

# Can you hear these seven things in your own voice?

Pronunciation is 25% of your Speaking score. Record a 60-second answer, play it back, and tick each feature honestly.

**Do this first:** record yourself answering "Describe a place you enjoy visiting" for one minute. Assess the recording, not your memory — your ears lie to you in real time.

**My voice rises and falls — it isn't monotone**

Played back with eyes closed, I don't sound like a robot reading a list. Pitch moves on key words, settles at the end of statements.

**I stress the right syllable in longer words**

I say pho-TOG-ra-pher, not PHO-to-graph-er. When I learn a word, I learn where the stress falls.

**My rhythm punches content words, rushes the small ones**

I lean on nouns, verbs and adjectives and glide over "the, of, to, a" — I don't give every word equal weight.

**I link words and use contractions naturally**

I say "I'd" and "they're", and words flow into each other ("an apple") rather than firing off one at a time.

**I don't confuse the sounds my first language lacks**

I can hear and produce tricky pairs — "ship"/"sheep", "bat"/"bad" — without them changing my meaning.

**I record and compare against a model — I don't just talk**

I check my speech line by line against a native speaker, one feature at a time.

**I shadow natural English most days**

I play short clips and repeat in real time, copying rhythm and melody — not just memorising answers.

## What your ticks mean

**6-7:** Strong habits. If Speaking is still stuck at 6, it's a specific sound or intonation pattern you can't hear yourself — the classic blind spot.

**3-5:** Clear English, capped score. The unticked features are what separate Band 6 from Band 7 on the descriptors.

**0-2:** Where the missing half-band lives — and the most trainable part of the exam once someone shows you what to fix.

**The catch:** you're judging your own recording, and even trained candidates mishear their own stress and intonation. What you can't hear, you can't fix. A free diagnostic at [sound-ready.com](https://www.sound-ready.com) lets you hear what the examiner hears.