Z Sound Word List

Same tongue and teeth position as /s/, with the voice turned on. The buzz should be continuous, not choppy.



SOUND	TYPICAL AGE	TYPE
/z/	By age 4	Voiced Alveolar fricative

PRACTICE TIP

/z/ is the plural and possessive workhorse (dogs, keys, Mom's). Practicing it pays off in grammar as well as articulation.

Initial Position (17 words)

The sound is at the beginning of the word.


zoo

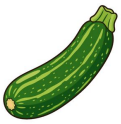

zip


zebra


zigzag


zipper


zip line


zucchini


xylophone

These and 3 more pictured words are in the Z Sound picture cards.

1 Syllable

5 words

zoo	zip	zoom	zone	zap

2 Syllables

5 words

zebra	zero	zigzag	zipper	zip line

3 Syllables

6 words

zucchini	zinnia	zipper pull
xylophone	zigzag line	zookeeper

4 Syllables

1 word

zucchini bread

Medial Position (64 words)

The sound is in the middle of the word.


scissors


lizard


puzzle


music


dizzy


desert


present


easel

These and 16 more pictured words are in the Z Sound picture cards.

2 Syllables

56 words

scissors	freezer	design	jazzy	visit
lizard	dozen	dessert	lazy	closing
puzzle	wizard	dissolve	noisy	cheesy
music	easy	drizzle	oozing	freezing
dizzy	buzzing	dozing	pleasant	teasing
desert	roses	fizzy	raising	daisies
present	cousin	frozen	reason	cheesecake
easel	breezy	fuzzy	rising	zigzag
busy	causing	gazing	rosy	
blizzard	chosen	grizzly	season	
closet	cozy	hazy	sizzle	
raisin	daisy	husband	thousand	

3 Syllables

8 words

museum	lizard tail	puzzle piece	bulldozer
amazing	magazine	visitor	raspberries

High-frequency medial 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.

exactly, easy, busy, using, closes, closing, supposes

Final Position (89 words)

The sound is at the end of the word.


nose


bees


shoes


cheese


rose


toes


keys


eyes

These and 40 more pictured words are in the Z Sound picture cards.

1 Syllable

73 words

nose	pies	days	knees	tease
bees	hose	doors	lose	these
shoes	jazz	ears	moves	those
cheese	trees	eggs	news	toys
rose	cars	fizz	ones	was
toes	noise	flies	pause	whose
keys	breeze	fries	paws	wise
eyes	as	fuzz	peas	zoos
prize	blaze	gloves	pose	buys
buzz	boys	graze	praise	pigs
maze	choose	has	raise	legs
size	clothes	haze	rise	bugs
please	clues	his	says	bears
sneeze	cows	hers	snooze	
freeze	cruise	is	stars	

2 Syllables

11 words

glasses	applause	scissors	fingers
sunrise	because	babies	flowers
surprise	daisies	cookies	

3 Syllables

5 words

exercise	sunglasses	raspberries	potatoes	bananas

High-frequency final 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.

is, was, his, because, please, these, those, things, always, does, says, kids, yours, seems, sometimes, lives, happens, others, suppose, feels, calls, loves, whose, gives, themselves, ourselves, upstairs, leaves, tells, plays

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

Zoo animals

Line up zoo animals and visit them one at a time. Make the buzzing bee land on each one.

Words that come up: zoo, zebra, buzz, bees, nose, eyes, toes, is, has, these, those, please, does, size

Zipper practice

Zip and unzip a coat, a bag and a pencil case. Race to see who can zip fastest.

Words that come up: zip, zipper, close, those, is, please, buzz, zoom, cheese, nose, was, his, hers, easy

Bubbles and buzzing

Buzz like a bee around the room, landing on things and naming them. Every landing is a /z/ word.

Words that come up: buzz, bees, zoom, nose, eyes, toes, knees, was, is, has, these, rose, cheese, sneeze

Conversation and verbal games for older kids

Plural challenge

Name ten things in a room, all in the plural. Nearly every plural ending is a /z/ - this is the single highest-value /z/ game.

Whose is it

Play a possession guessing game: whose shoes, whose keys, whose bag. Possessives are /z/ endings too.

Zoom in

Describe something starting far away and zooming closer, adding detail each time.