

THE SPEAK CLEARLY METHOD

FREE PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

English Pronunciation for Hebrew Speakers

built around your first language · לדוברי עברית

W vs V

/θ/ TH

the R

vowels

/æ/ cat

stress

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 Hebrew Speakers

A Speak Clearly Method guide

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

@SpeakClearlyMethod · www.SpeakClearlyMethod.com

Built for Hebrew speakers

Your accent isn't random — it's Hebrew, a precise and economical language, showing through in English. Because Hebrew 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

Hebrew gives you a real head start. Several English sounds that defeat learners from other languages are already yours — and Hebrew handles consonant clusters comfortably, so English words are easy to assemble.

ש → SH

Your ש in שמש, שלום is exactly English “sh” in she, wash, nation.

צ → TS

Your צ in צהריום gives you the ending in cats, its, parents — which many learners cannot make.

ה → H

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

ו / ב → V

Your v is clear and confident — very, love and five are already right.

Consonant clusters

Hebrew is comfortable with clusters, so English words like strengths and asked hold no fear.

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

Fix cards · 1 of 3

W V

/w v/

W vs V**HEBREW HABIT**

Modern Hebrew has no /w/, so “west” comes out as “vest” and “water” as “vater.” This is the single most recognisable one.

THE FIX

For W, round your lips like a kiss — no teeth touch at all. For V, top teeth on your bottom lip.

west/vest

wine/vine

water

we/V

TH

/θ ð/

The TH sound**HEBREW HABIT**

Hebrew has no TH, so “think” becomes “sink” or “tink,” and “this” becomes “zis” or “dis.”

THE FIX

Put your tongue tip between your teeth and push air. In a mirror you should see it peek out.

think

three

this

mother

R

/r/

The English R**HEBREW HABIT**

The Hebrew ר is made in the throat. The English r is made with the tongue, touching nothing.

THE FIX

Curl your tongue up and back and let it FLOAT — no throat scraping. Round your lips slightly.

red

right

car

around

Fix cards · 2 of 3

æ

/æ e/

Cat vs bet

HEBREW HABIT

Hebrew has no /æ/, so “cat” becomes “ket” and “bad” becomes “bed.”

THE FIX

Open your mouth wider and smile — more open than the Hebrew סגול. Feel your jaw drop.

cat/bet

bad/bed

man/men

ɪ iː

/ɪ iː/

Ship vs Sheep

HEBREW HABIT

Hebrew has five vowels; English has many more, so short “ship” and long “sheep” merge.

THE FIX

Short /ɪ/: relaxed and quick. Long /iː/: spread your lips like a smile and hold it longer.

ship/sheep

live/leave

fill/feel

ʌ ɒ

/ʌ ɒ/

Cut vs cot

HEBREW HABIT

Another pair Hebrew’s five vowels collapse — “cut,” “cot” and “caught” can sound identical.

THE FIX

“cut”: relaxed and central. “cot”: mouth open and rounded. Watch the lips change.

cut/cot

luck/lock

nut/not

Fix cards · 3 of 3

NG

/ŋ/

The NG sound

HEBREW HABIT Hebrew has no final 'ng', so "sing" gains a hard g — "sing-g" — or loses its ending.

THE FIX Lift the back of your tongue and let the sound out through your nose, then stop. No hard g.

sing

singer

running

' ə

stress

Stress & the weak vowel

HEBREW HABIT Hebrew usually stresses the last syllable. English moves the beat around and weakens everything else to a soft 'uh'.

THE FIX Hit one strong beat per word and relax the rest: baNAna, comPUter, aBOUt — not ba-na-NA.

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

W vs V

Round lips for W, teeth for V: west/vest, wine/vine, water. Record 3 sentences — keep them.

DAY
2

TH

Tongue between teeth: think, three, this. In the mirror.

DAY
3

The R

Tongue, not throat — float it: red, right, around.

DAY
4

Cat vs bet

Open wider and smile for 'cat'. Drill cat/bet, bad/bed, man/men.

DAY
5

Vowels

ship/sheep and cut/cot. Watch your lips change shape.

DAY
6

NG & stress

Nose test for sing; one strong beat (baNAna, comPUter).

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 Hebrew 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

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Speak as yourself.**

דבר כמו שאתה.

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