



## **Pronunciation: advanced schwa (weak forms)**



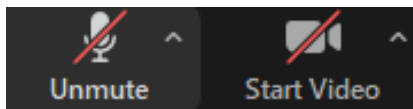
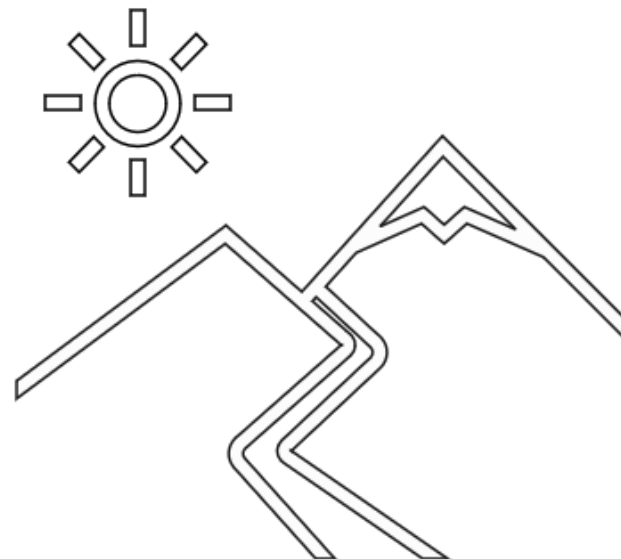
# Introduction

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*



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# Lead-in

What's the best thing about being a schwa?



## Let's focus

Let's look at a grammar point: modals to make deductions about the past.

could have used

should have said

may have left

How is 'have' pronounced in each example? Type 1 or 2 in Chat.

1. /hæv/

2. /həv/

# Form

The schwa sound /ə/ is found in many single syllable grammar words in English. Your learner's dictionary will show two ways to pronounce these words: *the strong form and the weak form.*

For example:

	Strong form	Weak form
and	/ænd/	/ən/
of	/ɒv/	/əv/
would	/wʊd/	/wəd/ /əd/
does	/dʌz/	/dəz/
have	/hæv/	/həv/ /əv/
must	/mʌst/	/məst/ /məs/

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# Form

**Weak forms (single syllable grammar words like the ones you've just practised) have the following characteristics:**

- They have only **one syllable**.
- They act as **function words**.
- They are heard in their weak form **unless the speaker wishes to emphasise them** to underline their message.
- They **occur in speech** but not in writing.
- They are **high frequency** words.

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# Examples

**Can you give other examples of weak forms?**

**Write them in the chat.**

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# Meaning and use

Let's have a look at some examples!

Imagine all these sentences and questions are being spoken. How many **weak forms with the schwa sound** are there in each of them? Write your answers in Chat.

1. What kind of music do you like?
2. What do you do?
3. I could have spoken slower to help everyone understand.



# Answers

How many **weak forms with the schwa sound** are there in each of them?

/ə/

What kind of music do you like? **1**

/ə/

What do you do? **1**

/ə/

/ə/

I could have spoken slower to help everyone understand. **2**

# Practice

**Practise saying the weak forms in these sentences:**

I can speak fluent English and a little Japanese

We could add some images to the presentation to make it more professional

She must have got lost!

# Practice

To practise weak forms on your own, write some simple sentences as a pair (like the examples below).

For example:

1) Can he do it for them?

Can he do it for them?

2) It must be done.

It must be done.

3) He's going to London.

He's going to London.

Then say each pair with the stresses in different positions. Listen for when you use **schwa in weak forms**.

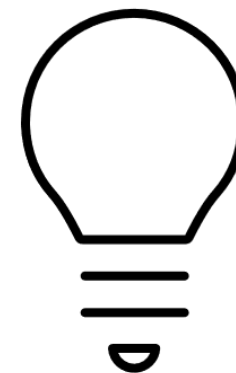
Practise these three sets with your teacher now.

## Key point

**Weak forms using the schwa sound are heard in function words (auxiliary verbs, pronouns, articles, linkers, prepositions) and are not stressed syllables.**

### **Pronunciation tip:**

**The greater your speaking speed, the more likely you are to use schwa in weak forms to help you speak smoothly.**



# Pronunciation Checkout

Choose the weak form of each function word below.  
Write your answers in Chat.

- |          |           |          |
|----------|-----------|----------|
| 1. must  | a. /mʌst/ | b. /məs/ |
| 2. to    | a. /tə/   | b. /tu:/ |
| 3. would | a. /wʊd/  | b. /wəd/ |



# Pronunciation Checkout - Answers

Choose the weak form of each function word below.  
Write your answers in the chat.

- |          |                |                 |
|----------|----------------|-----------------|
| 1. must  | a. /mʌst/      | b. <u>/məs/</u> |
| 2. to    | a. <u>/tə/</u> | b. /tu:/        |
| 3. would | a. /wʊd/       | b. <u>/wəd/</u> |



# Thank you for attending this presentation!

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

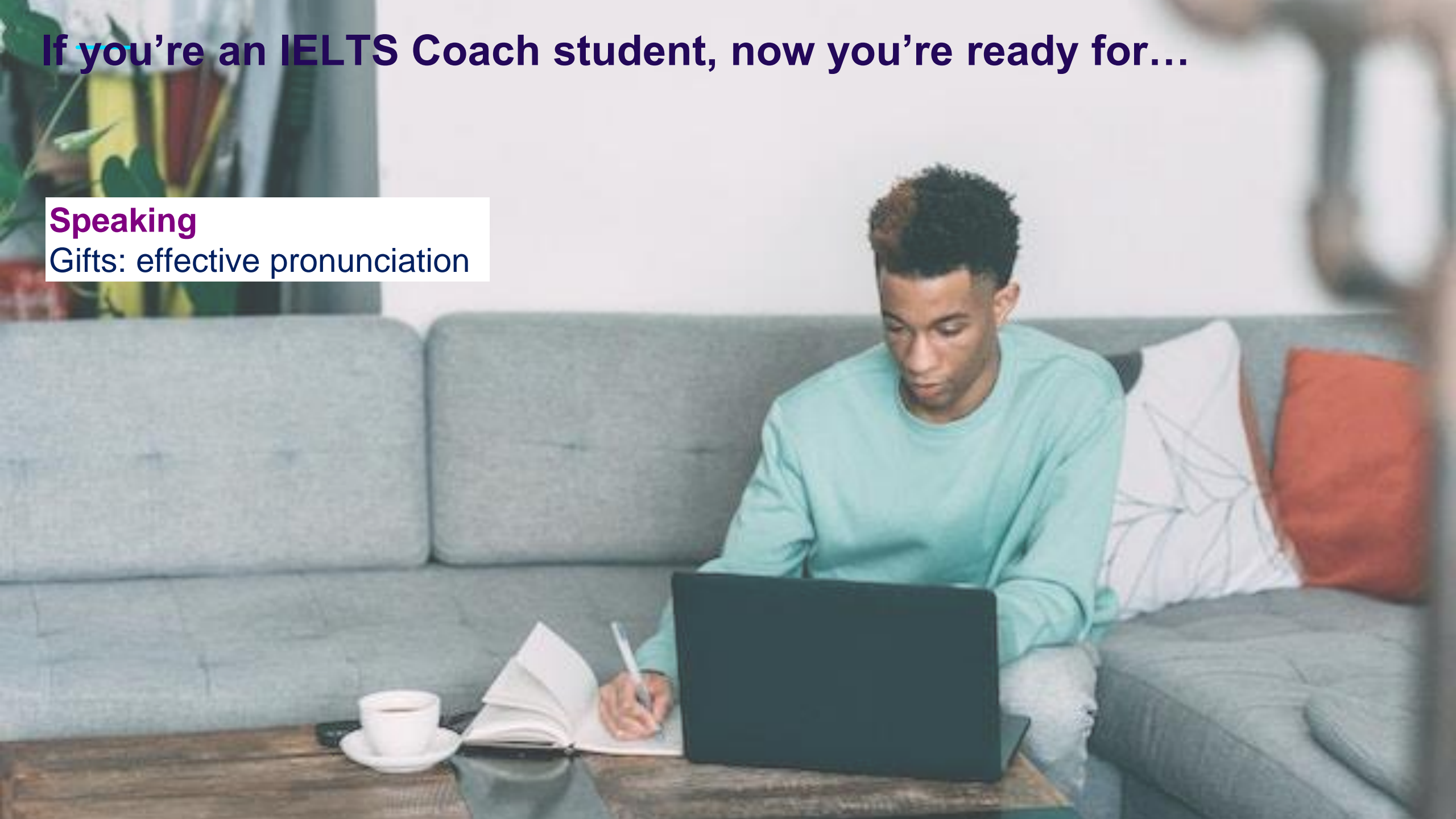


<https://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/grammar/pron/features/schwa/>

If you're an IELTS Coach student, now you're ready for...

## Speaking

Gifts: effective pronunciation





# If you're an English Online student, now you're ready for...

## Elementary

**Theme:** Experiences

**Lesson:** Business travel

## Pre-intermediate

**Theme:** Memorable events

**Lesson:** Being nostalgic

## Intermediate

**Theme:** Business travel and socialising

**Lesson:** Dealing with invitations

## Upper intermediate

**Theme:** Storytelling

**Lesson:** When things don't go as planned

## Advanced

**Theme:** Government, politics, crime and justice

**Lesson:** Political scandals



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.

# If you're an English for Work student, now you're ready for...

## Elementary

**Theme:** At work

**Lesson:** Questions, questions

## Pre-intermediate

**Theme:** New ideas and opportunities

**Lesson:** A new role

## Intermediate

**Theme:** Ready to work

**Lesson:** Your ideal job

## Upper intermediate

**Theme:** Changes of plan

**Lesson:** Communicating appropriately

## Advanced

**Theme:** Changing and growing a business

**Lesson:** Addressing concerns about a merger