

Talk a Lot

Focus on Connected Speech

Weak Forms – Complete the Table

Notes:

- The weak forms of many function words are commonly used in **spoken English** instead of strong forms (in Standard Pronunciation, dialects, and accents).
- All words that have weak forms usually act as function words.
- All words that have weak forms have only one syllable – they are monosyllabic (apart from “any”).
- Most of the weak forms use the vowel sound **schwa** /ə/.
- If we use strong forms when we should use weak, we sound overly **formal** and it’s harder for people to understand us, because the sentence stress is incorrect (see p.12.1). Communication is reduced.
- If a function word comes at the end of a sentence we usually use its strong form, e.g. “What are you looking for?” /fɔ:/ or, “Who are you writing to?” /tu:/
- If we want to show emphasis or contrast, we can vary intonation by using strong forms where we would normally use weak forms, e.g. “Where’ve you been all day?” /bi:n/

	<u>weak</u>	<u>strong</u>
<u>articles & determiners</u>		
a		
an		
any		
some		
such		
the		

	<u>weak</u>	<u>strong</u>
<u>conjunctions</u>		
and		
but		
than		
that		

	<u>weak</u>	<u>strong</u>
<u>be & auxiliary verbs</u>		
am		
are		
be		
been		
is		
was		
were		
do		
does		
had		
has		
have		
can		
could		
must		
shall		
should		
would		

	<u>weak</u>	<u>strong</u>
<u>prepositions</u>		
as		
at		
for		
from		
of		
to		

	<u>weak</u>	<u>strong</u>
<u>pronouns</u>		
he		
her		
him		
his		
me		
she		
them		
their		
us		
we		
you		
your		