Listening: names, numbers and introductions

English A1

What this topic teaches

Listening at A1 is not speed; it is **catching the parts** . In a first meeting, you only need three things: the name, the number, and who is who. This topic trains your ear on exactly those.

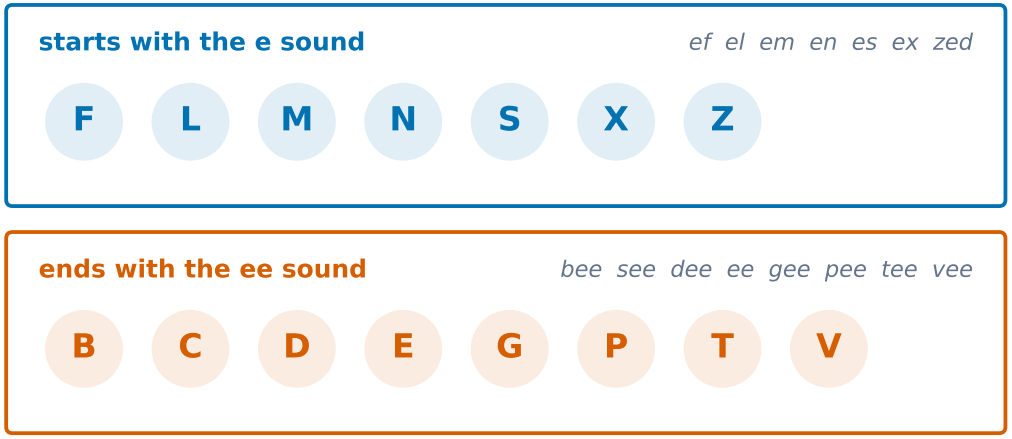
- Names sound different every time; the letters inside them do not.
- Numbers hide inside phone numbers, ages and room numbers.
- Memory hook: listen like a **checklist** : name, number, who.

Names: catch the letters

When you miss a name, English speakers spell it. Learn the letter sounds that Chinese ears mix up, and you catch names you have never heard.

The trap: many letters share one sound, so you cannot guess a letter from its sound alone. The fix is the question *Can you spell that, please?* Say it early; say it often.

- The e letters: F, L, M, N, S, X and Z (they all share the e sound: *ef, el, em, en, es, ex, zed*).
- The ee letters: B, C, D, E, G, P, T, V (they all end with the ee sound). American English says *zee*, which joins this group.
- The ay letters: A, H (*aitch*), J, K. *J* and *G* are a classic swap: *J* rhymes with *day*, *G* with *see*.
- Two names, same letters: *Gao* is G-A-O; *Dao* is D-A-O. One letter changes everything.



Letters in one family sound alike, so ask Can you spell that, please?

A first try

Listen (or read aloud with a partner) and catch the letters.

- My name is Lin, L-I-N.
- Her name is Beth, B-E-T-H.
- Can you spell that, please? Yes: X-I-A-O.

Numbers: they come in strings

Phone numbers come in **strings** , and English speakers say *oh* for 0 and *double* for repeated digits.

- 5078 6609: say *five, oh, seven, eight, double six, oh, nine.*
- Ages are single numbers: *I am thirteen.*
- Room numbers: *Room 4B* – a number and a letter travel together.

Listen and write

- The meeting is in Room 302.
- His number is 8 double 2, 401.
- She is 15. Her brother is 19.

Who is who: the introduction frame

First meetings follow a **frame** . Catch the frame and you can relax between the parts.

Part	You hear	You can answer
greeting	Hello. Hi.	Hello!
name	What is your name? I am...	I am... / My name is...
number	How old are you?	I am...
close	Nice to meet you.	Nice to meet you too.

- The frame repeats, so your ears can rest between the key parts.
- If you miss a part, ask: *Sorry, can you say that again?*

Watch out: traps for Chinese speakers

- English names stress one syllable: *MEI-mei* is easy, but *JENNifer* is not *jen-niFER*. Catch the loud part.
- *thirteen* and *thirty*: teen is long and loud; ty is short. *thirTEEN* (13) vs *THIRty* (30).
- Do not translate while listening. Catch first, understand later.

Say it aloud

- A: What is your name? B: Xiao, X-I-A-O.
- A: Your number? B: 5 double 7, 0-9-2.
- A: Nice to meet you, Xiao. B: Nice to meet you too.

Check yourself

Answer first, then read the explanation.

1. Name letters: which two groups share the *ee* and *e* sounds? – ***ee***: **B, C, D, E, G, P, T, V**. ***e***: **F, L, M, N, S, X, Z** (*zed*).
2. Numbers: how do you say 6609? – ***double six, oh, nine.***
3. The frame: name the four parts of a first meeting. – **Greeting, name, number (age), close.**
4. Traps: what is the difference between *thirteen* and *thirty*? – ***thirTEEN*** (13) has a long, loud end; ***THIRty*** (30) is loud at the start, with a short *-ty*.

■ Practice: listen and write

Teacher-read: your teacher reads each line twice. Write the name or number.

1. *"Hi, I'm Dan. That's D-A-N."* 6. *"My phone number is 0 double 8, 5 3 1 7."* 7. *"I'm fourteen, and my sister is forty."* 8. *"Our class is in Room 2C."* 9. *"Her name is Fei. F-E-I."*

Answers. 5 **Dan** – D (an *ee* letter), not T. 6 **088 5317.** 7 **14 and 40** – *fourTEEN*, then *FORty*. 8 **2C.** 9 **Fei** – F is an *e* letter: *ef*.

■ Practice: complete the form

Teacher-read: your teacher reads the conversation twice. Fill in the club form.

A: Hello, welcome to the chess club. What's your name?
B: Jake Hu. That's J-A-K-E, and Hu is H-U.
A: And how old are you, Jake?
B: I'm thirteen.
A: What's your phone number?
B: It's 7 double 4, 0 2 6 9.
A: Great. We meet in Room 5G on Fridays.

Club form	
First name	10 _____
Family name	11 _____
Age	12 _____
Phone	13 _____
Room	14 _____

Answers. 10 **Jake** – *J* is an *ay* letter, not *G*. 11 **Hu** – *H* is *aitch*. 12 **13** – *thirTEEN*, a long, loud end. 13 **744 0269** – *double 4* means 44. 14 **5G** – *G* rhymes with *see*.