

The Filler Swap

A person thinking in silence looks thoughtful. A person apologising for thinking looks unsure.

INSTEAD OF

TRY

~~"um / uh"~~

→ **a breath**

~~"sorry, I'm rambling"~~

→ **a pause, then "the point is..."**

~~"does this make sense?"~~

→ **"let me say that more simply."**

~~"I don't know if this is right, but..."~~

→ **just say the thing**

~~"kind of / sort of"~~

→ **delete; the sentence survives**

PRACTICE DRILL

Record one minute on anything. Every time you feel a filler coming, close your mouth for one second instead. That second feels enormous to you and completely natural to the listener.

Real rooms don't wait until you're ready. Pause instead of filling.

