

# D Sound Word List

Same tongue position as /t/ - tip up behind the top teeth - but turn the voice on.  
Release with a quick, buzzy tap.

SOUND

/d/

TYPICAL AGE

By age 2-3

TYPE

Voiced Alveolar stop

## PRACTICE TIP

Pair it with /t/ in minimal pairs (toe/dough, ten/den) so the child hears that the only difference is the voice.

## Initial Position (81 words)

The sound is at the beginning of the word.

### 1 Syllable

43 words

|       |      |      |       |      |
|-------|------|------|-------|------|
| dog   | deer | dawn | dill  | down |
| duck  | dime | day  | dine  | dude |
| doll  | dirt | dear | dip   | dull |
| door  | dive | deck | dock  | dump |
| dad   | dust | deep | dodge | dune |
| dish  | dam  | den  | doe   | dusk |
| desk  | damp | dent | done  | dye  |
| dance | dash | dice | dot   |      |
| dark  | date | dig  | dough |      |

### 2 Syllables

27 words

|         |         |          |          |          |
|---------|---------|----------|----------|----------|
| doctor  | daddy   | diamond  | dolly    | duckling |
| donut   | danger  | dinner   | donkey   | dugout   |
| dolphin | defend  | dirty    | doodle   | daughter |
| diaper  | desert  | disguise | doorbell |          |
| daisy   | design  | dizzy    | double   |          |
| dentist | dessert | dollar   | dozen    |          |

### 3 Syllables

9 words

|          |          |           |           |          |
|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|----------|
| dinosaur | daffodil | delicious | detective | discover |
| dominoes | decorate | deliver   | diary     |          |

### 4 Syllables

2 words

|           |            |
|-----------|------------|
| dandelion | dictionary |
|-----------|------------|

### High-frequency initial words

Everyday words rather than picture-card words - which is why most lists leave them out. A child already says these hundreds of times a day, so they carry more carryover value than any noun above. Target them in conversation, not in drill.

**do, did, does, different, daddy, dirty, dancing, downstairs, danced, dances**

## Medial Position (36 words)

The sound is in the middle of the word.

### 2 Syllables

30 words

|           |          |           |          |          |
|-----------|----------|-----------|----------|----------|
| window    | reindeer | candy     | outdoor  | toddler  |
| shadow    | adopt    | cardboard | sadly    | wander   |
| birdhouse | adult    | folder    | shoulder | wonder   |
| garden    | bedroom  | handle    | sidewalk | birthday |
| under     | bundle   | laundry   | thunder  | hotdog   |
| meadow    | candle   | order     | today    | windy    |

### 3 Syllables

6 words

|         |           |           |
|---------|-----------|-----------|
| holiday | tornado   | adventure |
| idea    | yesterday | calendar  |

### High-frequency medial words

Everyday words rather than picture-card words - which is why most lists leave them out. A child already says these hundreds of times a day, so they carry more carryover value than any noun above. Target them in conversation, not in drill.

**today, understand, already, under, everybody, somebody, nobody, children, anybody, daddy, wonderful, yesterday, needed, goodbye, building, birthday, middle, hiding, grandma, understood, grandpa, finding, sending, understands, loudly**

## Final Position (108 words)

The sound is at the end of the word.

### 1 Syllable

100 words

|       |       |        |       |        |
|-------|-------|--------|-------|--------|
| bed   | sound | end    | hood  | sand   |
| bird  | slide | fade   | kid   | shade  |
| red   | add   | field  | land  | shed   |
| road  | aid   | find   | lid   | shield |
| food  | band  | fold   | load  | shred  |
| hand  | beard | found  | loud  | sold   |
| head  | bend  | friend | mad   | spread |
| ride  | blade | glad   | made  | squid  |
| side  | blend | glide  | maid  | stand  |
| cloud | blond | gold   | mind  | thread |
| bread | board | good   | mound | tide   |
| seed  | braid | grade  | nod   | toad   |
| cold  | bride | grand  | odd   | told   |
| sled  | build | ground | paid  | trade  |
| wide  | child | guard  | pond  | wand   |
| sad   | code  | had    | pound | weed   |
| mud   | cord  | hard   | pride | wild   |
| crowd | dad   | herd   | proud | yard   |
| card  | did   | hide   | rod   | wood   |
| world | dude  | hold   | round | bad    |

## 2 Syllables

7 words

|            |            |          |         |
|------------|------------|----------|---------|
| salad      | lizard     | aloud    | mermaid |
| playground | blackboard | birdseed |         |

## 3 Syllables

1 words

pyramid

### High-frequency final words

Everyday words rather than picture-card words - which is why most lists leave them out. A child already says these hundreds of times a day, so they carry more carryover value than any noun above. Target them in conversation, not in drill.

**and, did, would, had, could, need, should, find, told, around, made, wanted, happened, understand, called, used, hold, inside, afraid, stand, started, supposed, behind, tried, send, outside, ahead, scared, cold, loved**

## Flap contexts (54 words)

These are medial D words in spelling, but between a stressed and an unstressed vowel American English turns /d/ into a quick flap - "ladder" a

## 2 Syllables

43 words

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|         |        |          |         |          |
|---------|--------|----------|---------|----------|
| ladder  | middle | hoodie   | riddle  | feeding  |
| spider  | buddy  | ladle    | saddle  | riding   |
| medal   | muddy  | model    | soda    | ready    |
| cider   | body   | noodle   | sudden  | louder   |
| pudding | cradle | paddle   | udder   | hiding   |
| wedding | feeder | powdered | wider   | cloudy   |
| rider   | fiddle | puddle   | reading | sledding |
| cheddar | glider | radish   | lady    |          |
| powder  | hidden | reader   | daddy   |          |

**3 Syllables**

10 words

|         |                |            |        |              |
|---------|----------------|------------|--------|--------------|
| radio   | video          | cider mill | melody | spider web   |
| ladybug | cheddar cheese | meadowlark | rodeo  | wedding cake |

**4 Syllables**

1 words

daddy longlegs

# Generalization

Word lists get a sound into a child's mouth. Generalization is what gets it into their life. These are activities where the target words come up on their own, so nobody has to be talked into practicing.

## Play-based ideas for young children

### Doggy play

Use a toy dog or a puppet. Feed it, walk it, put it to bed. Let it do something naughty, and tell it "down!" yourself - most children join in fast.

Words that come up: dog, doggy, down, dig, dinner, bed, good dog, bad dog, dish, do it, ride, hide, daddy, done

### Digging box

Bury small toys in dry rice, sand or beans. Dig them out one at a time and name each find.

Words that come up: dig, down, deep, dirt, dump, found, hide, more, do it, inside, dinosaur, duck, doll, dime

### Doors and drawers

Walk around the house opening and closing things. A play kitchen works just as well as a real one.

Words that come up: door, drawer, open, close, inside, dark, down, push, pull, did it, hide, behind, ready, done

## Conversation and verbal games for older kids

### Design a day

Plan a perfect day hour by hour. Days of the week, "do," "did" and "done" all show up on their own.

### Describe and draw

One person describes a picture, the other draws it without looking. Direction words are loaded with /d/: down, side, middle, under.

### Debate the difference

Pick two similar things - dogs and cats, dinner and dessert - and argue which is better. "Difference" and "decide" come free.