Devoicing of Consonants

In Russian some consonants are voiced, and others are unvoiced.

**Voiced** consonants are those where vocal cords are used to produce them. **Unvoiced** consonants are those where the vocal cords are NOT used to produce them.

Most Russian consonants come in pairs:

**Voiced**
- Б
- В
- Г
- Д
- Ж
- З

**Unvoiced**
- П
- Ф
- К
- Т
- Ш
- С

Knowing these is important because there are 2 pronunciation rules connected with them:

1. If a word ends in a consonant, that consonant will always be pronounced as unvoiced (despite the spelling)

2. Within a word the pronunciation of a consonant cluster (a group of 2 or more consonants) depends on the nature of the last consonant in that cluster.

   2a. If a consonant cluster ends in an unvoiced consonant, all the consonants in that cluster will sound unvoiced. This is called devoicing.

   2b. If a consonant cluster ends in a voiced consonant, all the consonants in that cluster will sound voiced.

**PRONUNCIATION PRACTICE:**

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Rule № 1</th>
<th>Rule № 2a</th>
<th>Rule № 2b</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>город</td>
<td>повторите</td>
<td>экзамен</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>завод</td>
<td>водка</td>
<td>сделать</td>
</tr>
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<td>раз</td>
<td>автор</td>
<td>отзыв</td>
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<tr>
<td>Париж</td>
<td>губка</td>
<td>пробка</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>тетрадь</td>
<td>в театре</td>
<td>вокзал</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Павлов</td>
<td>блузка</td>
<td>в город</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>парад</td>
<td>в классе</td>
<td>к городу</td>
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</tbody>
</table>