



Pronunciation: intonation
patterns - questions,
clarification and
signposting



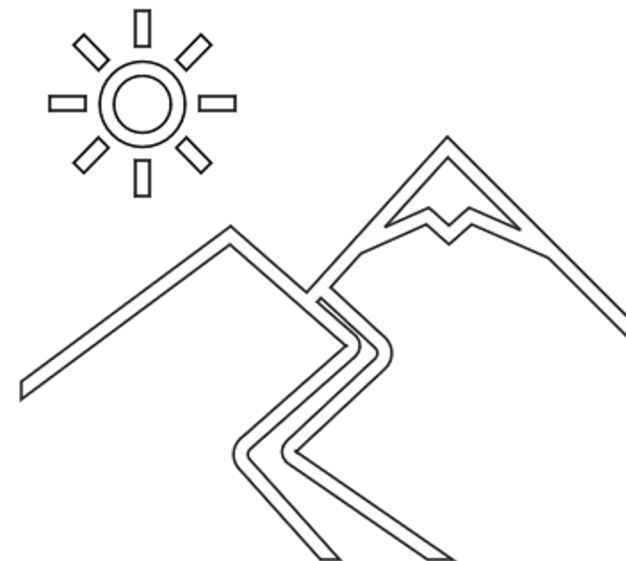
Introduction

Welcome to **Pronunciation Live25!**

- A 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

I'm going to ask you some questions.

Please write your answers in the chat.

1. What do you hope to learn in this session? Down
2. Are you all sitting somewhere nice and quiet? Up
3. Would you like to improve your pronunciation today?
Down + up

Listen again. What do you notice about my voice? Does it go up or down?



Let's focus

Intonation describes how our voice goes up and down as we speak.

There are three main patterns of intonation in English:

- **falling intonation** (the voice falls on the final stressed syllable of a phrase or a group of words)

What do you hope to learn in this session?



- **rising intonation** (the voice rises at the end of sentence or question)

Are you all sitting somewhere nice and quiet?



- **fall-rise intonation** (the voice falls and then rises)

Would you like to improve your pronunciation today?



Meaning and use (Asking questions)

Falling intonation is typical in *wh*- questions:

- *What time did you get here?* 

Rising intonation is commonly heard in questions that don't have a question word (*yes/no*) questions:

- *Are you alright?* 

Fall-rise intonation is used in questions in which we request information or invite somebody to do or to have something. It helps make our question sound more polite:

- *Would you like to take a seat?*  

Practice

Listen to your teacher model the sentences and pay attention to the intonation. Practice repeating the sentences to yourself.

1. Is he thirsty?

2. When can we expect her?

3. Would you like to join us?

Check your understanding

In yes/no questions, does my voice go up or down?

e.g. *Do you speak English? Up!*

In questions that have a question word, does my voice go up or down?

e.g. *Where do you come from? Down!*

Do we use fall-rise intonation to sound polite or more direct?

e.g. *Is this your camera? More polite!*

Meaning and use (Signposting)

Signposting expressions are the words and phrases that we use in order to **guide the listener** coherently through what is being said. We often use signposting language when delivering presentations or telling stories.

- **topic markers** are used to introduce a topic. They usually have a rising intonation. This helps us to sound enthusiastic.


Firstly, ...

 
Today, I'd like to talk about

- **topic shifters** are used to change topic. They usually have a falling intonation.


OK, now...


Let's move on.

- **contrast markers** are used to contrast something that has been said previously. They usually have a falling intonation.

  
However, it remains very expensive.

 
That being said, not everyone approves.

Key point

Remember:

- our voice typically goes up (rising intonation) with YES / NO questions
- our voice typically goes down (falling intonation) with questions that have a question word (= open questions)
- to make our requests and invitations sound more polite, use fall-rise intonation

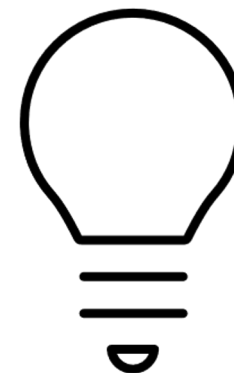
Pronunciation tip:

We also use falling intonation when providing clarification:

A: Go straight on and turn right onto Melville Road.

B: Left onto Melville Road?

A: No. Right onto Melville Road.



Pronunciation Checkout

Listen to me reading these sentences. What intonation pattern do you hear? Type R for rising, F for falling, FR for fall-rise.

1. However, it remains a very contentious issue.

RISING

FALLING

FALL-RISE

2. Was she late again?

RISING

FALLING

FALL-RISE

3. Secondly, another key advantage is the cost.

RISING

FALLING

FALL-RISE

4. Would you like me to open the window?

RISING

FALLING

FALL-RISE

5. What's the current time in Beijing?

RISING

FALLING

FALL-RISE



Pronunciation Checkout - Answers

Listen to me reading these sentences. What intonation pattern do you hear? Type R for rising, F for falling, FR for fall-rise.

1. However, it remains a very contentious issue.

FALLING

2. Was she late again?

RISING

3. Secondly, another key advantage is the cost.

RISING

4. Would you like me to open the window?

FALL-RISE

5. What's the current time in Beijing?

FALLING



Thank you for attending this presentation!

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

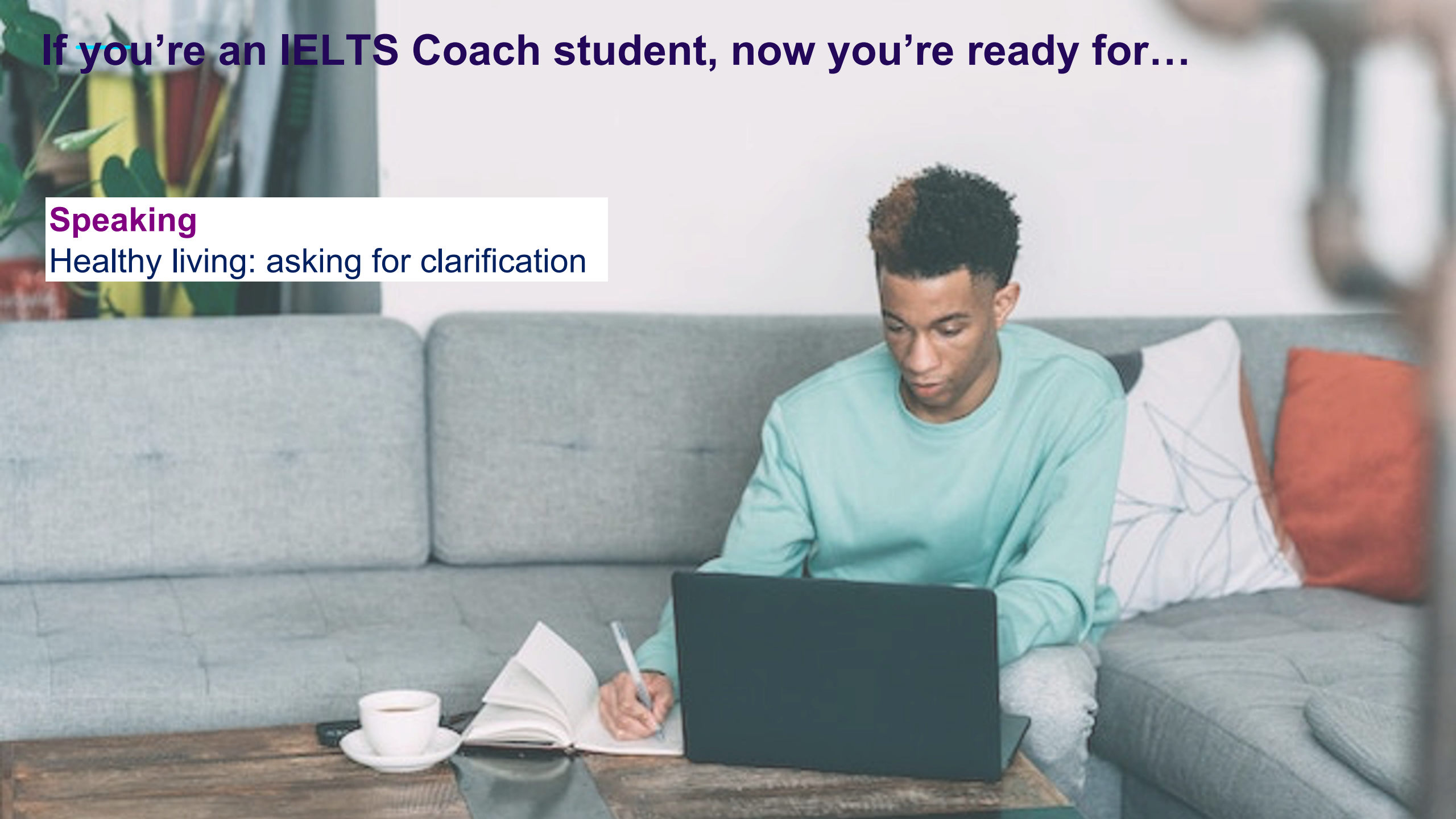


<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vkgMFZMBfqQ>

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

Speaking

Healthy living: asking for clarification



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

Elementary

Theme: Numbers and dates

Lesson: What time do you..?

Pre-intermediate

Theme: Business communication

Lesson: Asking and answering basic questions

Intermediate

Theme: Employment matters

Lesson: Asking someone how they got their job

Upper intermediate

Theme: Discussion and debate

Lesson: Expressing yourself at meetings

Advanced

Theme: The world of tomorrow

Lesson: Working together



A person wearing a white sweater is sitting at a white desk, typing on a silver laptop. The laptop screen shows a document with text and a table. 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: Presentations and networking

Lesson: Preparing for a presentation

Pre-intermediate

Theme: Clients and colleagues

Lesson: Problems in the office

Intermediate

Theme: Presentations and networking

Lesson: Giving a presentation

Upper intermediate

Theme: Changes of plan

Lesson: Presentations

Advanced

Theme: People and events

Lesson: Negotiating