

Slide Out/Easing Out/Pull Out

What is it?

Releasing tension in your speech *during* a moment of stuttering, then easing into the rest of the word or phrase

When can I use it?

During a moment of stuttering or whenever you feel tension in your speech



Walk me through it

When you “catch” a moment of stuttering,

- Identify where the tension is in your speech muscles
- Reduce the physical tension a little bit at a time
- Continue speaking to say the word and move on into the rest of the phrase

What’s in it for me?

Helps you reduce physical tension so you can speak more easily

Increases the feeling that *you* (and not your stuttering) are in control of your speech

Decreases avoidance of stuttering (no “hiding out”)

Gives you a choice about how you stutter (tense vs. easy)

Helps you change “involuntary stuttering” (not under your control) into “voluntary” (under your control) speaking

Keeps your speech moving forward

What else do I need to know?

You can practice this technique when you practice “catching” stuttering moments.

You can also practice this technique using pseudo-stuttering (fake stuttering) to help you gain a feeling of control over your speech. Then, as your feeling of control increases, you can try it in longer sentences or with higher levels of tension.

As you get better at monitoring your speech, it will get easier to catch moments of stuttering, figure out where the tension is, and reduce it so you can keep speaking.

Remember – your goal is to take control of the tension so you can keep speaking smoothly. You don’t want to just “push through” the moments of stuttering without changing the tension because pushing through makes more speech tension. Slide outs help you get more control as well as decreasing the tension in your speech muscles.

Cancellation

What is it?

Taking control of tension in your speech *after* you stutter

When can I use it?

After you feel tension in your speech muscles or after you stutter on a word



Walk me through it

After you stutter on a word,

- *Pause* long enough to figure out where the tension is
- *Release the tension* in your speech muscles
- *Start the word again* with an easy start or an easier stutter

You can start by practicing this in short conversations, then gradually move toward using cancellation in more challenging situations.

What's in it for me?

Helps you learn to recognize moments of stuttering more quickly so you can make changes in your speech

Gives you the opportunity to take control of your speech

Decreases avoidance of stuttering

Increases your confidence that you can manage the tension in your speech and make talking easier!

What else do I need to know?

Sometimes when you're stuck, just getting the word out feels good. The problem is that this can reinforce tension or "tricks" you might have used to get the word out. Cancellation helps minimize the likelihood that you'll use tricks by giving you time to change your tension in more helpful ways.

Practicing cancellation when you're talking with other people is very important.

Cancellation can help stay in charge of your speech so stuttering doesn't "win."

If, when practicing cancellations, your stuttering "turns real" during your second try, stay with it—you can always repeat the cancellation again until you can say the word with less physical tension.

Remember – your goal is not just that the word be produced fluently the second time; the goal is to decrease the tension in your speech.

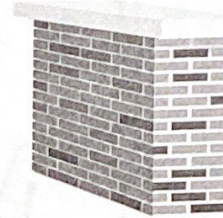
Block-Out (A Variation of Cancellation)

What is it?

Stopping a moment of stuttering, relaxing the speech muscles, then saying the stuttered word again with less tension

When can I use it?

During a moment of stuttering, or whenever you feel tension in your speech



Walk me through it

When you "catch" a moment of stuttering:

- Stop speaking, right in the moment
- Pause long enough to analyze where the tension is
- Release the tension by relaxing speech muscles
- Start the word again with an easy start or an easier stutter

You can use block-outs as a variation of cancellation or even pull out or easing out.

What's in it for me?

Helps you learn to recognize moments of stuttering more quickly so you can make changes in your speech

Gives you the opportunity to reduce physical tension and decreases the feeling of being "out of control"

Reduces the tendency to "push through" a moment of stuttering

Decreases the avoidance of stuttering

Increases your confidence that you can manage the tension in your speech to make talking easier!

What else do I need to know?

Block-outs are not the same as "just stopping and starting over." The most important thing is for you to reduce your tension on purpose and *take control* of your speech.

Block-out helps you *do something different* (by not pushing harder) with your speech machine during moments of stuttering.

If, when practicing block-outs, your stuttering "turns real" during the second attempt, stay with it – you can always repeat the block-out again until you can say the word with less physical tension

Remember – your goal is to reduce the tension in your speech, not just to say the word again fluently.

Voluntary Stuttering

*Not going to work on
Not appropriate Now*

What is it?

Producing fake moments of stuttering *on purpose* so they're under your control

When can I use it?

Whenever you feel like you want to reduce tension in your speech or when you want to let your stuttering out, when it's under *your* control



Walk me through it

Use a short, easy repetition ("bounce") or stretch ("slide") while you are talking.

You can try different types of voluntary stutters (longer/shorter, harder/easier) until you find the balance that's right for you.

What's in it for me?

Helps you decrease your discomfort with stuttering

Reduces the physical tension that occurs during "real" moments of stuttering

Helps to reduce the feeling that you want to avoid stuttering

Helps you make sure stuttering won't ever stand in the way of what you want to say

Helps you be more open about the fact that you stutter so you'll always be able to say what you want to say, regardless of whether or not you stutter

What else do I need to know?

Using voluntary stuttering may be hard at first, but the more you do it, the easier it will get.

To help yourself get better at voluntary stuttering, first start out in easy situations, then gradually move toward harder and harder situations as you get more comfortable with your speech and your stuttering.

Voluntary stuttering will help you gain more comfort with your speech and your stuttering, and this will help you say what you want to say without worrying about your speech!

Remember – you can use voluntary stuttering to help you reduce tension in your speech and to help you prevent the really big stutters from happening as often. It's not something you need to do all the time. Use it whenever it will help you!

Easy Starts (Easy Beginning, Easy Onset) — "sleepy talk" "yawn"

What is it?

Starting out speaking with less physical tension in your speech muscles so you can speak more easily

When can I use it?

Any time you want to reduce tension in your speech, you can start a phrase or sentence "a little easier"



Walk me through it

When using Easy Starts:

- Slightly reduce your rate of speech and reduce the physical tension in your speech muscles when you begin words or sentences
- Gradually move into the rest of the sentence using your regular speech

Note that you can use easy starts as often as you need as you manage your speech.

What's in it for me?

Decreases physical tension in your speech muscles

Increase your sense of control over speech tension when you are starting to speak

Helps you decrease the pace of your communication to help you speak more easily

What else do I need to know?

"Easy starts are just a start!" Don't forget that there are many tools for helping you speak more easily.

Easy starts can help you talk more easily, but you need to practice them if you want to be able to use them.

Sometimes, even when you try to use an easy start, it may not work. Stay with it, reduce tension (like "easing out") and try to keep moving forward.

Of all the techniques you learn, easy starts may take the *most* practice. Be sure to practice your easy starts in lots of different situations.

Remember – easy starts won't make you "perfectly fluent;" they'll help you manage your speech so you can say what you want to say in an easier way.

Light Contact

"mama Bear Speech"

What is it?

Touching parts of the speech machine together softly with less physical tension so you can keep your speech moving

When can I use it?

When you are easing into words, or whenever you want to reduce tension in your speech



Walk me through it

Light contact involves using softer or lighter touches between the parts of the mouth used for producing speech (the articulators).

- You can use it on any sound, and at any point when you are talking.
- As you're producing a sound, simply touch the parts of your speech machine together with less tension.
- For example, if you are producing a "t" as in "touch," move your tongue up to lightly tap the top of your mouth behind your teeth rather than pushing hard against the roof of your mouth.

You can begin to practice light contacts in single, words, phrases, and sentences. Later, you will be able to use it in conversational speech.

What's in it for me?

Helps you decrease tension in your speech muscles

Increases your awareness of the difference between hard or tense speech movements and light or easy speech movements

Increases your ability to "monitor" or keep track of tension in your speech muscles so you can more successfully manage your speech

What else do I need to know?

Playing around with the feeling of tensed and relaxed muscles helps you identify the tension more easily and quickly.

Light contact takes a lot of practice. Be sure to give yourself enough time to learn it.

Some sounds are easier to use light contacts on and other sounds are more challenging. Remember to practice light contact on different sounds and words.

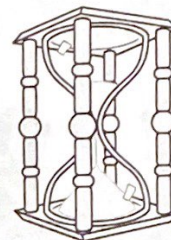
Remember – light contacts may not help you speak fluently all the time, but they can help you reduce tension in your speech muscles.

What is it?

Allowing short pauses in your speech at natural points within the conversation (e.g., between phrases, between speakers)

When can I use it?

Whenever you want to **reduce how fast the conversation is going** so you have more time to think about what you want to say, or to prepare to use speech tools.

**Walk me through it**

Phrasing simply means saying words that group together naturally; *pausing* means leaving a little bit of time between those phrases. When using pausing and phrasing:

- Speak as you normally would (though you can combine this technique with easy starts or light contacts to reduce tension as well).
- When you come to the end of a phrase (a group of words that goes together), use a *short* pause – as long as you need, but not too long – then continue to the next phrase.

During your pause, you can prepare to use an easy start or light contact to help you reduce tension in your speech muscles before you continue speaking.

What's in it for me?

Helps to decrease the overall pace of the conversation

Helps you reduce time pressure you might be feeling to talk more quickly

Gives you control over the conversation

Gives you the chance to reduce tension in your speech muscles

What else do I need to know?

At first, the pause time may feel uncomfortable. Give yourself some time to become comfortable with it.

Start out by practicing in situations that have very little time pressure (e.g., during practice exercises). Then gradually practice in situations with more and more pressure.

The more time pressure there is in a conversation, the more useful pausing and phrasing will be for you.

Remember – pausing and phrasing can be used with other tools. Try combining the pause with easy starts or light contacts to help you speak with less tension.

Turn Taking

What is it?

Giving everyone a chance to talk without interruptions

When can I use it?

Any time you're speaking! Good turn taking gives each person in a conversation the feeling that they have the time they need to think about what they want to say and to contribute their ideas to a discussion.



Walk me through it

When we have a conversation with somebody, we speak in "turns" — first one person has a turn to talk, then the other person has a turn to talk.

To use good turn-taking skills, simply wait your turn to talk. When somebody else is talking, give him the chance to finish what he wants to say.

Then, when it's your turn, know that you get to "hold the floor" until you're finished.

What's in it for me?

Reduces time pressures that can come from being interrupted — or from trying to interrupt other people

Makes it easier to use pausing and phrasing strategies

Gives you time to manage your speech by reducing tension or using other tools.

What else do I need to know?

Many people don't have great turn-taking skills. People interrupt each other all the time. You can't necessarily make other people wait their turn, but you can tell them that it helps you to communicate more easily when you get to take your own time for talking.

Sometimes, you'll need to use good turn-taking skills even if other people around you aren't. Stay with it, and it will help you reduce the time pressures you feel.

Remember — turn taking takes practice, especially when other people around you are "jumping in" and interrupting each other. You can let other people know that good turn taking makes it easier for you to communicate.

Handling Time Pressure

What is it?

Being in control of your time for talking by pausing before answering a question or making a comment

When can I use it?

Any time you feel time pressure to speak more quickly than you are ready to

Walk me through it

Remember that speakers talk in turns. When it is your turn to speak, you can handle the time pressures you might feel to start talking before you are ready by using a short pause at the beginning of your turn.

You can also handle time pressure during the middle of your turn by pausing or slowing your speaking rate whenever you need to.

You can also use the pauses to help you focus on managing your speech more easily or on just giving yourself the time you need to say what you want to say.

What's in it for me?

Reduces the overall pace of the conversation

Gives you more time to plan what you want to say

Makes it easier to use techniques to reduce tension in your speech muscles

Helps to reduce anxiety about speaking

What else do I need to know?

Handling time pressure is a technique that can be used in combination with all of your other techniques. Actually, handling time pressure gives you the "space" you need to use pausing and phrasing, easy starts, light contacts, or any other techniques you want to use.

At first, you may have trouble handling time pressure in tough situations so start out slowly with easy situations first. Gradually work your way up to harder and harder situations.

Remember – handling time pressure is a tool that helps you use all of your techniques more effectively. It takes time to learn how, but it will pay off!