

American English Pronunciation Course

The CON- is pronounced to rhyme with the word “on” when that syllable is stressed, and CON- is pronounced to rhyme with the word “sun” when that syllable is unstressed.

CON-tent (n.) = something that is “contained” inside an enclosed space or limits

Ex) The security guard asked to see the contents of my backpack

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con-TENT (adj.) = satisfied

Ex) I don’t need any more money; I’m content with my current salary.

CON-test (n.) = a type of competition

Ex) I entered some of my work in a poetry contest. The first prize is \$500!

con-TEST (v.) = dispute, try to disprove, call into question

Ex) The opposition party is contesting the election results, saying there was voter fraud.

CON-duct (n.) = behavior

Ex) I was shocked by your disrespectful conduct.

con-DUCT (v.) = manage, control, lead, or guide

Ex) Scientists conduct experiments to develop new technology.

Usually, when the CON- is stressed, it is pronounced to rhyme with “on”, and when the “con-” is unstressed, it is pronounced to rhyme with “sun.” However, there are some exceptions!

WORDS WITH CON- (LIKE “ON”):

concentrate (v.) = think hard, focus

concert (n.) = a musical performance

concept (n.) = an idea

condiment (n.) = an extra flavoring for food, like ketchup/mustard

console (n.) = a control panel for a mechanical or electronic system

conference (n.) = a gathering of people

congregation (n.) = a gathering of people for religious worship (usually Christian)

Note that the stressed syllable is “A,” but we still pronounce CON- as in “on”

consequence (n.) = a result

contact (n./v.) = touch someone/something or talk with someone

contract (n.) = a formal document defining an agreement

controversy (n.) / controversial (adj.) = a topic about which people hold different/opposing opinions

Note that the stress changes – in “controversy” the stressed syllable is CON, but in “controversial” the stressed syllable is “VER” – yet the CON- is still pronounced like “on”

WORDS WITH CON- (LIKE “SUN”):

conceal (v.) = to hide
concerned (adj.) = worried
conclude (v.) / conclusion (n.) = bring to an end
concur (v.) = agree
concussion (n.) = when you hit your head hard and injure it
condition (n.) = a state of being; existing circumstances
congratulate (v.) = express happiness at someone’s good fortune
connect (n.) = link two things together
consecutive (adj.) = one thing following another
consider (v.) = think about
construct (v.) = build
consult (v.) = seek advice or information from someone/something
consume (v.) = use or eat
contain (v.) = keep inside
continue (v.) = go on with an action or situation
control (n./v.) = have complete influence over
convenient (adj.) = easy and simple

MORE WORDS THAT CHANGE:

With these words, the first form (the verb) has con- like “sun,” and the second form (the noun or adjective) has con- like “on.”

conserve / conservation
confide / confidential
confront / confrontation
confirm / confirmation