Welcome to Broken English, the quick fix for your pronunciation on Fluent American. My name is Geoff. Today, we’re looking at the /Ʊ/ sound. Please note that this can be very different from the way you may have learned it. Before we begin, some standard notes: to really study pronunciation, please repeat the sounds with me as you listen. I even suggest recording yourself so you can see how you sound, if you are able. Alright, let’s get started.

To make the /Ʊ/ sound, your mouth does not need to be very open. You want your lips to be more long and horizontal; try smiling when you say these words if you are having trouble. The front of your tongue is down. The key is the back of your tongue; it must be high, but does not come to the top of your mouth..

There several ways to write this sound.

Firstly, you use two *o*’s, as in “neighborhood”, “book”, or “good”.

“-ould” modal verbs also make this sound: “would”, “could”, “should”.

Lastly, the letter *u* also produces it: “pull”, “put”, “cushion”

Let’s say those words again: “neighborhood”, “book”, “good”, “would”, “could”, “should”, “pull”, “put”, “cushion”.

Now, let’s put them into word pairs:

good neighborhood/ look at the book/ should cook/ would have understood/ look for sugar/ pull the hook

Here are some practice sentences. Again, try to repeat and sound like me.

Look at the book my brother took.

The cook book says sugar would be good.

I pulled out a picture of the neighborhood from my childhood.

The cushion on the hook is full of wool.

Alright, that’s it for today! Again, record yourself. See if you can pronounce the words like me, and we’ll practice again next time. Thanks for listening!