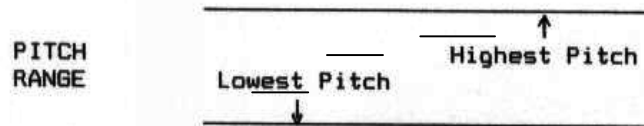


## PITCH

Degree of highness or lowness of the voice caused by variation in the rate of vibration of the vocal cords.

## PITCH RANGE

The scale of pitch between its lowest and highest levels.



## INTONATION

The variations or changes which take place in the pitch of the voice in connected speech.

## TONE GROUP (OR TONE UNIT)

The sentence or part of a sentence over which a particular pitch pattern extends.

## **TONIC SYLLABLE (OR NUCLEUS)**

The syllable that stands out within a tone group because it carries the major pitch prominence (tonic stress or primary sentence stress).

## **UNIT OF INFORMATION OR THOUGHT GROUP**

Important points of information or interest in speech (Semantically speaking).

## **PAUSES (||)**

Periods of silence that separate tone groups.

## **TONE**

The overall behavior of pitch, i.e., the different changes or movements the pitch can show in a syllable. The different tones make the voice go upwards and downwards in a tone group.

## **TYPES OF TONES**

a) **THE LEVEL (OR NEUTRAL) TONE** [ \_ ]: It shows no pitch movement, i.e., neither upwards nor downwards. This tone conveys a feeling of saying something routine, uninteresting or boring, as when calling the roll, asking and answering questions of an application, etc.

b) **THE FALLING TONE** [˩]: It makes the voice descend from a higher to a lower pitch on the tonic syllable. This tone gives the impression of ‘finality’ or ‘completeness’. It commonly falls on the tonic syllable of statements, information questions, commands and confirmatory question tags.

c) **THE RISING TONE** [˩]: It is the movement of the voice from a lower pitch to a higher one on the tonic syllable. This tone conveys an impression of ‘incompleteness’, i.e., that something more is to follow; or invites the speaker to continue talking. It is typically used on the tonic syllable of yes/no questions.

d) **THE FALL-RISE TONE** [˩˥]: It makes the voice descend and then rise again on the tonic syllable. It conveys an impression of ‘limited agreement’ or ‘response with reservations’ (i.e., one which requires an explanation), or ‘hesitation’. It is widely used when calling someone’s name out and with adverbials at the beginning of a sentence.

e) The **RISE-FALL TONE** [˥˩]: It causes the pitch of the voice to rise and then descend again on the tonic syllable. It conveys rather strong feelings of approval, disapproval, emotion, shock or surprise.

## INTONATION PATTERN

The different tones that can occur within a single tone group.

### BASIC INTONATION PATTERNS

a) **THE RISING-FALLING INTONATION PATTERN**: Before the tonic syllable, our voice goes slightly upwards on stressed syllables, or it will remain somewhat level on unstressed syllables. When we get to the tonic syllable, our voice goes up and then descends progressively after the tonic syllable till the end of the tone group. In English, the rising-falling intonation pattern communicates an impression of completeness of thought. It is often used with statements, commands, information questions and confirmatory question tags.

b) **THE RISING INTONATION PATTERN**: Before the tonic syllable, our voice will go slightly upwards on stressed syllables, or it will remain somewhat level on unstressed syllables. When we get to the tonic syllable, our voice goes up and continues rising slightly till the end of the tone group. In English, the rising intonation pattern communicates an impression of incompleteness of thought or leaves an utterance open and inconclusive. It is normally used with yes/no questions and question tags (that are real questions).

## OTHER USES OF THE RISING-FALLING INTONATION PATTERN

a) When the clauses are separated by a long pause, indicated in writing by colon (:) or a semicolon (;), we use rising-falling intonation in both clauses. E.g., *I'll tell you the truth: it can't be done. They shouldn't go there alone; it's dangerous.*

b) We pronounce the subordinate clause of a complex sentence with rising intonation and the main (or independent) clause with rising-falling intonation. E.g., *When I came in, she greeted me warmly. When I come back, I'll bring you a present.*

c) Alternatively, our voice can go slightly upwards on the tonic syllable of the first tone group(s) of a compound sentence or a complex sentence, in order to suggest that what is connected with what has just been said. The final tone group is pronounced using rising-falling intonation. E.g., *You say it's easy, but you won't try it. He drank, he stole; he was soon despised.*

d) When tone groups (whether words, phrases or sentences) are parts of series or alternatives, the tone group which begins with AND, OR, or NOR is pronounced with rising-falling intonation; all the other tone groups before it are usually pronounced with rising intonation. This combination of intonation patterns is often used when counting or listing things. It is also used when yes/no questions have or to show alternatives. E.g., *I saw Charles, Harry and Robert. It's neither a plane, nor a car. I'll call John, Paul or Peter.*

e) We pronounce forms of direct address or vocatives (i.e., single nouns or short noun phrases -usually names or titles plus names- which denote the persons to whom we speak directly) in different ways. If the vocative is a one-syllable call, its tonic syllable is pronounced on a fall-rise tone. If the call interrupts the sentence, its tonic syllable is pronounced on a rise-fall tone. If the vocative is a phrase, rising intonation is used. E.g., *John, dinner's ready! And that, my friends, is the truth. Are you hungry, John?*