

Series 1 – No.6 Deserve

Audioscript

Welcome to **Words Alive**. The **Words Alive** series helps with the pronunciation of, and listening to, words and their examples in the Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary. **Words Alive** is written and recorded by Richard Cauldwell, and brought to you by Cambridge University Press.

Part 1 Today's Word

Today's word is 'deserve'. It is a two-syllable word: 'de'serve'. The dictionary tells us that it means 'to have earned or to be given something because of the way you have behaved or the qualities you have.'

Part 2 The Examples

There are four examples: as I say them, listen for the word 'deserve'. In three of the examples it will be easy to hear; in the other one it will be difficult.

Example 1

After all that hard work, you deserve a holiday.

Example 2

Chris deserves our special thanks for all his efforts

Example 3

I hope they get the punishment they deserve.

Example 4

They certainly deserved to win that match.

In which example was it most difficult for you to hear the word 'deserve'? I suspect it was example number 1: 'After all that hard work, you deserve a holiday'. In this example, 'deserve' is very short and quick and part of a two-word stretch 'deserve a' which is gabbled, 'deserva', 'deserva', 'deserva' - 'you deserve a holiday'. These words are gabbled because the words on either side of them are highlighted: 'YOU' and 'HOLIDAY' are stressed, and 'deserve a' becomes 'deserva'. It is very common in everyday speech that words are 'gabbled' like this (spoken very fast). In your own speech you may favour a slow careful and accurate style of pronunciation, and that is fine. However, when you have to listen to and understand real English, you need to be able to cope with and handle speech of all

speeds.

Part 3 Practice

Let's work with the second half of the first example at different speeds. Imagine first that you are saying this slowly - you are giving praise to someone. You are pleased with them, and they will be pleased to hear what you say. Let's use a rising tone, on the second syllable of 'deSERVE', and a high falling tone on the first syllable of 'HOLIDAY'. Pause slightly after 'deserve' so that 'a holiday' comes as a surprise.

Example 3A

// YOU deSERVE // a HOLIDAY //

Now say it in one speech unit, very rhythmically, with three stresses and a falling tone beginning on the first syllable of 'HOLIDAY'.

Example 3B

// YOU deSERVE a HOLIDAY //

Such rhythmic speech (three beats in a row) is relatively rare in everyday speech. More often we get two beats in a speech unit - so let's highlight 'you' and 'holiday'. In highlighting 'you' like this, we are making the person feel even more special: 'you and nobody else'. We will do this speech unit at three different speeds: 120, 200, and 300 words per minute.

Example 3C

C1 // YOU deserve a HOLIDAY // 120

C2 // YOU deserve a HOLIDAY // 200

C3 // YOU deserve a HOLIDAY // 300

The last version, at 300 words per minute, may seem too fast for you. But, as I say, these kinds of speeds are very common in natural speech.

Part 4 Pairwork

To end with, let's add a reply which makes an enthusiastic response:

Example 3D

A // YOU deserve a HOLIDAY //

B // oh THANKyou // will you PAY for it //