Welcome to Broken English, the quick fix for your pronunciation. My name is Geoff. Today, we’re looking at consonant clusters. 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.

Consonant clusters in English are groups of consonants in which there are no vowels. Every consonant will be pronounced. Let’s start with some examples:

instantly twelfth splash through breakfast hopefully apartments parked texts

extra enthrall vodka strength cards recognition

The twelfth of the extra cards instantly splashed on the tables.

There are also some common patterns to watch out for.

1. Firstly, x + stressed vowel = /gz/ sound

 examination exemption existential example exact exude exam

 The exempt exam was exactly like the examples.

1. Next, x as a /ks/ sound

 extreme extra extract context expect

 next accept success accident

test/text aspect/expect lass/lax fast/fax

 I wasn’t successful but I expected to pass the extra difficult entrance exam.

1. Also, pay attention to t with the letter s.

 /ts/ sound

 it’s states what’s that’s lasts doubts

 his/hits biz/bits was/what’s days/dates bows/boats highs/heights

 What’s with your doubts these are the heights he hits?

1. As well as d with the letter s

/dz/ sound

feeds raids lends friends bids rounds

 fees/feeds rays/raids bans/bands bees/beads owes/odes

She feeds the cats and rides lawn mowers across the yards.

1. A last combinations that can be difficult are words that end with r+l or r+l+d:

 whir/whirl/world cur/curl/curled fur/unfurl/unfurled per/pearl/pearled

 The curly girl unfurled a whirlwind of pearls.

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!