

Portuguese Pronunciation Guide 4

Daily Practice Routine

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YouTube URL: <https://youtu.be/lbZyLQlfo3I> .

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Biggest Key To Sounding Natural in Portuguese

If you want to sound natural in Portuguese, one of the biggest secrets is mastering **syllable stress**.

Stick with me, and I will **show you how**—even before you know the meaning of the words (vocabulary).

Once you can read Portuguese with ease, the door really **opens** and from here, the sky is the limit in **your learning journey**.

So, stick with me, because one of the biggest keys to sounding natural in Portuguese is **mastering stressed syllables**.

This is especially important in European Portuguese, sometimes called Continental Portuguese.

Learn and Practice Sentences Like This One To Master Portuguese Intonation

Let's dive right in with a sentence I pulled out from a *news* magazine, to be current.

Don't worry about the meaning yet, the exercise is simply to read it correctly.

Vocabulary will come later.

Once you're able to read the words correctly you can learn faster.

So, the practice sentence is this:

Revolução Energética em Curso: inscreva-se e venha debater o futuro da energia.

Now, notice where the stress is in each word.

Revolução Energética em Curso:
inscreva-se e venha debater o futuro da energia.

So, here, in Revolução,
the accent on the last syllable
makes it an oxytone word,
meaning the stress falls on the final syllable.

That's not normal, so, we need an accent.

In this case, a tilde (~),
otherwise, it would have been revo-lú-ção.
but it should be revolução.

Ok, the next word is Energética.

Now, in energética, the accent is on the third syllable from last.

Normally, Portuguese words are stressed on the one before last syllable, the penultimate syllable.

Energética is a **proparoxytone** word, and proparoxytone words are not normal (not the default trend).

Normal trending words are paroxytones.

So, we need to put an accent on the "e", energética, otherwise, we would read, energetíca.

Now, words like **Curso**, **inscreva-se**, **venha**, **futuro**, and **energia**, don't have accent marks.

Why?

Because they are paroxytones.

The accent falls on the penultimate syllable.

Of course, in **Curso**, the stress is on the **first syllable** but that syllable is also the penultimate syllable of the word.

Then we have

Inscreva-se, **venha**, **futuro**, and **energia**.

Cltic Pronouns —an introduction

Now, here's a subtle point about the word inscreva-se.

That little “se” at the end doesn't change the stress syllable count.

The stress is still on the penultimate syllable of inscreva.

Why? Because “se” is a *clitic* pronoun.

It has meaning, but it leans on the verb and doesn't carry stress in itself.

A clitic pronoun is a grammatically independent unit that is phonologically **dependent** on a neighboring word, meaning it has its own meaning but cannot stand alone and must “lean” on a host word for pronunciation.

So, inscreva-se remains a paroxytone word, with the stress right where it belongs: on the penultimate syllable.

The Rhythm Of The Portuguese Language

Mastering stress is more than a rule.

It's that **rhythm** that makes Portuguese sing.

Once you hear it, the language **opens up**.

And every word becomes a step closer
to sounding natural.

Alright, Great!

Shall we do another example?

Yes?

Second Practice Example To Master Portuguese Pronunciation

So, here's another example:

Já é conhecida a música que vai representar Portugal na Eurovisão Júnior.

So, let's break this down:

Conhecida.

Well, this word carries the default stress on the penultimate syllable.

Música. This one is a proparoxytone; stress is on the third from last syllable. Here, we need a graphical accent, otherwise, it would be muśica, instead of música.

What Are diphthongs?

Next, **vai**.

Vai, is just one syllable, so, it's an oxytone word, stressed on the last syllable.

But vai is a **diphthong**: two vowels in a single syllable.

The "I", here, acts as a *glide*. So, the stress falls on the first vowel, the "a".

If we wanted to stress "I" instead, we would write **vaī** with an acute accent on "i".

Other examples of diphthongs include

mais, sai, ai, eu, ui, fui.

Now, let's see **representar**.

Representar, no accent needed here.

It's oxytone because it ends in a consonant "r".

Remember from last session: words ending in

i, u, l, r, z, or **im**

don't need graphical accents.

And next we have **Portugal**.

In English we say **Portugal**

in Portuguese we say **Portugal**.

This is also an oxytone, ending in "**L**".

And the last two words are:

Euroví^{são} , Eu-ro-ví-são

and

Júnior, Jú-ni-or.

They both have an accent showing us exactly where to place the stress.

Nothing to declare there.

How To Practice Portuguese Pronunciation On Your Own

Okay, and that's it for this session, my friend.

Please review these examples, then try an exercise on your own.

A good practice is to go online, say, Google News in Portuguese.

Search for *Google Notícias Portugal*.

Current URL: <https://news.google.com/home?hl=pt-PT&gl=PT&ceid=PT%3Apt-150> .

And once there, read the headlines using your
new stress powers.

I'll see you next time.

Or, in Portuguese: *A té à próxima vez.*

Thank you,

Tony de Araújo

Please note:

The *araú* on my last name has an interesting grammar rule. We will cover that at our next session on pronunciation.