

British English: Listening Comprehension 10

Dinner for Two



(5:46)

In this video, David has another date with Julia. What I would like you to focus on as you listen to this video is how words in English are linked. In the exercises, *when you fill in the blanks, you will always have to write 2 words that, when spoken, are linked.*

But before we get to the questions, let's review some of the rules for linking in English speech rhythm...

- As you know, when a word ends in a consonant sound and the following word begins with a vowel sound, the two words are linked, for example: “send it” sounds like / sɛn dɪt /.
- In an earlier lesson, we saw that when a word ends in [d] or [t] and the following word begins with a /y/, these sounds combine to form a new sound. The combination of /d/ + /y/ sounds like the sound of the letter [j], for example: “could you” sounds like /cuju/ or /cudju/. The combination of /t/ + /y/ sounds like /ch/, for example: “want you” sounds like /wanchu/ or /wancha/.
- The next rule brings us back to the use of the [r] in British English. As you know, the British typically do not pronounce the [r], except when followed by a vowel, for example: “car park” sounds like /cä päk/ and “car is” sounds like /cä rɪz/. This occurs when the letter [r] is written. However, the British sometimes pronounce the /r/ when one isn't there. This is called the intrusive [r]. When a word ends in one of several vowel sounds—the schwa (as in *sofa*), the “aw” sound (as in *draw*), or the “ah” sound (as in *spa*)—and the following sound is another vowel, the British add an /r/ between the vowels sounds—even though the [r] is not written. Here are some examples with audio:
 - “The sofa is blue” sounds like /the sofa (r) ɪz blu:/
 - “I saw a film” sounds like /I saw (r) ə fɪlm/.
 - “The spa is closed” sounds like /the spa (r) ɪz kləʊd/
- The next rule—in fact the next two rules—is similar to the previous one: a sound will be added between two vowel sounds. This time, the first vowel sound will be /ō/ or /ū/—as in *go* or *you*—

and the second is any other vowel sound. The sound injected between them is /w/, for example: “do it” sounds like /du wit/ and “How are you?” sounds like /how wahr you/.

- Finally, when the long /ē/ or the diphthong /ai/ comes before another vowel sound, the /y/ is inserted between them, for example: “my office” sounds like /mai yah fis/ and “tea and biscuits” sounds like /tee yan bis kits/.

Again, it is not necessary—nor do I (pronounced /du wai/) advise it—to try to change your pronunciation to sound more British. This info is (pronounced /info wiz/) presented to help you understand the Brits when you travel to England.

Watch the video and answer the following questions. Then try the linking exercises.

- 1) What was David preparing for dinner? _____
- 2) Why couldn't he serve that? _____
- 3) What does “hot” mean in the context of this video?

- 4) What ingredients does Jane ask for?

- 5) Below is a transcript of the video. Listen again—just the audio below—and fill in the blanks. Remember: you will always write 2 words.

Helen (voice over): David's preparing a romantic dinner for his girlfriend Julia. Unfortunately, _____ the world's most confident cook.

Helen: What is it?

David: It's Thai chicken with chili.

Matt: Mmm, I like Thai food.

David: Look, Julia will be here soon. _____ going out?

Matt: It's not very hot.

David: What do you mean? I put lots of chili _____.

Helen: Here, let me.

Matt: I'll get that.

Helen: Matt's right. It needs more chili powder.

Matt: David, it's Julia.

David: Hold on.

Matt: Julia's _____ the station. She's early.

Helen: Matt, no!

David: Hey, give that to me.

Helen: David, don't!

David: What's wrong?

Helen: I put some more chili powder in.

Matt: So did I. ... Too hot?

David: Of course it's too hot. Julia can't eat this and she'll be here in a _____ an hour.

Helen: I can't cook anything in 15 minutes.

Matt: Jane can! She's a fantastic cook.

David: Matt, Jane isn't here.

Matt: Then phone her.

[They call Jane, who is in yoga class.]

Jane: Sorry. Sorry. ... Hello?

Helen: Jane, it's Helen. We need your help.

Jane: What's wrong?

Helen: Julie is coming to dinner, and Matt ruined David's delicious Thai chicken.

Jane: Oh dear.

Helen: Well, can you think of something?

Jane: Is there any _____ the cupboard?

Helen: Pasta, pasta, yes, there's some pasta.

Jane: How much is there?

Helen: Half a kilo.

Jane: That's plenty. What about tuna?

Helen: There are two small tins. ... Matt, are there any mushrooms and onions?

Matt: Yes, _____.

Helen: We've got everything. ... OK, Matt, boil some water.

David: Can I do anything? ... It can't be her. It's only ten _____.

Helen: Don't worry, we can do this. ... What next? ... David, go!

[Julia arrives.]

Julia: This is nice.

David: Here, sit down. ... Would you like some wine?

Julia: Yes, please. ... Why _____ sit down?

David: I can't. First course.

Julia: Oh good, I'm really hungry.

[Scene cuts to Helen in the kitchen for just a moment.]

Helen: Fry the onions, yep.

Julia: That was delicious. What's the main course? I can't wait.

David: It's a surprise. Have some more wine.

Julia: Thank you. ... I had a really busy day today. Didn't have time for lunch. It's lovely to be here and have a quiet dinner and simply relax.

David: I'll just get the main course.

Julia: Great.

David: Here _____.

Julia: Thank you so much.

[Scene cuts to Helen in the kitchen.]

Helen: Thank Jane.

David: Jane?

Jane: Hi.

David: Jane, you're wonderful.

Jane: No problem. ... Thanks. Thanks.

[and back to the date.]

David: Ta-da!

Julia: How exciting!

David: What is it? It's called *pasta alla Giulia*.

Julia: Smells very good.

David: Oh, _____. I forgot the salad.

Julia: This is much nicer than a restaurant. It's more romantic.

David: And is the food better, too?

Julia: Possibly. Thanks. ... David, this is absolutely delicious. Can you give me the recipe?

David: The recipe? I can, but...

Julia: But what?

David: It's a family secret.

Julia: Oh, David, really?

Helen (voice over): Matt, Jane and I did a good job for David. Maybe we could open a restaurant.

Here are more examples of linked speech. Write what you hear.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____
- 6) _____
- 7) _____
- 8) _____
- 9) _____
- 10) _____
- 11) _____
- 12) _____
- 13) _____
- 14) _____
- 15) _____
- 16) _____
- 17) _____
- 18) _____
- 19) _____
- 20) _____
- 21) _____
- 22) _____
- 23) _____
- 24) _____
- 25) _____