

How do you pronounce
these sentence fragments?

this Saturday

life and death

what time

Linking: CONSONANT + CONSONANT

There are two types of consonants.

1. Stops — A stop sound is created by stopping the air flow with either our lips as in /p/ and /b/, the front of the tongue as in /t/ and /d/, or the back of the tongue as in /k/ and /g/.

2. Continuants — A continuant sound is often longer. The air flow can continue as long as we have air in our lungs. Common continuants include /s/, /z/, /m/, /l/, /f/, /v/, and /θ/.

Rule 1: When the stop sound is followed by another consonant, you must hold the stop sound. In other words, don't release a puff of air after you create the sound with your lips or tongue. Releasing the air will create an extra syllable. Instead, simply hold the air pressure that is building up inside your mouth. For example, instead of saying "help a me" say "help me".

Word pairs for practice

Make sure that you hold the final consonant of the first word.

up there

baked beans

great day

cookbook

help me

fried chicken

big deal

dark night

drop down

good music

blog post

break time

When the stop is in the middle of a word and the next letter is also a consonant — for example, when you say "lobster" make sure that you don't release the "b." Don't say, "lob/ə/ster." Hold the "b" and say "lobster." (Please note that the final stop at the end of the sentence can either be held or released.)

Words for practice

Make sure you hold the stop sound in the middle of the word.

admit

cupcake

midterm

hopefully

grapefruit

stepmother

Rule 2: Linking continuants is much simpler. Just go from one consonant sound to another without stopping the air flow. This usually happens automatically.

sounds like:

likes to	"like Stu"
it's top	"it stop"
life and death	"lie fan death"

Linking consonant to same consonant

Rule 3: When the final consonant of one word is the same as the first consonant of the following word, pronounce the consonant only once. Do not pause between the sounds, but just lengthen the sound a bit or say it with a little bit more energy. See the example below.

sounds like:

1. She speaks S panish.	"She speak Spanish."
2. turned d own	"turn down"
3. help p Paul	"help all"
4. well l it	"well it"
5. black c at	"black at"
6. foreign n ame	"foreign aim"

This concept is described in more detail and, therefore, more accurately in this Rachel's video. The most important part of the video is only 3 minutes from 1:00 to 4:00.



Word pairs for practice

1. big **g**ame
2. well **l**it
3. can **n**ever
4. good **d**ay
5. this **s**aturday
6. far **r**ight
7. stop **p**laying
8. Tom **m**ight
9. book **c**lub
10. what **t**ime

Practice sentences

1. Both **th**ings are from **m**e.
2. Stop **p**laying and help **p**aul.
3. She's **s**ingle, and she's **s**o happy.
4. I'm **m**arried, and I'm **m**iserable.
5. It was **s**o nice to meet **t**om.

There's a small exception, though...

This rule (Rule 3) doesn't work with the /tʃ/ and /dʒ/ sounds.
We say "hatchch chicks", not "hatchicks", and "fudge jar", not "fudjar".

It's mentioned in the video below after 4:30.



Linking consonant to similar consonant

Voiceless and voiced consonant pairs

Voiceless Consonants (vocal cords do not vibrate)		Voiced Consonants (vocal cords vibrate)		How to produce the sound
/p/	pet rope	/b/	bet robe	Lips start fully together, then part quickly to produce a small release of air.
/t/	ten seat	/d/	den seed	Tip of the tongue is slightly tense as it firmly touches and then releases the gum ridge.
/k/	class back	/g/	glass bag	Back of tongue presses up against soft palate (back of mouth) and releases.
/f/	fault leaf	/v/	vault leave	Lower lips lightly touch upper teeth; vibration occurs on the lips from the flow of air created.
/θ/	thank breath	/ð/	this breathe	Tip of the tongue touches back of front teeth or edges of front teeth. Air flows out between tongue and teeth.
/s/	sink price	/z/	zinc prize	Sides of tongue touch middle and back upper teeth. Tip of tongue is lowered a bit. Air flows out of middle part of the tongue.
/ʃ/	pressure wish	/ʒ/	pleasure massage	Tip of tongue is down, sides of tongue are against upper teeth on sides of mouth. Air flows out through middle of tongue.
/tʃ/	choke rich	/dʒ/	joke ridge	Tip of tongue is down, sides of tongue are against upper teeth on the side of mouth. Tip of tongue quickly touches gum ridge and then releases.

The concept of linking similar consonants is described in this video.

