


MODULE 3: DESARROLLO DE DESTREZAS DE LA PRONUNCIACIÓN EN INGLÉS

## Vowel sound /ə/ (schwa) as in "ago"



**What Is a Schwa?**

a vowel sound like "uh"

I'm a schwa.

I can be any vowel, y, or even no letter.

a	salad
e	elephant
i	cousin
o	lemon
u	upon
y	syringe
	rhythm

**INTRODUCTION**

The reduced vowel sound called schwa is one of the most common vowels sounds in spoken English. The schwa vowel [ə] is a very short, quick sound. Your lips should be completely relaxed and barely move during its production.

**WATCH VIDEO**  
*Click the "Play" Button*

<https://sandiegovoiceandaccent.com/american-english-vowels/introduction-to-the-schwa-uh-%C9%99-vowel>

Other spelling patterns for [ə] consist of the letters **eo**, **ou**, **iou**, **io** and **ai**.

**Pigeon**      **famous**      **delicious**      **nation**      **certain**

The **schwa** [ə] can occur more than once and can be represented by different

letters in the same word. For example:

**President**      **accident**      **elephant**



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2BmkUa4Mv60>

[https://soundsamerican.net/article/vowel\\_sound\\_schwa\\_as\\_in\\_ago](https://soundsamerican.net/article/vowel_sound_schwa_as_in_ago)

## [ə] At the Beginning of Words

ago	upon
away	contain
along	asleep
amaze	suppose

## [ə] In the Middle of Words

agony	relative
holiday	seventy
company	telephone
buffalo	photograph

## [ə] At the End of Words

soda	famous
sofa	lemon
zebra	cousin
reason	circus

## [ə] Spelled

<b>a</b>	<b>e</b>	<b>i</b>	<b>o</b>	<b>u</b>
arrive	oven	liquid	occur	upon
ashamed	open	humid	obtain	suppose
asleep	cement	capital	lemon	circus
away	jacket	typical	lesson	column
signal	belief	cousin	contain	support



# INSTRUCTIONS

Listen and practice words with the sound the [ə].

## Vocabulary

1 The sound /ə/ is used in many unstressed syllables and words. In the words below, the spelling has been changed to show you when to use the sound /ə/. Stressed syllables are in bold. Listen and repeat.



chickən



təmatəʊs



lɛttəʃ



ə bənənə



ən ɒnɪən



səme ʃɒkəleɪt\*



ə ɱɛstɪən



ə wʊmən



wʊmən

\* A slash through a letter means it is not pronounced.

# INSTRUCTIONS

Listen and practice words with the sound the [ə].

## International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) Symbol



## Practice Words

<b>ago</b> / ə'gəʊ /	<b>above</b> / ə'bʌv /	<b>again</b> / ə'geɪn /	<b>person</b> / 'pɜːsən /
<b>action</b> / 'ækʃən /	<b>ability</b> / ə'bɪlɪti /	<b>abrupt</b> / ə'brʌpt /	<b>sofa</b> / 'səʊfə /
<b>abyss</b> / ə'bɪs /	<b>accurate</b> / 'ækjʊrɪt /	<b>parent</b> / 'peərənt /	<b>across</b> / ə'krɒs /



**INSTRUCTIONS**

Practice pronunciation of the [ə] **sound** with the top 30 most common words.



- |             |              |              |
|-------------|--------------|--------------|
| 1. the      | 11. woman    | 21. ago      |
| 2. about    | 12. family   | 22. suppose  |
| 3. even     | 13. open     | 23. police   |
| 4. happen   | 14. together | 24. person   |
| 5. again    | 15. idea     | 25. moment   |
| 6. away     | 16. problem  | 26. reason   |
| 7. around   | 17. tomorrow | 27. afraid   |
| 8. listen   | 18. tonight  | 28. against  |
| 9. today    | 19. second   | 29. husband  |
| 10. another | 20. alone    | 30. children |



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m8QcDHExsNs>

# INSTRUCTIONS

Practice the pronunciation of the following words and sentences with the sound the [ə].

# Schwa Words List

a

adapt  
ago  
alarm  
alone  
alphabet  
amount  
atas  
balloon  
banana  
comma  
forma  
human  
idea  
magazine  
pleasant  
thousand  
zebra

e

algeba  
blanket  
came  
calenadar  
celebrate  
children  
effective  
elephant  
enemy  
event  
item  
present  
problem  
silent  
system  
telephene  
the

i

accidient  
anima  
cousin  
decima  
difficilt  
easily  
festiva  
medica  
pencil  
president  
promise

o

astronaut  
botom  
brothor  
cannon  
carrot  
comma  
confoss  
dinosaur  
freedom  
harmony  
lemon  
occur  
offond  
parrot  
phantom  
reason  
ribbon

u

album  
campus  
faculty  
focus  
suggust  
supply  
support  
voluntury  
upun

y

analysis  
catalyst  
syringe

Pennsylvania  
vinyl

Central vowel /ə/



1. How are you today?
2. See you tonight.
3. See you tomorrow.
4. Don't complain.
5. I suppose so.
6. I suppose it's possible.
7. Consider my complaint.
8. Complete today's lesson.
9. Don't complain about the problem.
0. My cousin will arrive at seven.





<https://thriveedservices.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Schwa-Words-list-791x1024.jpg>

### INSTRUCTIONS

Practice the pronunciation of the following sentences with the sound the [ə].

#### Word Bank for -TION

- Question
- Action
- Education
- Construction
- Action
- Attention
- Solution
- Addiction
- Location
- Mention
- Celebration



#### Word Bank for -SION

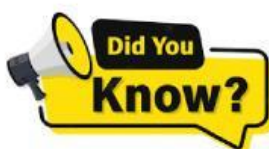
- Profession
- Impression
- Permission
- Depression
- Confession
- Possession
- Discussion
- Transmission

#### Word Bank for -ious

- delicious
- religious.
- conscious.
- ambitious.
- delicious.
- notorious.
- malicious.
- luxurious.
- ingenious.

#### Word Bank for -ous

- Famous
- Dangerous
- Courageous
- Cautious
- Jealous
- Poisonous
- Anxious



Can / Can't

LIVEWORKSHEETS



## can and can't

- Can is usually unstressed and has a weak pronunciation when another word follows it in a sentence. The vowel sound is reduced to /ə/.
- Can has a strong pronunciation when it is at the end of a sentence. It has the clear vowel sound /æ/.
- Can't always has a strong pronunciation. It has the clear vowel sound /æ/.

The difference in vowel sounds can help you hear the difference between *can* and *can't*.



### CAN - CANNOT

USES OF CAN      Simple Present Tense

**1. ability or possibility**  
- I can swim.

**2. permission**  
- You can use my pen.

**CAN + VERB\*** \*Base form of the infinitive

He can speak English. ✓

He can speak~~s~~ English. ✗ No S

He can~~t~~ speak English. ✗ No TO

			AFFIRMATIVE		NEGATIVE	
SINGULAR	I	can	speaking English.	I	can't	speaking French.
	You	can	ride a bike.	You	can't	ride a horse.
	He	can	drive a car.	He	can't	drive a truck.
	She	can	play the guitar.	She	can't	play the piano.
	It	can	swim.	It	can't	fly.
PLURAL	We	can	play football.	We	can't	play tennis.
	You	can	see the stars.	You	can't	see germs.
	They	can	dance.	They	can't	sing.

**QUESTIONS**

**+ Affirmative** They **can** speak Spanish.

**? Question** **Can** they speak Spanish?

**Short Answer** Yes, they can. / No, they can't.

**CONTRACTION**

**can't = cannot**

He **can't** sing.  
= He **cannot** sing.

www.grammar.cl    www.woodwardenglish.com    www.vocabulary.cl

1 Listen and repeat.



She cən ride ə bike.



She cən play thə guɪtər.



She cən sail ə boat.



She cən't drive ə car.



She cən't play thə piano.



She cən't swim.

2 Listen and repeat.

A Cən she ride ə bike?

A Cən she drive ə car?

B Yes, she can.

B No, she cən't.

## Discussion

1 Practice in a group of three to five people. List things you can and can't do.

*Example:* I can ride a bike.

I can't ride a horse.



Use the examples in task C, the ideas below, or your own ideas.

ride a bike

drive a car

play the piano

swim

do a handstand

bake a cake

ride a horse

drive a truck

play the guitar

sail a boat

do karate

speak three languages

I can  
ski



I can't  
ski



2 Tell the class what all of you, some of you, and none of you can do.

*Example:* A All of us can swim.

B Two of us can play the piano.

C One of us can ride a horse.

A None of us can do a handstand.



# Listening SECTION

## INSTRUCTION

Listen to each sentence and choose the word you hear.

1. He **can** **can't** play the piano.

2. I **can** **can't** stand on my head.

3. She **can** **can't** ride a horse.

4. She **can** **can't** speak Japanese, but her children **can** **can't**

5. You **can** **can't** park your car here.

6. I **can** **can't** meet you at three o'clock.







# CAN

## DISCUSSION

### Student 'A'

- *Discuss the questions below with your partner.*

1. What languages **can** you speak?
2. What **can't** you do that most people **can** do?
3. What songs **can** you sing?
4. Where in your town or city **can** you eat great restaurant food?
5. What **can** you do to improve your English?
6. Which student(s) in your class **can** tell funny jokes?
7. What six animals **can** eat you? For example: sharks, bears, ... (think of six more)
8. **Can** you remember what you dreamed about last night?
9. Why **can't** chickens fly?
10. In how many languages **can** you say, "Hello"?



# CAN

## DISCUSSION

### Student 'B'

- *Discuss the questions below with your partner.*

1. What **can** you do that most people **can't** do?
2. What **can** you do to make yourself feel happy?
3. What kinds of food **can** you cook?
4. At what age **can** people drive in your country?
5. What is another thing you **can** do to improve your English?
6. What six things **can** fly? For example: birds, airplanes, ... (think of six more)
7. What six animals **can't** eat you? For example: rabbits, ... (think of six more)
8. **Can** you make a sound like a bird or an animal?
9. What **can** you remember about your last English class?
10. In how many languages **can** you say, "Thank you"?

