

## STRONG AND WEAK FORMS

Compare: I like **that**. /aɪ 'laɪk 'ðæt/ I hope **that** she will. /aɪ 'həʊp ðæt ʃɪ 'wɪl/

Only strong forms in speaking? Some foreigners do it... Are they understood? Why should we learn weak forms?

Weak forms x contracted forms

About **fourty** words appearing in weak forms in English - usually **function** words. Can you name some of them?

Words occurring in their weak forms are printed in smaller type than stressed words and strong forms, e.g.

We can wait /'wi: kən 'weɪt/

### Exercise 1 Sentences for repetition

Listen and repeat:

We can wait for the bus	/wi kən 'weɪt fə ðə 'bʌs/
How do the lights work?	/'haʊ də ðə 'laɪts 'wɜ:k/
There are some new books I must read	/ðə ə səm 'nju: 'bʊks aɪ mʌs 'ri:d/
She took her aunt for a drive	/ʃi 'tʊk ə 'a:nt fə ə 'draɪv/
The basket was full of things to eat	/ðə 'bɑ:skɪt wəz 'fʊl əv 'θɪŋz tu 'i:t/
Why should a man earn more than a woman?	/'waɪ ʃəd ə 'mæn 'ɜ:n 'mɔ: ðən ə 'wʊmən/
You ought to have your own car.	/ju 'ɔ:t tə 'hæv jə 'əʊn 'kɑ:/
He wants to come and see us at home.	/hi 'wɒnts tə 'kʌm ən 'si: əs ət 'həʊm/
Have you taken them from that box?	/'hæv jə 'teɪkən ðəm frəm 'ðæt 'bɒks/
It's true that he was late, but his car could have broken down.	/ɪts 'tru: ðæt i wəz 'leɪt bət ɪz 'kɑ: kəd əv 'brəʊkən 'daʊn/
I shall take as much as I want.	/aɪ ʃl 'teɪk əz 'mʌʃ əz aɪ 'wɒnt/
Why am I too late to see him today?	/'waɪ əm aɪ 'tu: 'leɪt tə 'si: ɪm tə'deɪ/

### Exercise 2

In the following sentences, the transcription for the weak-form words is left blank. Fill in the blanks, taking care to use the appropriate form.

- I want her to park that car over there.  
aɪ wɒnt      pɑ:k      kɑ:r əʊvə
- Of all the proposals, the one that you made is the silliest.  
ɔ:l      prəpəʊzɪz      wʌn      meɪd      sɪliəst
- Jane and Bill could have driven them to and from the party.  
dʒeɪn      bɪl      drɪvən      pɑ:ti
- To come to the point, what shall we do for the rest of the week?  
kʌm      pɔɪnt wɒt      rest      wɪ:k
- Has anyone got an idea where it came from?  
eniwʌn gɒt      aɪdɪə weə ɪt keɪm
- Pedestrians must always use the crossings provided for them.  
pədestriənz      ɔ:lweɪz ju:z      krɒsɪŋz prəvaɪdɪd
- Each one was a perfect example of the art that had been developed there.  
i:tʃ      wʌn      pɜ:fɪkt ɪgzɑ:mpəl      ɑ:t      bi:n dɪveləpt

### Exercise 3 Weak forms with pre-vocalic and pre-consonantal forms

#### DIFFERENT VOWELS

When you hear the number, say the phrase, using the appropriate weak form:

1 the apple      2 the pear      3 to Edinburgh      4 to Leeds      5 so do I      6 so do they

#### LINKING CONSONANT

7 an ear    8 a foot    9 her eyes    10 her nose    11 your uncle    12 your friend    13 for Alan    14 for Mike  
15 there aren't    16 there couldn't    17 these are ours    18 these are mine    19 you were out    20 you were there

### Exercise 4 Transcription

Write the following sentences in transcription, taking care to give the correct weak forms for the words printed in smaller type.

- 1 Leave the rest of the food for lunch.
- 2 Aren't there some letters for her to open?
- 3 Where do the eggs come from?
- 4 Read his book and write some notes.
- 5 At least we can try and help.

### Exercise 5 Pronunciation of weak forms

This exercise uses the sentences of Exercise 3. When you hear the number, say the sentence, giving particular attention to the weak forms. (1 . . .5)

**Exercise 6 Stress placement in sentences. Put a stress mark ' before each syllable you would expect to be stressed in the following sentences. For example, given the sentence 'I think I'll be late for work' you should mark the words 'think', 'late' and 'work' like this:**

I 'think I'll be 'late for 'work.

- 1 James decided to type the letter himself.
- 2 The plane was approaching the runway at high speed.
- 3 Try to see the other person's point of view.
- 4 You put your brakes on when the light turns to red.
- 5 In a short time the house was full of children.

**Exercise 7 Pronunciation of stressed syllables. When you hear the number, say the sentence from the list in Exercise 3 taking care to stress the correct syllables. You will then hear the correct version, which you should repeat. (1 . . . 5)**

**Exercise 8 Weak forms. In the following sentences, those words which are not stressed must be pronounced in their weak forms. When you hear the number, say the sentence:**

- 1 Here's a present for your brother.
- 2 These are all the pictures that are left.
- 3 There could be a bit of rain at the end of the morning.
- 4 A few people asked him a question.
- 5 Collect your luggage before leaving the train.