



IIT Madras
ONLINE DEGREE

PHRASAL PAUSE

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Phrasal Pause

- Two or more words behaving in a sentence like one word make phrase. For example, an apple, a big basket, a committee of experts, etc. all behave in a sentence just like a single noun will. You can say “fish swims”, you can also say “an apple sells”, “ a big basket has been kept at the temple.”, and “ A committee of experts has been formed.”

- Speakers of standard English pause also after a phrase, just as they pause after a clause and a sentence. Listen to the following for example:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1i-9Kw8lFU2mF6KF23b5k7X7vPkwnExJI/view?usp=sharing>

Good evening# this is All India Radio# and I am Anuja Kumar # with the news at nine## Prime Minister Narendra Modi today stated# that India is one of the safest habitats in the world # with almost three thousand tigers....



- This pause is not long, but it is noticeable. It is the punctuation of speech. Speaker pauses every few seconds.
- Pause in this manner follows a simple rule: pause after every phrase, or every group of words within a phrase, if the phrase is a big group of words.

- Pause after a word of address is essential. For instance,

May I borrow this book # professor#

Do you #doctor # know why I got fever?##

- Pause after a pair of numbers, or three numbers, is helpful. For example, you should say

94#43#02#84#34 #or# 944#302#84#34##

The postal code of the area I live in is# 600#113##

my employee id is# 19#95##

- Similarly, when you tell your address, pause after every new level, e. g. door no., street, area, city, state. So, for instance,

My address is# D4/12# 2nd Link Road#
IIT Campus# Chennai 600#036

- After words like “so”, “therefore”, “but”, “thus”, “of course”, “indeed”, “by all means”, etc. also you should take a pause. For instance, you should say,

Without good health# there is no happiness##
so# invest in your health##

Ruth was tired# but# not bored## Many students
rise late # therefore # they come to class without
breakfast##

- After every word in a series, you should pause.
So for instance, you can say,

For breakfast# I take some corns # milk # eggs #
bread # butter # fruits # and tea ##

I am doing honours in Economics # but# I am
also interested in History # Philosophy #
Malayalam Literature # and Raja Ravi Varma's
paintings ##

- Ordinarily, the rule is : after every Noun Phrase, Verb Phrase, Adjectival Phrase and Adverbial Phrase.
- See, for instance, the following:

Rose # is a lovely flower##

The black rose #is the loveliest of flowers##

All the beautiful #black roses# that came from
Bangalore yesterday #are# many say# extra-
ordinarily lovely flowers##

- Noun phrase, adjectival phrase, verb phrase and adverb phrase or clauses are all followed by a pause in speech. This shows which words go together as a group. See the following, for example:

- He# that is down # needs fear no fall##
- Strike the iron# while it is hot##
- Only the wearer knows # where shoe pinches##
- Rabindranath Tagore# the Nobel laureate# was also a freedom fighter##
- All# that glitters# is not gold##

ACTIVITY

For practice, mark and speak the following sentences:

1. May I come in sir?
2. Stars twinkle planets do not.
3. Fault dear Brutus is not in our stars.
4. Long years ago we made a tryst with destiny.
5. I have a dream that one day sons of slaves and sons of slave owners would sit together on the table of fraternity.

6. Given a chance everyone would like to go to school.
7. More girls than boys drop out of school before completing secondary education.
8. Ask not what the nation can do for you ask what you can do for the nation.

For more practice and self-test, see page nos. 51-62 in the book, *Better Spoken English* .

ANSWERS

1. May I come in# sir?
2. Stars twinkle # planets do not.
3. Fault # dear Brutus # is not in our stars.
4. Long years ago# we made a tryst with destiny.
5. I have a dream # that one day # sons of slaves # and sons of slave owners# would sit together # on the table of fraternity.

6. Given a chance # everyone would like to go to school.
7. More girls than boys # drop out of school # before completing secondary education.
8. Ask not # what the nation can do for you # ask # what you can do for the nation.

Thank you