

WORD STRESS

1. Syllables

The number of times that you hear the sound of a vowel (short, long, diphthong or triphthong) is the number of syllables in a word.

Which word has a different number of syllables from the others? Circle it.

- | | | | | |
|----|---------------|-----------|------------------|---------------|
| 1. | likes | wants | talks | washes |
| 2. | wanted | walked | saved | brushed |
| 3. | chicken | chocolate | afternoon | different |
| 4. | about | around | asleep | asked |
| 5. | school | texts | over | sports |
| 6. | build | rebuild | builder | building |
| 7. | snakes | sheep | foxes | cats |

2. General Patterns

Listen to the following words and underline the stressed syllable:

- | | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| A ugust | e e conomy | ba b oon |
| popu l ation | de v elop | bel ie ve |
| m orning | bec o me | de t erminate |
| f ifty | Br ittany | scien t ific |
| fif t een | de p end | s cientist |
| t ourist | Pa r isian | p eople |
| p layground | P aris | to re b el |
| econo m ics | Louisia n a | a re b el |

- Most **2-syllable nouns & adjectives** are stressed on the **first** syllable.
- Most **2-syllable verbs** are stressed on the **second** syllable.

Some basic principles:

- There must be at least one stressed syllable in **multisyllabic / poly-** words.
- As well as the **primary / main** stress in a word, one or more of the other syllables in the word can also have a **secondary** stress.
- The **secondary** stress is *generally* placed **before** the **primary** stress.
- A word **cannot** begin with two **unstressed** syllables. (There must be at least one **secondary** stress.)
- It is not possible to have two stressed syllables **beside / next to** each other.*
- Stressed syllables are indicated as follows:
 - Main or primary stress: / ' /
 - Secondary stress: / , /

***As always, there are, however, exceptions... See, for example, the British pronunciation of one of the words from exercise 2 p. 47.**