ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION · DEEP DIVE

Linking: When a Consonant Joins the Next Word

Why 'an ice cream' and 'a nice cream' are the same sounds, why 'bus stop' has one long /s/ and not two, and why British speech sounds fast when it is not.

A2 · pronunciation · linking · connected speech

consonant + vowel

The final consonant moves on to the next word.

turn off → tur-noff

Please turn off the light.

same consonant

One long sound, not two.

bus stop → bu-sstop

I waited at the bus stop for ages.

stop + consonant

The first stop is formed but not released.

hot dog → ho(t)dog

He ate a hot dog in the park.

PHRASE	SOUNDS LIKE	NOTE
an ice cream	a nice cream	only context tells them apart
an aim	a name	the same sounds
not at all	/ˈnɒ tə ˈtɔːl/	two links in a row
an hour	a-nour	silent h: link to the vowel

1 Which sound links?

Write the consonant that moves on to the next word.

1. Would you like an ice cream? ____
2. Please turn off the light. ____
3. She worked out the answer. ____
4. The table is made of oak. ____
5. He picked it up. (picked + it) ____
6. He built it with his own hands. ____
7. We waited an hour for the bus. ____
8. Make an effort to understand. ____
9. Can I come in? (come + in) ____
10. Look at this! ____

2 One long sound

Write the consonant that is said once and held longer.

1 I waited at the bus stop. ____

2 She is a big girl now. ____

3 The bottle was half full. ____

4 Could I have some more tea? ____

5 I'd like a black coffee. ____

6 Stop pushing! ____

7 It was a nice song. ____

8 That was a good day. ____

3 Broken links

The symbols show where the speaker broke the link. Write how it should sound.

1 Would you like an ?ice cream?

2 I waited at the bus s-stop.

3 He ate a hot t-dog.

4 He picked-uh it up.

5 He works as a nice cream salesman.

6 Not ?at ?all.

Remember Never break the link with a small stop (an ?ice) or an extra vowel (picked-uh it): both sound strongly foreign.

4 Mark the links

At each number, write L (consonant links to a vowel), G (one long consonant) or – (no link).

Turn [1] ____ off the TV and come [2] ____ in. I've got [3] ____ a big [4] ____ gift for you. It's [5] ____ an [6] ____ old book [7] ____ called [8] ____ Two Cities.

5 Same sounds

Match each phrase with its sound-alike. Put each pair's first half in the left box and its partner in the right box, in the same order.

an ice cream | an aim | an ocean | grade A | a nice cream | a name | a notion | grey day

phrase	sounds like

Where are the answers?

The answers, with an explanation for each one, are in the LinguaBite app. Open this Deep Dive and scroll to Downloads at the bottom of the article: once you have downloaded this worksheet, its answers appear there after a couple of days, so you do the exercises first. You can choose 1, 2 or 3 days in the app's Settings.

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