

Star Pronunciation Video Tip #1

[Click here](#) to watch the video

Hi there, and welcome to Star Pronunciation tips to get you on the path to clearer English.

My name is Georgie Taylor and I'm a speech pathologist, who specialises in helping people from non-English speaking backgrounds speak English with more clarity and confidence.

In today's quick tip I'd like to talk to you about two areas, rate of speech and volume of speech. Now, there are lots of things to think about when you are working to improve your English pronunciation, but rate of speech and volume of speech are really the foundations for clear speech. So that is why I want to start with them today.

So I would like you firstly to have a think, do you ever speak English too quickly, or do you ever speak English too quietly? If you do, you are probably aware of this because people would have asked you to slow down or speak up, or sometime you have notice that they haven't caught what you said by the expression on their faces or you might get the feeling that they are guessing some of your words. All of these things are really frustrating for people who have a few difficulties with English pronunciation. So we want to help you to be understood the first time.

So if you do sometime speak too fast I'd like you to think about when this happens. Is it in certain situations? Is it when you're speaking to your boss? Is it when you are on the phone? Or maybe it's when you're giving feedback in the meeting or a presentation, or when you're feeling nervous. So have a think about situations when you're likely to speak too fast.

The next thing to do is try to remind yourself in those situations to slow down and control your rate. Now it is easy to forget when you are trying to focus on what you are saying. It is hard to focus on how you are saying it. So there are a few tricks. My favourite trick is to write down on yellow sticky note or post-it note in your first language "slow down". Okay? Whether it would be Mandarin or Sinhalla or Russian write down "slow down", stick it on the top of your notes and hold it while you're giving your presentation. Put a sticky note on your phone so when you make a phone call you are constantly reminded to control your rate and slow down. We need to help ourselves remember. It is likely that you can slow down, what happens is you are just forgetting. So this is my little tip.

Now I have many clients who say to me at this point "but I want to speak English quickly. It makes me sound more fluent and more proficient in English". Well, personally I disagree and this is for a few reasons.

The first is that good, effective English speakers don't tend to speak really, really quickly in the professional environment. We use lots of pauses and we use a good rate, so our listener can absorb and take in our message.

The other thing to think about is as a non native speaker you will make some of the sounds and stresses and rhythms of English differently to a native speaker. This means that listeners have to concentrate a little bit harder to catch what you are saying. When you speed up you give them less time to do this. So when you speak quickly we have less time to catch the words that you saying and less time to process them.

Also, when you speak quickly you're more likely to make more errors. Your speech is likely to become even flatter, your vowels are more likely to become shorter and you're more likely to do things like, drop the endings of your words, you're more likely to do grammar mistakes, you're more likely to choose the wrong words and to make errors in your expression. So if you sometime speak English too quickly try to control the rate of your speaking. Things will really improve. It's a small easy thing that you can do to really improve your clarity. You will find that your grammar improves and your expression and your pronunciation, because you have more time to think about what you are going to say. Also you give your listener more time to absorb and take in your message. They will focus on what you are saying, not trying to keep up with understanding you. Okay?

Now the next thing I quickly wanted to mention was volume. Are you sometime speaking too quietly? If you are, think about when this happens and try to remind yourself to use a louder voice. Okay? Back with the sticky notes, in your first language "speak up". Put it on your phone, put it on your notes while you are at the meeting or giving a presentation. Okay? Also practice reading in a louder voice at home. It may feel to you like you are shouting, it might feel to you like you are speaking really loudly. You just need to get used to hearing a louder voice and you will get used to it, it just takes a little bit of time.

So two things to think about over the next two days:

If you sometimes speak English too fast, control your rate and remember to use the sticky notes to remind yourself to slow down. If you sometimes speak too quietly, remind yourself in those situations to speak up and also practise using a louder voice as much as you can.

That is it for today.

Good luck!

NOTE:

This transcript was prepared for Star Pronunciation Video Tip 1 by the team at www.IELTS-Blog.com. **If you decide to purchase any of [Star Pronunciation courses](#), copy this text **IELTSBlog** and paste it at the checkout to get a \$45 discount.** The discount text is case sensitive. This price reduction is exclusive to IELTS-Blog.com and is not available elsewhere.