



Pronunciation: weak forms of
auxiliary verbs (be/have/do)



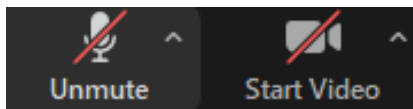
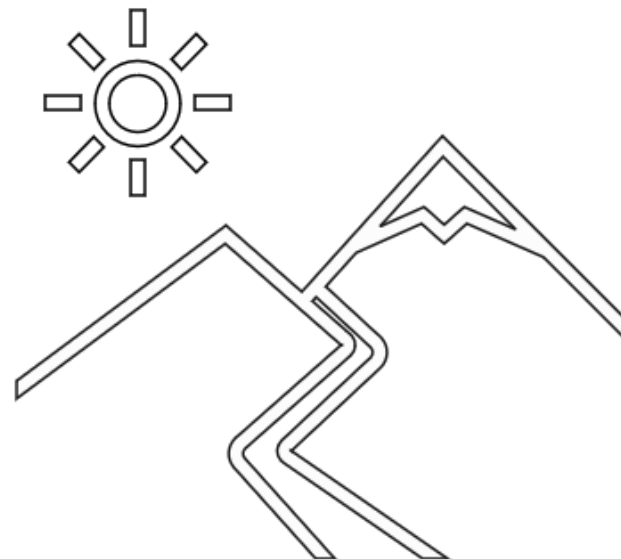
Introduction

Welcome to **Pronunciation Live25!**

- A new feature of English Online
- Free **pronunciation** presentations
- Download the PDF after booking
- **Practise on mute**
- Sit back and enjoy the ride!

Please be on mute

You can keep your cams off



Lead-in

Were you studying English last night? **Write in the chat.**



A) Yes, I was.



B) Unfortunately not.



Lead-in

Have you got a pet? **Write in the chat.**



A) Yes, I have.



B) Nope.



Lead-in

Do you like pineapple on pizza? **Write in the chat.**



A) Yes, I do.



B) No way!



Let's focus

Which pronunciation is weaker, the **orange** or the **green**? Listen and check.

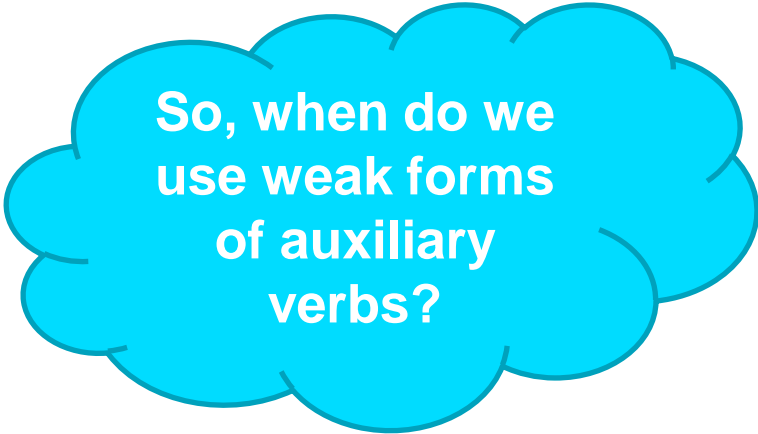
Were you studying English last night? Yes, I **was**.

Have you got a pet? Yes, I **have**.

Do you like pineapple on pizza? Yes, I **do**.

In this sentence, should the auxiliary be **orange** or **green**?

'We **were** studying English all night.'



So, when do we
use weak forms
of auxiliary
verbs?

Meaning and use


Most words have a **strong form** and a **weak form**. *Weak forms* are used when the focus of the stress is on another word in the sentence.

Auxiliary verbs such as ‘do’, ‘be’ and ‘have’ are **function words** and are *not usually stressed so their weak forms are used*.

We only usually use the strong forms of auxiliary verbs when they are used in **short answers** e.g., ‘yes, I **do**.’, or to add emphasis e.g. ‘I **do** like cats.’

Form

Auxiliary verb	Strong form	Weak form
Be: am	/æm/	/əm/



When the auxiliary verb is pronounced in its **weak form**, we use the **'schwa'** sound.

To make this sound:

- Open your mouth and relax your tongue, lips and jaw.
- Push the sound out.
- Repeat after me, but keep yourself muted.

Form

Auxiliary verb	Strong form	Weak form
Be: am are is was were	 /æm/ /ɑː/ /ɪz/ /wɒz/ /wɜː/	 /əm/ /ə/ /ɪz/ /wəz/ /ə/
Have: have has	 /hæv/ /hæz/	 /həv/ /həz/
Do: do does did	 /duː/ /dʌz/ /dɪd/	 /də/ /dəz/ /dəd/

Keep yourself muted, but practice repeating the auxiliaries after me.

Practice

Listen to me read the sentences, notice how I pronounce the auxiliary verbs (be/have/do). Then, practice saying the sentences **yourself**.

We were walking down the road when I fell over.

I have never tried yoga.

Does he eat meat? Yes, he does.

Are you cycling to work tomorrow?

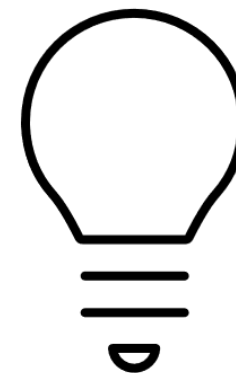
Key point

Remember:

In English we don't stress every word in the sentence, so auxiliary verbs are usually pronounced in their weak forms.

Pronunciation tip:

Next time you listen to a conversation in English, try to notice the weak forms of auxiliary verbs!



Pronunciation Checkout

In each sentence, are the auxiliary verbs pronounced as weak forms or strong form? Write 'W' for weak and 'S' for strong.

1. Has he gone to bed?
2. Do you love summer? Yes, I do.
3. Have they arrived?
4. I was reading a good book this morning.

*** Now, repeat the sentences after me. Focus on the correct stress and the weak/strong forms of the auxiliaries.**



Pronunciation Checkout - Answers

In each sentence, are the auxiliary verbs pronounced as weak forms or strong form? Write 'W' for weak and 'S' for strong.

1. Has he gone to bed? **W**
2. Do you love summer? Yes, I do. **W, S**
3. Have they arrived? **W**
4. I was reading a good book this morning. **W**

*** Now, repeat the sentences after me. Focus on the correct stress and the weak/strong forms of the auxiliaries.**



Thank you for attending this presentation!

Review the next few slides for lessons linked to this Live25 webinar.

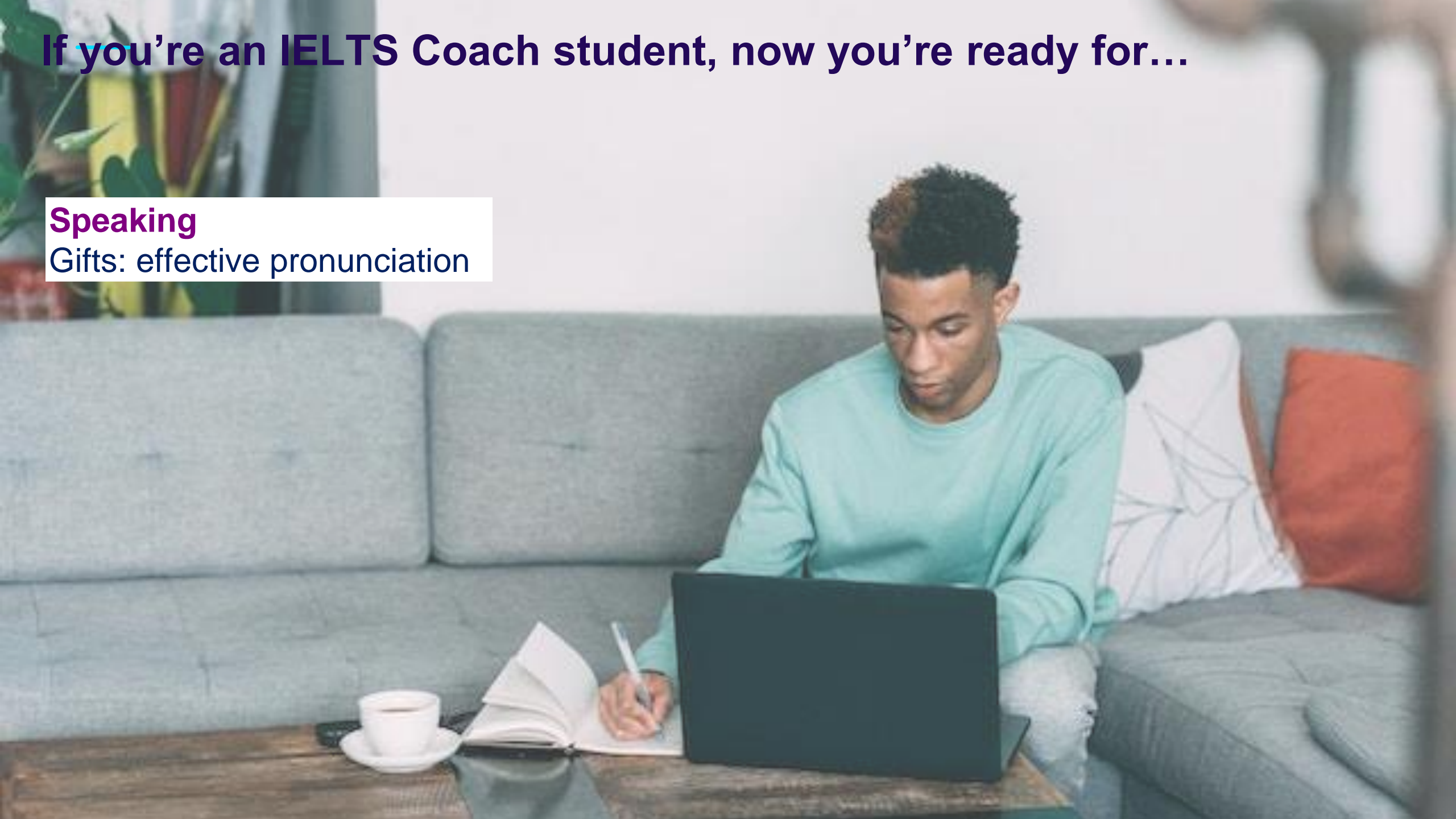


<https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/category/grammar/verb-auxiliary-verbs>

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Speaking

Gifts: effective pronunciation



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Lesson: Were you a good student?

Pre-intermediate

Theme: Wealth and career

Lesson: Lifestyle changes

Intermediate

Theme: Home, holidays and tourism

Lesson: A memorable holiday

Upper intermediate

Theme: Humour and happiness

Lesson: Telling a funny story

Advanced

Theme: Science, Space and technology

Lesson: Asteroids and meteorites



A person wearing a white sweater is sitting at a white desk, typing on a silver laptop. A glass of water is on the desk next to the laptop. The background is a plain white wall.

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Lesson: Showing your best

Pre-intermediate

Theme: A new position

Lesson: Describing yourself

Intermediate

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Lesson: Working together on products

Upper intermediate

Theme: Evaluating performance

Lesson: Skills and talents

Advanced

Theme: Changing and growing a business

Lesson: Understanding the issues in a merger