

Portuguese Pronunciation Guide 2:

Stress Patterns With the Verb Fazer

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YouTube URL: <https://youtu.be/UNJKgUpVceU>

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Stress Patterns with the Verb Fazer

So, welcome back.

If you're new here, don't worry
—this session stands on its own.

And if you watched the last video,
this will feel like a natural continuation.

Today we're going to keep practicing Portuguese
pronunciation,
and we'll do it through the verb **fazer**.

In English, that's usually translated as "to do" or "to make."
Simple words,
but they open the door to some important stress patterns
we'll explore together.

Present Tense

Eu faço	I make/ I do
Tu fazes	You make/ You do
Ele/ela/você faz	He makes/ He does
Nós fazemos	We make /We do
Vós fazeis	You make/ You do
Eles/elas/vocês fazem	They make / They do

Now, please look at the first three examples:

faço, fazes, faz.

Here, we place emphasis on the first syllable.

This is because, by default, the penultimate syllable tends to be stressed in Portuguese.

We learned this in the previous video session, and I'll leave a link to it in the description, but let's review it to make this session independent.

Stress Patterns in Portuguese

So, the first three forms of the verb sound like **faço, fazes, faz.**

Now, let's look at the next three:

Nós **fa-ze-mos**, vos **fa-ze-is**, eles **fa-zem**.

So, here's the pattern:

- Fazemos and fazeis have three syllables.
And unless there is a graphical accent,
the stress naturally falls on the penultimate syllable
—the one before last.
Thus, we stress **ze**: **fazemos**, and **fazeis**.
- As for "Fazem", it's disyllabic. So, we stress the first
syllable:
fa-zem.
Same as Faço, Fazes, Faz.

Now, let's remind ourselves of the bigger rule.

In Portuguese, the natural stress usually falls
on the penultimate syllable.

Even when a word has four or more syllables.

That's by default.

Of course, there are exceptions,
but this is the guide to follow.

Accordingly, in these examples,
we emphasize ze in fazemos and fazeis,
and fa in fazem.

I'll leave this text as a **PDF** for you to practice reading later.

Please check the URL in the video description.

Past Perfect of Fazer

Now, let's practice with the **past perfect** of verb fazer.

Eu fiz	I made/ I did
Tu fizeste	You made/ You did
Ele/ela/você fez *	He made / He did
Nós fizemos	We made / We did
Vós fizestes	You made / You did
Eles/elas/vocês fizeram	They made / They did

Again, the default rule applies:

- The penultimate syllable is stressed
→ unless there is a graphical accent

So, Why Does "Fez" Sounds Like "Fêz"

It's a closed "e",

when it normally should be open.

It does not sound like féz, but fêz.

The reason seems to be historical,
but some phonological rules were also created over time
to describe this phenomenon.

Let's just mention the historic reason for now.

The word "fez" comes from Latin fēcit,
which had a long, closed /e/.

So, when "fēcit" became "fez",
the closed vowel quality was preserved.
It's the same "e" sound as in mesa.

Examples Using Verb Fazer While Practicing Syllable Stress

Let's look at some examples of the verb **Fazer** while also observing the stressed syllables.

Example 1

Eu **hoje** fiz **uma carne** de **porco** à **alentejana**.

Today I made Alentejo-style pork.

Breakdown:

Eu **ho-je** fiz **u-ma car-ne** de **por-co** à **a-len-te-ja-na**.

So, let's pause on that little word "à."

In Portuguese, it means "in the style of."

Think of the famous French phrase "**à la carte**."

Same idea.

Now, look at **alentejana**.

It's a five-syllable word,

and we put the stress on "ja."

Why?

Because that's the penultimate syllable

—the one before last.

Paroxítona words (Paroxytone)

Words that naturally stress the penultimate syllable are called **paroxítonas**.

That's the default in Portuguese.
If we wanted to stress the third-before-last or the very last syllable,
we'd need a graphical accent to tell us so.

For example, it would look like alentéjana or alentejaná.
But those forms are incorrect.
The proper stress is on ja—alentejana.

Let's compare alentejana with a word we used in the last video: matemática.

In matemática, the stress falls on **má** —that's the third syllable from the end.

And notice, it has to be marked with an acute accent.
Without that accent, it would sound like matematica,
which is incorrect.

The accent is what tells us exactly where the stress belongs.

Example 2

Elas fizeram a escola em Santarém.

They attended [made] school in Santarém.

Breakdown:

E-las fi-ze-ram a es-co-la em San-ta-rém.

Here, in Santarém, we use an acute accent to stress rém.

Without it, it would sound as San ta rem,
which is incorrect and it sounds very foreign to Portuguese
ears.

As for "fizeram" and "escola",

no accents are necessary.

Stress falls naturally on the penultimate syllable.

Closing Thoughts

Let's end this session here.

Short learning sessions with emphasis on repetition help us build fluency while adding new layers to the magic of Portuguese speaking.

If you haven't subscribed to the channel yet, please do so for notifications of new uploads.

Thank you!

Obrigado.

Tony de Araújo