

# **Unit 2: Intonation in English**

Phonetics - Term 4

Department of English

# What is Intonation?

- Intonation refers to the rise and fall of the voice in speaking.
- It is the 'music' of the language and affects meaning.
- Intonation conveys attitudes, emotions, and grammatical structure.

# Functions of Intonation

- 1. Attitudinal function:** Expresses emotions (surprise, anger, sarcasm, etc.)
- 2. Grammatical function:** Marks sentence type (statements, questions, etc.)
- 3. Focusing function:** Highlights new vs. known information

# Functions of Intonation

**4. Discursive function:** Signals speech flow and turn-taking

**5. Psychological function:** Helps with speech organization and memorization

**6. Indexical function:** Reflects social identity and roles

# Types of Intonation Patterns

1. Falling Intonation (↘)
2. Rising Intonation (↗)
3. Fall-Rise Intonation (↘↗)
4. Rise-Fall Intonation (↗↘)

# Falling Intonation (↘)

**1.**

She doesn't live here anymore. ↘

**2.**

Where's the nearest post office? ↘

**3.** Write your name here. ↘

# Falling Intonation (↘)

## 1. Declarative Statements

She doesn't live here anymore. ↘

## 2. Wh-questions

Where's the nearest post office? ↘

## 3. Commands

Write your name here. ↘

# Falling Intonation (↘)

4.

He thinks he's so clever, doesn't he?

5.

What a beautiful voice! ↘



# Falling Intonation (↘)

4. **Tag questions, requiring a confirmation (e.g., rhetorical questions)**

He thinks he's so clever, doesn't he?

5. **Some exclamatory statements**

What a beautiful voice! ↘

# Falling Intonation (↘)

1. There are two types of falling intonation (in declarative statements):
2. ***Low fall***: It may start from mid pitch to the lowest pitch. For example: **How are you?** ↘
3. ***High fall***: It may start from the highest pitch of the voice to the lowest. It may be used for extra emphasis in informal situations to express lively interest and friendliness in statements, for example, in greetings and exclamations.  
E.g., **Oh, I'm glad to** ↘ **see you!**

# Rising Intonation (↗)

1.

- Are you thirsty? ↗
- Do you have any magazines? ↗

2.

- You're a new student, aren't you? ↗

# Rising Intonation (↗)

## 1. Yes/no questions

- Are you thirsty? ↗
- Do you have any magazines? ↗

## 2. Tag questions, requiring an answer

- You're a new student, aren't you? ↗

# Rising Intonation (↗)

- There are two types of rising intonation:
    1. **Low Rise**: It may extend from low to mid pitch or from mid to high pitch or with other variations. For example: Will you open the door, please? ↗
    2. **High Rise**: it may extend from low pitch to high pitch. For example: You said what? ↗. What?
- Elliptical questions:
- Full question**: Are you coming with us? ↗
- Elliptical version**: Coming with us? ↗

# Fall-Rise Intonation (↘↗)

1.

Well, ↘ I suppose so ↗

2.

Perhaps we could ↘ visit the place? ↗

3.

Would you like another ↘ coffee? ↗

# Fall-Rise Intonation (↘↗)

## 1. Hesitation

Well, ↘ I suppose so ↗

## 2. Uncertainty

Perhaps we could ↘ visit the place? ↗

## 3. Politeness (polite requests)

Would you like another ↘ coffee? ↗

# Rise-Fall Intonation (↗↘)

1.

Are you having ↗soup or ↘salad?

2.

I like ↗football, basketball, and ↘volleyball.

3.

- If he call again ↗, ask him to leave a message ↘



# Rise-Fall Intonation (↗↘)

## 1. Choices

Are you having ↗soup or ↘salad?

## 2. Lists

I like ↗football, basketball, and ↘volleyball.

## 3. Conditional statements

If he call again ↗, ask him to leave a message ↘

# Practice

Read the following sentences, indicate the intonation direction and justify your answer.

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Read the following sentences, indicate the intonation direction and justify your answer.

1. Take your hands out of your pockets

2. Do you sell stamps?

3. Do you think it's allowed?

4. Dad wants to change his car.

5. Whose bag is this?

6. Have you finished already?

7. Here is the weather forecast.

8. If you have any problems, just contact us.

9. What country do you come from?

10. The view is beautiful, isn't it?

11. That's a surprise!

# Answers

1. Take your hands out of your pockets. ↘ **(Command)**
2. Do you sell stamps? ↗ **(Yes/no Question)**
3. Do you think it's ↘ allowed? ↗ **(Doubt)**
4. Dad wants to change his car. ↘ **(Statement)**
5. Whose bag is this? ↘ **(Wh- questions)**
6. Have you finished already? ↗ **(Yes/no Question)**
7. Here is the weather forecast. ↘ **(Statement)**
8. If you have any problems ↗, just contact us. ↘ **(Conditional sentence)**
9. What country do you come from? ↘ **(Wh- question)**
10. The view is beautiful, isn't it? ↗ **(question requiring answer)**
11. That's a surprise! ↘ **(Exclamation)**

# Dialogue time!

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**A:** Do you have any questions?

**B:** Yes, I want to know about fees.

**A:** Which fees?

**B:** Overdraft fees.

**A:** You will be required to pay a small fee for everytime of your draft.

**B:** How much is the fee?

**A:** You'll have to pay \$25 every time you overdraft.

**B:** That's a small fee? High rise

**A:** It should stop you from overdrafting.

**B:** You would think it would, but it most likely won't.

**A:** Can I help you with anything else?

**B:** That's it for to day. Thank you.