SM Blend Word List

Hold a long /s/, then close the lips for /m/ while the voice switches on and the sound moves into the nose.



SOUND	TYPICAL AGE	TYPE
/sm/	By age 5-7	Voiceless Fricative + nasal cluster

PRACTICE TIP

Cue "keep the snake going, then close your lips" - the two sounds should feel like one long motion.

SM does not occur often in the middle or at the end of English words, so this page practices it at the beginning.

Initial Position (11 words)

The sound is at the beginning of the word.



All in the SM Blend picture cards.

1 Syllable

9 words

small	smell	smart	smudge	smirk
smile	smooth	smock	smear	

2 Syllables

2 words

smoothie	smelly

High-frequency initial words

Everyday words rather than picture-card words - which is why most lists leave them out. A child already says these hundreds of times a day, so they carry more carryover value than any noun above. Target them in conversation, not in drill.

smell, smile, smells, smelled, smiled, smelling

Generalization

Word lists get a sound into a child's mouth. Generalization is what gets it into their life. These are activities where the target words come up on their own, so nobody has to be talked into practicing.

Play-based ideas for young children

Smelling jars

Smell different things and react. Cinnamon, lemon, soap.

Words that come up: smell, smells, small, smile, smooth, again, more, yum, yuck, nice, what is it, my turn, sniff, guess

Smile faces

Draw smiley faces or make faces in a mirror.

Words that come up: smile, smiling, small, smell, smooth, again, more, big, funny, happy, look, my turn, draw, face

Small and big sorting

Sort toys into small and big piles.

Words that come up: small, smaller, smallest, big, smile, again, more, this, that, here, sort, put, look, done

Conversation and verbal games for older kids

Small talk

Practice small talk on a made-up topic.

Smart choices

Talk through a decision and what the smart move would be.