound.
 - (6) Be careful how you end the sound. Don't move your tongue until you have stopped blowing.

To check your production, maintain the airflow evenly for 5 seconds.

II. CAN YOU HEAR THE DIFFERENCE?

"S" and "T" substitutions for "TH" are common. Can you hear the difference between:

thin - sin
thaw - saw

thank - tank
thought - taught

Now the speaker will say one of each of the following pairs of words. Decide whether it is the first or second word.

thin - sin

thank - tank

thank - sank

thorn - torn

theme - seem (seam)

thigh - tie (Thai)

think - sink

thug - tug

thick - sick

therm - term

thing - sing

thought - taught

thought - sought

thin - tin

thumb - some (sum)

thick - tick

thigh - sigh

theme - team (teem)

III. NOW IT'S YOUR TURN.

Words

thin

thaw

third

within

think

thought

thirty

without

thick

thug

thirteen

ethics

thing

thumb

thorough

author

thank

thunder

Thursday

method

thigh

thump

thirsty

something

theme

thud

thermal

nothing

thief

therapy

three

anything

thousand

theory

through (threw)

everything

Exceptions: Although these words are spelled with "TH", they are pronounced with a "T": Thomas, Thompson, Theresa, Thailand, Thames, Esther, thyme, apartheid.

The "TH" is omitted in: asthma.

Sentences

1) Thank you.

- 2) I think so.
- 3) Cathy is too thin.
- 4) Today is Thursday.
- 5) I'm thirsty.
- 6) Thomas is a thief.
- 7) Arthur will be thirty on Thursday.
- 8) I thought I heard thunder.
- 9) A rose has thorns.
- 10) Say something.
- 11) Theresa goes to therapy on Thursday.
- 12) Anthony said nothing.
- 13) Arthur hurt his thumb.
- 14) Thanks very much.
- 15) Do you need anything?
- 16) I thought of something.
- 17) Thanks for everything.
- 18) I think we're leaving at 3:30.
- 19) I thought Cynthia taught something else.
- 20) Kathy did a thorough job.
- 21) Theresa is thirty-three years old.

Sentences with an explanation

- 1) His hair is thinning (i.e., He is losing his hair. He is going bald.).
- 2) Thanks anyway. (Say this to someone who has tried unsuccessfully to help you.)
- 3) Anthony has been my friend through thick and thin (i.e., in good times and in bad).
- 4) Theo is having second thoughts about his decision (i.e., doubts).
- 5) A new think tank has been formed to study urban problems (i.e., a research center for solving social or scientific problems).

Sentences to use with your friends

- 1) Cynthia is something else (i.e., quite an unusual person)!
- 2) Put on your thinking cap (i.e., take time to figure something out; often said to a child).
- 3) Thomas isn't mainstream; he's a musician who does his own thing (i.e., He follows his own inclinations; he doesn't follow the crowd).
- 4) Howard Hughes had a thing about privacy (i.e., an obsession with).
- 5) He also had a thing about germs (i.e., phobia; fear).
- 6) You should think twice before accepting his job offer (i.e., reconsider; think again before acting).
- 7) Samantha was thumbing a ride (i.e., hitchhiking).
- 8) I heard you turned thumbs down on the offer (i.e., rejected).
- 9) I didn't know Cynthia was so thick-headed (i.e., stupid).
- 10) Anthony is under his therapist's thumb (i.e., under his influence or power).
- 11) The author is very thin-skinned (i.e., sensitive to criticism).
- 12) Martha is thick-skinned (i.e., insensitive to criticism).
- 13) Instead of taking action, Matthew sat around twiddling his thumbs (i.e., doing nothing; literally, turning one's thumbs idly around each other with the fingers clasped).

DID HE BEAT "THE STREET"?

Vowel /i/, most often spelled "ee" or "ea".

I. MAKE THE SOUND.

This sound is most easily produced in imitation. It is very similar to the /i/ in other languages. Smile as you say it.

- Be careful:
- (1) Do not make your production of this sound longer than any other vowel, even though it may be represented by two letters.
 - (2) /I/ (as in "it") is a common substitution for /i/, as discussed in the exercise below.
 - (3) Another common error is to make two sounds instead of the one (e.g., "me-at", "me-an"). The /i/ in "meu, meat, and mean" should sound the same. Maintain the same tone throughout the word until you can produce such words easily.
 - (4) Some Chinese speakers may substitute /ji/ for /i/, as in "yeat" for "eat". To avoid this error, do not let the back of your tongue touch your palate.
 - (5) The most common correction needed is to make the sound more definite. Do this by exaggerating your smile.
 - (6) Note that the "N", "L", and "R" sounds may adversely influence your production of /i/ at this point.

II. CAN YOU HEAR THE DIFFERENCE?

The /i/ and /I/ (as in "it") are often substituted for each other. You will study the /I/ sound next. Can you hear the difference between:

eat - it

deep - dip

ease - is

feet - fit

Now the speaker will say one of each of the following pairs of words. Decide whether it is the first or second word.

eat - it

sheep - ship

ease - is

wheel (we'll) - will

bean - been (bin)

peak (peek) - pick

<u>leak</u> (<u>leek</u>) - lick	<u>meal</u> - mill
<u>meat</u> (<u>meet</u>) - mitt	<u>seek</u> - sick
<u>feast</u> - fist	<u>feet</u> (<u>feat</u>) - fit
<u>peel</u> (<u>peal</u>) - pill	<u>seat</u> - sit
<u>seen</u> (<u>scene</u>) - sin	<u>beat</u> (<u>beet</u>) - bit
<u>he's</u> - his	<u>least</u> (<u>leased</u>) - list
<u>feel</u> - fill (Phil)	<u>steal</u> (<u>steel</u>) - still
<u>teen</u> - tin	<u>each</u> - itch
<u>deed</u> - did	<u>heal</u> (<u>heel</u> , <u>he'll</u>) - hill

III. NOW IT'S YOUR TURN.

Words

<u>be</u> (<u>bee</u>)	<u>eat</u>	<u>cheek</u>	<u>feed</u>
<u>fee</u>	<u>seat</u>	<u>beach</u>	<u>read</u> (<u>reed</u>)
<u>we</u>	<u>beat</u> (<u>beet</u>)	<u>beef</u>	<u>lead</u> (v.)
<u>me</u>	<u>meat</u> (<u>meet</u>)	<u>bean</u>	<u>niece</u> (<u>Nice</u>)
<u>see</u> (<u>sea</u>)	<u>sweet</u> (<u>suite</u>)	<u>seen</u> (<u>scene</u>)	<u>lease</u>
<u>she</u>	<u>cheat</u>	<u>beep</u>	<u>wheel</u> (<u>we'll</u>)
<u>three</u>	<u>sheet</u>	<u>weed</u> (<u>we'd</u>)	<u>ease</u>
<u>the</u>	<u>week</u> (<u>weak</u>)	<u>need</u> (<u>knead</u>)	<u>easy</u>
<u>key</u>	<u>piece</u> (<u>peace</u>)	<u>leak</u> (<u>leek</u>)	<u>leash</u>
<u>gee</u>	<u>tea</u> (<u>tee</u>)	<u>feet</u> (<u>feat</u>)	<u>teen</u>

Sentences

- 1) Leave me a key.
- 2) Dean is weak.
- 3) When will he see me?
- 4) Read the lease.
- 5) Tina made some tea.
- 6) Keep your room neat.
- 7) I need a sheet of paper.
- 8) Please read Jean's memo.
- 9) I'll see my niece next week.
- 10) My dog needs a new leash.
- 11) He'd never cheat.
- 12) The police keep the peace.
- 13) Jeane has a key to Suite 323.
- 14) I'll see you in a week.
- 15) Lee is mean.
- 16) I've seen Nei's jeep.
- 17) This isn't a meal; it's a feast.
- 18) Have a seat.
- 19) Gina has a Ph.D. from M.I.I.

Sentences with an explanation

- 1) Beep me when you're readyy to leave (i.e., Call my pager/beeper).

- 2) Look before you leap (i.e., Think before you act; consider a situation carefully before you jump into it).
- 3) Neel always takes the easy way out (i.e., the easy solution).
- 4) Did the money manager beat "The Street" (i.e., Did his performance exceed that of the appropriate stock index on Wall Street, the financial center of the U.S.)?
- 5) You caught me at a weak moment (i.e., Your request of me is likely to be granted because I am vulnerable at the moment).
- 6) Did Gene make the team (i.e., Was he selected to join the team)?

Sentences to use with your friends

- 1) Keep your cool (i.e., Stay calm).
- 2) Don't freak (i.e., Don't become extremely excited).
- 3) Steve is a beach bum (i.e., someone who spends all his time on the beach, rather than working).
- 4) Sheila made the decision; let her take the heat (i.e., pressure).
- 5) Keith has two left feet (i.e., He can't dance because of his clumsiness).
- 6) Beats me (i.e., I don't know).
- 7) Phoebe and I are going to the concert, but we have the nosebleed seats (i.e., seats in a stadium, auditorium, or the like that are so high as to give one a nosebleed; these are usually the cheap seats).
- 8) Melanie is a neat freak (i.e., an extremely neat, orderly person; this is the opposite of "slob").
- 9) Peter used a cheat sheet during the exam (i.e., a piece of paper with the answers to the test on it).
- 10) I think it's time to feed the meter (i.e., to put money in the parking meter).

SKIP IT.

Vowel /ɪ/ most often spelled “i”.

I. MAKE THE SOUND.

This sound is most easily produced in imitation in words. It is slightly more open, and the muscles of the neck are more relaxed than in the /i/ sound you just studied.

Be careful: (1) Italians, along with some Portuguese and Brazilian Portuguese speakers may add /h/ before the /ɪ/, as in “his” for “is”.

Practice these contrasts: his - is, hit - it, hill - ill

(2) Chinese speakers may add /j/ before the /ɪ/ as in “yin” for “in”.

To avoid this error, do not let the back of your tongue touch your palate.

(3) Most other speakers tend to substitute /i/ for /ɪ/.

II. CAN YOU HEAR THE DIFFERENCE?

For most speakers, the contrasting pairs of words are those in the /i/ section you just studied. Review that section, as needed.

III. NOW IT’S YOUR TURN.

Words

<u>ɪ</u> t	<u>ɪ</u> n (ɪnn)	l <u>ɪ</u> p	<u>ɪ</u> f
h <u>ɪ</u> t	th <u>ɪ</u> n	h <u>ɪ</u> p	b <u>ɪ</u> g
s <u>ɪ</u> t	t <u>ɪ</u> n	r <u>ɪ</u> p	d <u>ɪ</u> g
f <u>ɪ</u> t	w <u>ɪ</u> n	s <u>ɪ</u> p	th <u>ɪ</u> ng
m <u>ɪ</u> tt	ch <u>ɪ</u> n	z <u>ɪ</u> p	s <u>ɪ</u> ng
s <u>ɪ</u> ck (s <u>ɪ</u> c)	sh <u>ɪ</u> n	d <u>ɪ</u> d	l <u>ɪ</u> ve (v.)
qu <u>ɪ</u> ck	p <u>ɪ</u> n	l <u>ɪ</u> d	<u>ɪ</u> s

p <u>i</u> ck	f <u>i</u> sh <u>i</u> ng	<u>i</u> tch	b <u>u</u> ild <u>i</u> ng
th <u>i</u> s	k <u>i</u> ck	h <u>i</u> m (h <u>y</u> mn)	b <u>ee</u> n (b <u>i</u> n)
h <u>i</u> s	m <u>i</u> ss <u>i</u> ng	g <u>y</u> m	b <u>u</u> sy
Ms. (/m <u>I</u> z/)	g <u>i</u> ve	w <u>i</u> th <u>i</u> n	b <u>u</u> siness
Mr. ("m <u>I</u> ster")	r <u>i</u> ch	wh <u>i</u> ch	pr <u>e</u> tt <u>y</u>
Mrs. ("m <u>I</u> ssez")	f <u>i</u> lth <u>y</u>	b <u>i</u> d	w <u>o</u> men

Note: Although the last five words are not spelled with "i", they are pronounced /I/. "Business" is reduced to two syllables: omit the center "i". "We'll, he'll, she'll, really" may be pronounced with either /I/ or /i/ in connected speech.

Sentences

- 1) I bit my lip.
- 2) This is it.
- 3) is she in?
- 4) Who is it?
- 5) Bill is sick.
- 6) it itches.
- 7) Linda is in the building.
- 8) Ms. Simpson is rich.
- 9) The sandwich comes with a dil pickle.
- 10) I'll see him in a minute.
- 11) Chris will be back in awhile.

- 12) Tim is in the office.
- 13) It's in my desk.
- 14) Did Bill leave the tip?
- 15) Rick hid it in his room.
- 16) Kim made a cheese dip for the chips.
- 17) Give it to Sidney.
- 18) I live in England.
- 19) I've been in Finland in the winter.
- 20) Mr. Smith is in business for himself.
- 21) Fill in the blanks.
- 22) Fill out this form.
- 23) We saw Mickey and Minnie at Disneyland.

Sentences with an explanation

- 1) May I sit in on your class (i.e., observe)?
- 2) The student demonstrators staged a sit-in (i.e., an action in which people enter and remain seated in a public place as a form of protest).
- 3) Sidney gave Jim a stock tip (i.e., secret or confidential information).
- 4) The check is in the mail. (i.e., payment is on the way. This is a common excuse used to stall a creditor. This statement is often assumed to be untrue.)
- 5) The title "Ms." grew out of the women's lib movement (i.e., liberation; Note: "Ms." refers to both single and married women).
- 6) I missed the meeting; would you fill me in (i.e., update me; tell me what I missed)?
- 7) I can't teach my class today; would you fill in for me (i.e., substitute for me)?

- 8) Whhitney wll lip sync her ht song on TV (i.e., synchronize her mouth movements with the record; mouth the words to her song).

Sentences to use with your friends

- 1) Is that it (i.e., is that all?; is there anything else?)?
- 2) Our guests wll be here in ffteen minutes; you'd better get wth it (i.e., do what you are supposed to do).
- 3) I'm not wth it today (i.e., I'm not all here; I'm not thinking clearly).
- 4) Wth hs new job, Jm is sitting pretty (i.e., is in a good financial position).
- 5) The stand-up comic has a gig in Philadelphia (i.e., a job in the entertainment industry; a single engagement).
- 6) The singer played a weekend gig in Wilmington.
- 7) Timothy isn't into jazz; he likes R&B (i.e., he isn't interested in jazz; he likes rhythm & blues).
- 8) Linda wll fix Jm up wth her sister (i.e., arrange a date).
- 9) Chll out (i.e., calm down).
- 10) Who slipped Bill a mickey (i.e., who secretly gave him a drugged alcoholic drink; also referred to as a "mickey finn")?
- 11) I think my sister-in-law has sticky fingers (i.e., she is a thief).
- 12) Mr. Gilmer is a bigwig in the rag business (i.e., an important person in the fashion industry).
- 13) My sister paid way too much for that lpstick; she was ripped off (i.e., cheated).
- 14) You paid how much for this insurance? What a rip-off! (i.e., What a gyp!)

NOW PUT IT ALL TOGETHER.

I. Titles

The preferred title for women, single or married, is “Ms.” This title grew out of the women’s liberation movement of the 1960’s in the U.S. Just as the title “Mr.” for men does not reveal marital status, “Ms.” is used for all women, regardless of marital status. “Mrs.” and especially “Miss” are generally considered old-fashioned and are rarely used.

When you need to get the attention of a particular stranger, saying “Excuse me, ma’am” or “Excuse me, sir” is preferable to “Hey, lady” or “Hey, buddy”. You may also hear “Yes, ma’am” and “No, sir” as polite forms in certain parts of the country and in certain situations. “Ma’am” is a contraction of “madam”.

When addressing a group, “ladies” and “gentlemen” are proper terms. Informally, “Hi, guys” may be used with groups of men, mixed groups, and even groups of women only.

II. What are the preferred titles for men and women in your country? Do you differentiate by marital status and by age? Are these titles and forms of address changing? If so, why?

III. Begin using the sounds you have learned in your everyday speech. Use them in such common expressions as “Thank you” and “I think so”. Focus on your speech at certain times during the day. Remember to speak more slowly in order to give yourself time to say the sounds correctly or to recognize and correct any errors.