



Phonological Processes

Phonological processes are patterns of sound errors that typically developing children use to simplify their speech as they are learning to talk. When a phonological process persists beyond the typical age at which it should have resolved, a child is said to have a phonological disorder or delay.

Phonological Process	Example	Age at which process is typically gone
Backing: A front/alveolar sound is substituted with a back/velar sound	toy → koy door → goor	Usually seen in more severe phonological delays
Initial consonant deletion: A consonant at the start of a word is deleted	cup → up more → ore	
Pre-vocalic voicing: A voiceless sound before a vowel is substituted with a voiced sound	cat → gat	3 years
Word final devoicing: A voiced consonant at the end of the word is substituted with a voiceless consonant	bed → bet	
Final consonant deletion: A consonant at the end of a word is deleted	cat → ca	
Stopping of /f/ and /s/: The fricative sounds /f/ and /s/ are substituted with a stop sound	fish → bish sock → dock	
Reduplication: A complete or incomplete syllable is repeated	water → wawa	
Fronting: A back/velar sound is substituted with a front/velar sound	car → tar girl → dirl	3 years 6 months
Stopping of /v/ and /z/: The fricative sounds /v/ and /z/ are substituted with a stop sound	vacuum → bacuum zip → dip	
Assimilation: A consonant sound starts to sound like another sound in the word	bus → bub kitty cat → titty tat	3 years 9 months
Weak syllable deletion: Deletion of a weak/unstressed syllable from a word	elephant → efant banana → nana	4 years
Consonant cluster reduction: A consonant sound is deleted from a consonant cluster	spoon → poon train → tain	
Stopping of /sh/, /ch/ and /j/: The fricative sounds /sh/, /ch/ and /j/ are substituted with a stop sound	sheep → deep chair → tair jump → dump	4 years 6 months
Gliding of /l/ and /r/: The /r/ sound is substituted with a /w/ sound; The /l/ sound is substituted with a /w/ or /y/ sound	rabbit → wabbit lion → wion leaf → yeaf	5 years
Stopping of /th/: The fricative sound /th/ is substituted with a stop sound	thing → ting them → dem	
Labialisation: The /th/ sound is substituted with a /f/ sound	thumb → fum thank you → fank you	7 years