

Phonetics

First year

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Lateral Consonant Sound

Lateral Consonant:

A consonant sound produced by having the tip of the tongue touching the alveolar ridge; while at the same time the sides of the tongue are lowered so air moves over them and out of the mouth.

- ❖ English has only one lateral consonant, **/l/**.
- ❖ It has the velum raised, so no air goes out of the nasal cavity, and all air goes out of the mouth.
- ❖ It is continuous.
- ❖ It is voiced.

/l/: consonant sound, lateral, alveolar, voiced, so is lenis (weak) and short.

e.g.: **leave** /li:v/ , **mailing** /meɪlɪŋ/ , **call** /kɔ:l/

➤ However, the lateral **/l/** is produced in **two ways** depending on its position in the word, and as follows:

1- Light [l]: this version of **/l/** is produced in a way where the mouth becomes in a state similar to when producing the spread vowel **/i:/**, even the lips have a slight spreading.

- This version of **/l/** is produced in:

a- Initial position before all vowel sounds **except before vowel /ɑ:, ɔ:, ɜ:, ʌ, ɒ, ə/** it would be produced in its other dark version.

e.g.: **leave /li:v/**

b- Medial position before a vowel.

e.g.: **melon /melən/**

2- Dark [ɫ]: this version of **/l/** is produced in a way where the mouth becomes in a state similar to when producing the rounded vowel **/ɒ/**; even the lips have a slight rounding.

- This version of **/l/** is produced in:

a- Final position.

e.g.: **tall /tɔ:l/**

b- Before a consonant.

e.g.: **belt /belt/**

c- In initial position if followed by of **/ɑ:, ɔ:, ɜ:, ʌ, ɒ, ə/**.

e.g.: large /lɑ:dʒ/

lawn /lɔ:n/

learn /lɜ:n/

love /lʌv/

lock /lɒk/

sailor /seɪlə/