

## Minimal Pairs Worksheet

A. Minimal pairs are two words that are different in **ONE** sound only.

Examples:

cat cap - difference is the final sound: /t/ and /p/

bat pat - difference is the first sound: /b/ and /p/

big bag - difference is the middle sound: /i/ and /æ/

B. Sometimes non-native speakers have trouble pronouncing minimal pairs differently, so if they say “chip” and “ship” might sound the same. Why is this a problem? How can you use minimal pairs to your advantage when working on your accent?

C. Read the following minimal pairs. Which sound is different in each word?

- |                |              |
|----------------|--------------|
| 1. two zoo     | 6. know new  |
| 2. mitt met    | 7. work jerk |
| 3. caught cut  | 8. cut cup   |
| 4. forge force | 9. gone gong |
| 5. plug pluck  | 10. fly flow |

D. Read the following minimal pairs. Which sound is different in each word?

- |               |                    |
|---------------|--------------------|
| 1. cow know   | 6. work cork       |
| 2. slip sleep | 7. breathes breeds |
| 3. go dough   | 8. bomb bum        |
| 4. knee new   | 9. two too         |
| 5. laugh life | 10. praise place   |

E. Make your own minimal pairs

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- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

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Here's How to Do Accent Modification  
Robert McKinney