






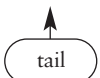
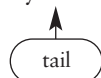
40

They taste great , *these biscuits*


Tails

- A**  In informal spoken English, *tails* are sometimes used at the end of a sentence to emphasise or make clearer what we have just said. We often use them when we give an evaluation of something:

It's a really good PHOto , THAT one . She's a JUDGE , my AUNT .

Tails consist of a noun or a noun phrase. They usually have a rising tone because they are referring to or expanding on something that has been said before (see Unit 39).

- B**  Some tails consist of *this*, *that*, *these* or *those* or a phrase beginning with one of these words. These tails usually emphasise what we are saying:



They're all we've got LEFT , THOSE two .



They taste GREAT , these BIScuits .



It's BEAUtiful , THIS part of the COUNtry .



It says here that they're going to put up a new town hall. INTEResting , THAT .

- C**  Other tails make clear who or what we are referring to:


He's a good COOK , NIGel . (= Nigel is a good cook)

She's really STRICT , the headTEAcher .

I can't STAND it , cigarETTE smoke . (= I can't stand cigarette smoke)

That's MY hat , the ONE you're WEARing .





- D**  Another type of tail, also with a rising tone, repeats the subject + verb in order to reinforce what we have just said. It is similar to a *tag* (see Unit 41), and is used mainly in very informal speech:

Important for listening


A: Maybe you could borrow the money from your brother?
 B: No, he's incredibly MEAN , HE is .

subject + verb

A: Do you know those people over there?
 B: Yeah, they LIVE near me , THEY do .

subject + verb

the subject in the tail is prominent and the verb non-prominent

- E**  Some other tails usually have a falling tone; for example, a tail added to a *wh*- question in order to clarify who or what the question refers to:

What time's it ON , this SHOW ?
 How OLD is she , your DAUGHter ?

Exercises

40.1 Match the sentence beginnings and the tails.

1	It's so boring, this cream.
2	I think it's gone off, those two shirts.
3	I took them myself, most of these photos.
4	That's my coat, my sister.
5	They're a bit unfriendly, tennis.
6	It's really annoying, that dripping tap.
7	They're quite similar, the one with the fur collar.
8	She was the first one in our family to go to university, our neighbours.



Now listen and check your answers. Then say the full sentences aloud, making sure you use a rising tone on the tail and a falling tone before it.

EXAMPLE It's so boring ↘, tennis ↗.

40.2 Do you think the tails in these sentences are likely to have a rising tone (put ↗ in the box) or a falling tone (↘)?

EXAMPLE They're all over the kitchen, those beetles. ↗

- Where's it being held, Friday's concert? ■
- What's it like, this cheese? ■
- It can be dangerous, skiing. ■
- It's made from Thai silk, Vicky's dress. ■
- When are they coming, Frank and Gill? ■
- How much did you pay for them, these tickets? ■
- It's not a great day for us to meet, Sunday. ■



Now listen and check your predictions. Then say the sentences aloud.

40.3 The speakers in this conversation actually used sentences with tails instead of the parts in green. Write down what you think they said and mark the likely intonation with arrows.

- A: **These things are fascinating.** *They're fascinating ↘, these things ↗.*
- B: Careful, **that knife's sharp.**
- A: Looks old, too.
- B: **Most of those things've been in my family for over a hundred years.**
- A: **That's amazing.**
- B: **My grandfather brought them back from Nepal.**
- A: **Nepal is somewhere I'd really like to go.**
- B: Me, too. But I'd have to go by plane, and **I hate flying.**



Now listen and check your answers.

Follow up: Imagine you are being shown around a house that is for sale. Using sentences with tails, think of five criticisms and five compliments you might make. For example: 'It's very small, the garden'; 'It's nicely decorated, the sitting room!'