



How to Correct R Sounds












The Essentials

An Ultimate Articulation Program

Garth Schindel - SLPatHome

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About the Author

I have been helping children and their parents for over 33 years as a licensed speech-language pathologist. I have found that the best way to help children is to give parents the tools and strategies that they need. Parents are always their child's best teacher.

More information on speech and language therapy and all of my programs can be found on my website: Speech-TherapyAtHome.com. I would love to hear from you if you have any questions or comments. I can be reached at SLP@Speech-TherapyAtHome.com

Garth Schindel, SLPatHome

Introduction

The Essential R program is designed to be used by anyone who wants to help a child work on R sounds. It provides step by step guides for parents and those not familiar with speech therapy.

In it you will find all of the practice words and images you need to help your child correct R.

Essential R is intended for traditional speech therapy. The R Blend Complexity program provides additional resources to maximize the power of the complexity approach.

The three tools this program does use are coarticulation, minimal pairs and sound cues.

Coarticulation makes it easier or harder to make an R depending on what sound comes before and after the R. I've organized the practice words into groups for all of the different vowel sounds that come before and after the R and provided sets of all of the different basic R blends.

Minimal pairs are words that differ by only one sounds. For R, pairs such as One/Run, and Weigh/Ray, help children to listen to and practice saying these differences.

Sound Cues provide children with the information they need to fully understand the sounds that make up words. Each sound in English is paired with a visual image, a label and a hand gesture. Sound Cues help children understand what sounds are in each word and provides the support needed for them to make each sound correctly. I've added the visual for each sound in the practice words.

The complete Ultimate Sound Cues program (visuals, gestures and labels) is free to download from my website.

These are the same ideas and materials that I use in my practice and share with my parents. I hope you find them helpful.

How the Practice Images are Divided

- R at the Start of Words: Consonant and Consonant Vowel word shapes
- R at the Start of Words: Consonant Vowel Consonant word shapes, divided by all of the possible vowel sounds that follow R
- R at the Start of Words: Other Word Shapes & Longer Words
- Vowel R words for all of the vowels that come before R
- R Blends: BR, DR, FR, GR, KR, PR, TR
- Minimal Pairs contrasting W and R.

Some practice words will be harder for children to say than others. The practice pictures in this program generally move from easiest to harder. The general rules I used to divide the practice images are as follows:

- Shorter Words are Easier than longer ones
- Sounds at the Start of words are easiest, followed by sounds at the End and then sounds in the Middle
- Sounds blended with one other consonant are more difficult. Words with the blend at the start are easiest
- Words with multiple target sounds are often the hardest

These are just generalization; every child is different and will have different difficulty with words. I've tried to stay with these rules as much as possible when organizing the practice words.

Disclaimer

While I am a certified speech-language pathologist and all the ideas in this book are ones that I use with the parents who come to see me, this program does not replace an assessment or treatment with a speech-language pathologist or any other professional. I sincerely hope that you find my ideas and information helpful but if you have continued concerns about your child's speech development, please seek professional help.

Indirect Speech Therapy: How to “Work” on the R Sound without “Practicing”

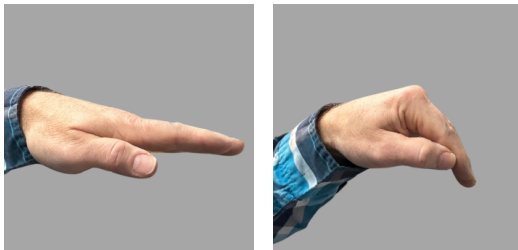
Indirect Speech Therapy focuses on increasing your child’s awareness of specific sounds. Awareness is needed to get ready to say the sounds correctly. Indirect therapy can also be used to “work” on sounds when children are resistive to more formal “practicing”.

Try the following ideas for Indirect Therapy:

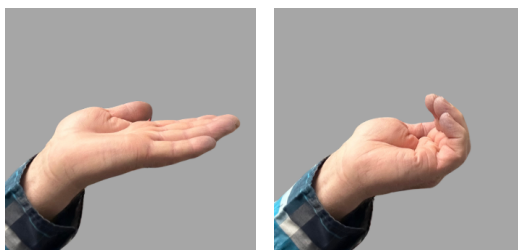
1. Give the sound a label. For younger children who do not understand what the letter R is, it often helps to call it something that they do understand. Using a label will make them more aware of the R sounds. Calling it the “Car”, “Angry Bird”, “Motor Sound” or the “Growling Sound” often works well. You can use any label that makes sense to your child. The label itself doesn’t matter as long as it has meaning to your child. English is confusing, sound labels help.
2. Give the sound an action. Pairing a physical action with a sound makes it easier to say the sound, but for now you are using the action to help draw your child’s attention to the sound.

There are two Hand Gestures that I like to use with R. Actions that mimic how the sound is produced are often the most helpful. In the section Establishing the R Sound you will learn that some people make their R with their tongue bunched at the back of their mouths, while others curl their tongue tip back on itself.

If your tongue bunches up: Place your hand, palm down, in front of you. Pull your hand back into a humped-up shape as you make the R sound.



If your tongue tip curls back when you make R: Place your hand, palm up, in front of you. Curl your fingers back so they are pointing up as you say the sound.



Direct Speech Therapy

When your child can easily and consistently make a good strong R sound by itself and they can sit down and focus on a structured activity/game for a few minutes at a time, then you are ready for Direct Therapy. Direct Therapy will provide the practice and repetition needed to master the R sound. But try or keep doing some of the “Indirect Therapy” ideas too. These will provide the extra awareness needed to make great progress.

Remember, do not try to practice R in words until your child is able to make a good strong R sound easily and consistently by itself This is very important.

Tips and Tricks for Working on R Sounds

1. Practice success. Try to have your child get the sound right at least 80 to 90% of the time. This is my Golden Rule for speech therapy. Do whatever you need to ensure success. You do not want to practice errors. This is especially important for the R sound. As the R sound improves, gradually make practice harder.

To Make it Easier:

- Start low on the Speech Ladder.
- You say the word first and have them watch to see how you made the sound and then repeat after you.
- Have them say the word in repetition. Such as “run, run, run, run” without stopping.
- Work on the easy words first. Some words because of the different sounds in the word or because of a habit are harder to say.
- It is often easier to say the R sound if you break the words apart. For example, “R...un”, “D...eer”, “H...or...se”.
- Say the word slowly.
- Use a Hand Gesture.

To Make it Harder:

- Gradually take away the support that you were providing.
- Have them say the word first.
- Have them say the word in repetition but then have them stop. Tell them to think about how they made the sound. I like to say, “Think about it”. After a couple of seconds have them say the word again. This short pause can make it much harder to say the sound correctly.
- Don’t use the Hand Gesture.
- Say the words faster. Saying the words faster will make them more automatic. Just ensure that they are saying the sounds right.
- Move up the Speech Ladder.

2. Rs at the start of words are usually the easiest for children to say followed by the Vowel Rs which can be in the middle or at the ends of words. Words with more than one R in them such as “Rhinoceros” will be even harder. R blends such as

Carryover - When to Stop Practicing?

The goal of working on any speech sound is that your child will be able to use the sound independently in their everyday talking. This is carryover. Carryover can take a long time and be difficult for some children. Others will pick up new ways of saying sounds very quickly.

Try to think about and start working on carryover as soon as you can. Here are some ideas to try

- Keep up awareness. Continue to work on the ideas from Indirect Speech Therapy.
- Continue to practice saying the sounds correctly with lots of repetition. The repetition will help them learn to say the sounds automatically.
- Catch good R sounds as they come up. When you are not practicing and hear a good R sound, make a big deal out of it. Let them know that you heard them use their good sound. Try keeping track of the number of good R sounds you hear and reward them.
- Word of the day/week. Once they can say some words with good R's fairly consistently, have them pick a word with an R sound and put its picture someplace where you will both see it. Now try to make this word come up as many times as you can through the day and let them know that they "must" say this word right each time it comes up.

Keep track of words that would be good to work on and put them into a jar. Have your child draw a word from the jar as their Word of the Day/Week.

- Focus Words. Providing extra focus on a short number of common every day words is a very powerful way to make practice meaningful, effective and to promote carryover.

With your child, pick 4 to 5 words to work on. Make sure they can make a good R sound in these words, even if you need to help in some way. The R could be at the start, in the middle or at the end of the word. Words that are meaningful such as names, favorite foods, favorite toys/activities, sports teams etc. are often good ones.

Make a list of these words. For younger children find a picture for each. Put this list somewhere where you both will see it every day.

Practice the words on this list every day. Say each word at least 10 times. You can practice other words too but always practice these ones.

Games to Play when Practicing R Sounds

Playing simple games makes it motivating for your child to practice R sounds. It doesn't matter what game you play as long as you both are having fun.

An easy way to play is to have your child say a word a certain number of times, usually 5 to 10, before they get a turn at a favourite game such as "Pop up Pirate", "What's in Ned's Head", "Don't Break the Ice" or getting another piece of "Lego" or of a puzzle. Any simple game where you need to take turns works well. Make sure to take your turn at the game too. When it's your turn you can practice saying the words or they can say the words for you.

Sometimes it can help to make these games special ones that you only play when you practice speech.

Just be careful that the game doesn't take away too much from practicing the sounds. If the game is "too fun" it will make it harder for them to remember to say the sounds right. Try to find the right balance. Also watch out for games that take too long to set up and ones that take too much time between turns.

For some games you will need to cut the R pictures apart. To help the pictures last use clear contact paper or laminate the cards in some way. You could also glue or tape the R pictures to a deck of regular playing cards. The practice images are 2.2" by 3.2", just a bit smaller than a regular sized playing card.

Repetitive Games:

Games where your child is saying the R sound or R words over and over again are a great way to establish the R sound. Try:

- "Rrrr" as you play with cars and trucks.
- "Rrrr" or as you pretend to growl or make stuffed animals growl.
- Telling each other to "Run" or "Race"
- Pretending to be an Angry Bird.
- Using an Angry Bird image as a game piece in a board game. Rrr every time you move your piece.



Simple Games to Try:

Fishing. Put a paper clip or a couple of heavy-duty staples in each card. Make a fishing pole with a magnet on the end of the line. Turn the cards upside down and have them "fish" for the cards. Say the cards as you catch them.

Bowling. Put a card under each bowling pin. Throw the ball and then say the words under the pins that were knocked down.

Flashlight Hunt. Use sticky tack or tape to put some cards on a wall. Turn off the lights and use a flashlight to find the cards.

Treasure Hunt: Hide some cards around the room and go on a treasure hunt to find them.

Race. Lay down a set of cards in a winding path. Put the words "Start" at one end and "Finish" at the other. Use pennies or pieces from a board game and a dice/spinner. Have a race to the end. Say each card as you land on them. Add in spaces that say "Car Broke Down - Miss Your Turn", "Ran Out of Gas", "Road Repair" etc. to add in more Rs and to make it even more fun.

Target Practice. Lean cards up against plastic cups or use cut up egg cartons with slits in them or the little "tables" that come in pizza boxes to make the cards stand up. Throw/roll a ball at the "targets" or shoot nerf darts at them saying the ones that you knock over.

For older children have them say which cards they are aiming at. If they knock the right card down, they get extra points. Make it a competition to see who can get the highest score.

Cooking. Place the cards face down and then use a spatula to flip them over. Tell each other what to turn over before they burn or which ones to put onto a plate.

Stamping. Using a bingo dabber or ink stamp, say the word each time you stamp it. Roll a die to see how many times to stamp. Try stamping until the picture is completely covered. If the cards are laminated, you may be able to wipe them clean.

Cards in a Bag. Put some cards in a cloth or paper bag. Have them say the cards as they pull them out. Try adding a card that says "Kapow" or another fun word. When this card is pulled out, they have to put all of the cards back in the bag. See how many cards you can pull out.

Feed the _____. Find a picture of an animal or funny face – cookie monster is a favorite. Print it out large enough so that you can glue it to a small box. Cut a slit for the

Sound Cues Used with Words

Each practice word has images below the word that represent each sound in the word. These are the Sound Cues that I developed and use in my Ultimate Articulation program. I have found that representing each sound with an image to be very helpful. English is confusing. The sound cues help children learn what sounds make up the word and can be used to help children to say the correct sounds in the words. I often point to the images to help children to know which sound they need to go back and “fix”. They are also very helpful with early phonological (early reading and writing) skills.

There are two Sound Cues for R. The Race Car is for R that is usually at the start of words. The Angry Bird represents the R in Vowel R’s and in R blends. The Sound Cues are a good way to help children know the difference between these two Rs and to know when each sound is being used.

	B as in “Boy”		P as in “Pop”		C/K as in “Can”
	G as in “Go”		T as in “Top”		D as in “Drum”
	F as in “Fun”		V as in “Van”		H as in “Happy”
	J as in “Jam”		L as in Laugh		M as in “Mom”
	N as in “No”		Qw as in “Queen”		R as in “Run”
	IR as in “Bird”		S as in “See”		Z as in “Zoo”
	W as in “We”		Y as in “Yes”		Ch as in “Chip”
	Sh as in “Shoe”		Zh as in “Treasure”		Th as in “Think”
	Th as in “There”		Ng as in “Ing”		Short A as in “Cat”
	Short E as in “Pet”		Short I as in “It”		Short O as in “Off”
	Short U as in “Up”		u as in “Book”		Long A as in “Ape”



Long E as in "Eat"



Long I as in "Pie"



Long O as in "Toe"



Long U "Oops"



Oi as in "Oil"



Ow as in "Cow"



Ew as in "Few"

The Sound Cues are underneath all of the practice words. I used General American Pronunciation for each word. If you pronounce the words differently, either ignore the sound cues or change them to what works for you.

Further information on how to use the Sound Cues, labels, how to stimulate each sound and the hand gestures that go with each, is included in my Ultimate Articulation Program which can be downloaded for free on my website: www.Speech-TherapyAtHome.com.

You of course do not need to use the sound cues to teach R's but I have found that they can be very useful. I hope you find these sound cues helpful. Let me know if you have any questions.

Practice Images

This program contains 398 practice images for R plus 28 sets of minimal pair images that contrast W and R.

Most of the practice words are very common functional words such Run, Air and Bread. Some though are much less common and there are a few words that are made-up. These less common and made-up words can be very helpful to establish R patterns and to break bad habits. They also provide variety to the practice words. Please let me know if you have any questions.

List of Practice Words:

R at the Start of Words – C and CV

RRRR	Ru	Roux
Ra	Ray	Roy
Re	Ree	Row
Ri	Rye	Rou
Raw	Row	

R with at the Start of CVC Words

Razz	Wrap	Rat
Wrath	Rash	Rack
Ram	Rad	

R with at the Start of Words: CVC

Reb	Rev	Retch
Reg	Ref	Red
Wreck	Rep	

R with at the Start of Words: CVC

Rick	Rich	Rig
Rip	Riff	Rib
Rid	Ridge	

R with at the Start of Words: CVC

Rob	Rot	Ron
Ross	Rock	Wrong
Raj	Rod	

R with at the Start of Words: CVC

Run	Ruck	Rut
Rug	Rush	Rung
Rub	Rough	

R with at the Start of Words: CVC

Rake	Raid	Rail
Rave	Rate	Rain
Rage	Race	

R with at the Start of Words: CVC

Reach	Real	Reef
Reap	Reese	Reek
Read	Ream	

R with  at the Start of Words: CVC

Rhyme	Right	Rile
Rise	Ride	Rice
Rife	Ripe	

R with  at the Start of Words: CVC

Rose	Roll	Wrote
Rope	Rogue	Robe
Roach	Rode	

R with  at the Start of Words: CVC

Room	Roof	Rude
Rouge	Ruse	Root
Rule	Ruth	

R with  /  /  at the Start of Words: CVC

Royal	Roit	Routh
Royne	Rouse	Rook
Royce	Route	

R at the Start of Words: Other Word Shapes & Longer Words

Raged	Roped	Raise It
Razzle	Roast	Robin
Rest	Ribbit	Robot
Rent	Ribbon	Rex's
Risk	Reuse	Redwood
Rift	Rushing	Rudolph
Rocks	Rainbow	Ruthless
Roused	Reading	Rumkin
Wronged	Rabbit	Racoons
Rubbed	Relief	Raisins
Rails	Railway	Rainy Day
Raced	Rodent	Revolved
Rival	Remote	
Rides	Rumba	

AIR as in "Fair"

Air	Where	Careful
Dare	Bear	Bear Hug
Chair	Carry	Airplane
Fair	Be There	Aquarium
Share	Carrot	
There	Sheriff	

AR as in "Car"

Ar	Ark	Art
----	-----	-----

Par
Tar
Bar
Car
Jar

Charge
Large
Hard
Start
Smart

Garbage
Sparkle
Armadillo

EAR as in “Hear”

Ear
Year
Cheer
Deer
Fear
Gear

Hear
Pier
Mirror
Clear
Smear
Beard

Steer
Spear
Hero
Cereal

IRE as in “Fire”

Ire
Iron
Choir
Dire
Fire
Higher

Tire
Buyer
Tired
Tires
Diary
Pliers

Umpire
Vampire
Campfire
Fire Engine

OR as in “Four”

Oar
Bore
Chore
Core
Door
More

Four
Soar
Orange
Short
Fork
Cord

Horse
Outdoor
Explore
Popcorn

OOR as in “Poor”

Oor
Chewer
Doer
Lure
Moor
Newer

Sewer
Poor
Tour
Spoor
Dhoora
Hooray

Coorie
Detour
Tandoor
Tourism

OIR as in “Lawyer”

Oiyer
Coyer
Foyer
Lawyer
Boyer
Sawyer

Toyer
Annoyer
Cloyer
Lawyers
Moires
Enjoyer

Convoyer
Employer
Deployer
Destroyer

EWR as in “Fewer”

Ewer	Spewer	Renewer
Hewer	Skewer	Previewer
Newer	Mewers	Interviewer
Viewer	Viewers	Previewers
Fewer	Hewers	
Mewer	Skewers	

OWR as in “Power”

Our	Tower	Flowers
Bauer	Flower	Empower
Cower	Glower	Sunflower
Power	Scour	Sunflowers
Sour	Powers	
Shower	Coward	

BR Blends as in “Break”

Brr	Break	Robber
Bert	Bribe	Dauber
Burp	Brown	Zebra
Brew	Brat	Brother
Bird	Burst	
Bro	Burned	

DR Blends as in “Draw”

Draw	Dress	Dribble
Dry	Drum	Odor
Drive	Dirty	Ladder
Drag	Droid	Spider
Dredge	Drip	
Dream	Drop	

FR Blends as in “Free”

Fur	Fries	Wafer
Free	Fridge	Fruit
Fry	Frizz	Gopher
Frog	From	Roofer
Freeze	Friend	
Fresh	Frosty	

GR Blends as in “Grey”

Gr	Grass	Grandma
Grow	Growl	Grasshopper
Gray	Grin	Ogre
Girl	Grapes	Booger
Green	Grandpa	Sugar

Hamburger

KR Blends as in “Cry”

Curr
Cry
Crow
Crew
Crab
Crate

Crook
Crush
Crutches
Cricket
Baker
Soccer

Secret
Across
Marker
Cracker

PR Blends as in “Pro”

Pro
Pray
Pry
Purse
Proof
Prize

Prick
Prune
Pretty
Private
Pepper
Zipper

Yapper
Keeper
Rainproof
Pepperoni

TR Blends as in “Try”

Tree
Troy
True
Try
Turf
Trike

Truck
Trick
Treasure
Triumphed
Later
Shooter

Alligator
Peanut Butter
Watermelon
Tractor

Minimal Pairs: W-R

Wig - Rig
Wok – Rock
Wayne – Rain
Witch – Rich
Weigh – Ray
Wound – Round
Wed – Red
West – Rest
Wipe – Ripe
Weed – Read
Wide – Ride
Wing – Ring
One – Run
Wag – Rag
Wake – Rake
Wink – Rink

Wind – Rind
Wheel – Real
What – Rut
Wait – Rate
Whoa – Row
Whip – Rip
White – Right
Whale – Rail
Why – Rye
Went – Rent
Wage – Rage
Wise – Rise

Practice Words:

Following are the images for all of the practice words. Please let me know if you have any questions or suggestions for additional words.

R at the Start of Words – C and CV



RRRR



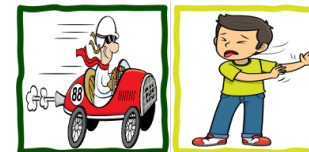
Ra



Re



Ri



Raw



Ru



Ray



Ree



R with  at the Start of Words: CVC



Rick



Rip



Rid



Rich



Riff



Ridge



Rig



Rib



R at the Start of Other Word Shapes & Longer Words



Raged



Razzle



Rest



Rent



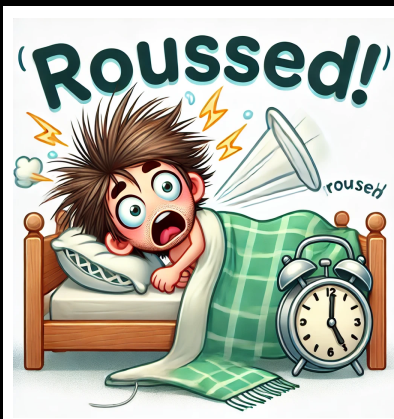
Risk



Rift



Rocks



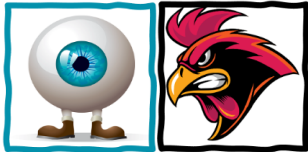
Roused



IRE as in "Fire"



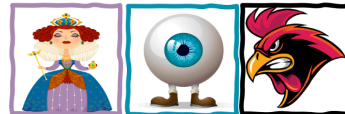
Ire



Iron



Choir



Dire



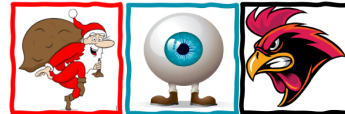
Fire



Higher



Tire



Buyer



BR Blends as in "Break"



Brr



Bert



Burp



Brew



Bird



Bro



Break



Bribe



Minimal Pairs: W-R



Wig



Rig



Wok



Rock



Wayne



Rain



Witch



Rich

