
BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

Tim's Pronunciation Workshop

Elision of /d/



Tim

Hi. I'm Tim and this is my pronunciation workshop. Here I'm going to show you how English is really spoken. It'll help you to become a better listener and a more fluent speaker. Are you ready? Come on, follow me. Today, we're going to talk about one of the most important questions in contemporary Britain. The answer will also help you improve your pronunciation. So, what is this question? Well, it involves one of these, and one of these. Quite simply: do you prefer your potatoes steamed - or boiled? What's your preference? Well this is what the people of London think.

Voxpops

- I prefer steamed potatoes.
- I prefer boiled potatoes.
- I prefer steamed potatoes to boiled potatoes.
- I prefer boiled potatoes.

Tim

Well there we have it: the nation has spoken. Our completely scientific survey proves that the country is divided fifty-fifty. But what about pronunciation? Well, one of the things that happens when we speak English fluently is that we don't always pronounce all the sounds in every word. The words steamed and boiled both end in the sound /d/, don't they? Or do they? Watch and listen again - can you hear the sound /d/?

Voxpops

- I prefer steamed potatoes.
- I prefer boiled potatoes.
- I prefer steamed potatoes to boiled potatoes.
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It's very difficult to say /d/ when it comes in between two other consonants. Your mouth has to do a lot of work. So in many cases the /d/ is not pronounced. 'Boiled potatoes' becomes 'boilpotatoes'. And 'steamed potatoes' becomes 'steampotatoes'. This is called elision. Here are some more examples.

Examples

My best friend let me borrow his car.

Don't hold back - say what you mean.
His car rolled down the hill.

Tim

Right, so you've heard the examples, and now it's your turn. You know the drill: listen and repeat.

Examples

My best friend let me borrow his car.
Don't hold back - say what you mean.
His car rolled down the hill.

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Well done. Now remember, if you want to learn more about pronunciation, then please visit our website, bbclearningenglish.com. And that is about it from the pronunciation workshop for now. I'll see you soon. Bye bye. Right – now I'd better prepare my own potatoes. Ahhh!! I just peeled my finger! Ewwwsh – doesn't look good...