

THE SPEAK CLEARLY METHOD

FREE PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

English Pronunciation for Arabic Speakers

Ahlan wa sahan · built around your first language

P vs B

V vs F

vowels

clusters

NG

the R

You don't have to lose your accent.

You have to be understood.

by Evangeline Smith & Miriam Smith · authors of Speak Clearly

THE PRACTICAL ENGLISH SERIES

English Pronunciation for Arabic Speakers

A Speak Clearly Method guide

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Companion to "Speak Clearly: A Practical Guide to English Pronunciation."

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Built for Arabic speakers

Your accent isn't random — it's Arabic, a rich and deeply expressive language, showing through in English. Because Arabic follows clear rules, the places it shapes your English are predictable. And predictable means fixable.

This guide skips the sounds you already handle well and goes straight to the handful that most affect whether English listeners understand you the first time.

The promise

This is not about erasing your accent or sounding American. Only about 1 in 4 English speakers learned it as a first language — you're the majority, not the exception. We keep your accent and fix only what gets in the way of being understood.

How to use it

Read the strengths on the next page first, then work through the fix cards one at a time. Say everything OUT LOUD — into your phone's recorder or a mirror. A sound only counts when it survives outside the page.

Sounds you already own

Arabic gives you something rare: you already own the sound that defeats almost every other learner of English — the TH. Trust these.

TH — both of them!

Arabic has both 'th' sounds. "think" and "this" are easy for you while others struggle for months.

h → H

You pronounce h clearly — "house" and "happy" start easily for you.

s and z

You have clear /s/ and /z/ — so "zoo" and "eyes" buzz correctly.

sh → SH

Your sheen gives you English "sh" in she, wash, nation.

Emphatic control

Arabic trains fine muscular control of the mouth — useful for every new sound.

Start from these. When a new English sound feels hard, remember how many you already make perfectly.

Fix cards · 1 of 3

p b

/p b/

P vs B

ARABIC HABIT

Arabic has no /p/, so “pen” becomes “ben” and “park” becomes “bark.”

THE FIX

For P, press your lips together and release a puff of air — no voice. Hold a tissue up: P moves it, B doesn't.

pen/Ben

park/bark

pig/big

v f

/v f/

V vs F

ARABIC HABIT

Arabic has no /v/, so “very” becomes “fery” and “van” becomes “fan.”

THE FIX

Same mouth for both: top teeth on bottom lip. F = just air. V = add your voice — feel the buzz.

very/ferry

van/fan

vine/fine

i e æ

vowels

Bit, bet, bat

ARABIC HABIT

Arabic has three main vowels, so English “bit, bet, bat” collapse into one another.

THE FIX

“bit”: relaxed, quick. “bet”: mouth mid-open. “bat”: mouth wide, smiling. Watch the change in a mirror.

bit/bet/bat

sit/set/sat

Fix cards · 2 of 3

CC

clusters

Don't add a vowel

ARABIC HABIT

Arabic breaks up clusters with a helper vowel:
"children" → "chil-de-ren," "street" → "is-treet."

THE FIX

Glide the consonants together with no vowel between. Start straight on the first sound.

street

children

spring

next

NG

/ŋ/

The NG sound

ARABIC HABIT

Arabic has no final 'ng', so "sing" gains a hard g or becomes "sin."

THE FIX

Let the air out through your nose and stop — no hard g. Pinch your nose: "sing" should stop.

sing

singer

running

R

/r/

The English R

ARABIC HABIT

The Arabic r is a tap or trill. The English r touches nothing — a tapped r sounds foreign.

THE FIX

Curl your tongue up and back and let it FLOAT — no contact anywhere. Round your lips slightly.

red

right

car

around

Fix cards · 3 of 3

g

/g ʒ/

G and the 'j' sounds

ARABIC HABIT

Depending on your dialect, /g/ or /ʒ/ (measure) may shift — “garden” or “usually” can come out differently.

THE FIX

For /g/, touch the back of your tongue to the soft palate and add voice. Keep it hard and clean.

garden

again

usually

'ə

stress

Stress & the weak vowel

ARABIC HABIT

English hammers ONE syllable per word and weakens the rest to a soft 'uh'.

THE FIX

Hit one strong beat and relax the others: baNAna, comPUter, aBOUt.

banana

computer

about

PRACTISE

Your 7-day plan

Ten minutes a day. Record yourself on day 1 and day 7 — hearing your own progress is the most motivating thing you'll do.

DAY
1

P vs B

Tissue test: pen/Ben, park/bark, pig/big. Record 3 sentences — keep them.

DAY
2

V vs F

Teeth on lip; add the buzz for V. Drill very/ferry, van/fan.

DAY
3

Vowels

bit/bet/bat and sit/set/sat in the mirror. Watch your mouth open.

DAY
4

Clusters

No helper vowel: street, children, spring, next. Glide them together.

DAY
5

NG

Nose test: sing (not sing-g), singer, running.

DAY
6

R & stress

Float the r; one strong beat per word (baNAna).

DAY
7

Together

Re-record your day-1 sentences. Compare. Pick your hardest sound to keep polishing.

WHEN YOU'VE GOT THESE

Ready for all 22 sounds?

This guide covers the sounds Arabic speakers most need. Speak Clearly — the full book — covers all 22 sounds and speech patterns, with minimal pairs and tongue twisters for every one, guides for six first languages, and a complete 30-day plan.

Speak Clearly

A Practical Guide to English Pronunciation

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Speak as yourself.**

Speak as you are.

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