

Lesson Five: Stress in Simple Words

I) - Stress: is the power that we put on the syllable to make it *louder, longer, and stronger*.

A *stressed syllable* has a *prominent vowel* and is indeed produced with more muscle energy than an unstressed syllable, with the result that it sounds louder. Loudness, however, is not the only criterion i.e. a *stressed syllable* is made more prominent by the use of *pitch* rather than loudness. Pitch is the auditory property of a sound that enables the listener to place it on a scale going from high to low. It is the most important in distinguishing stressed from unstressed syllables.

If we compare the words transport in *means of transport* (noun) and *to transport goods* (verb) we can hear an important difference in pronunciation. In *means of transport*, the first syllable /træn/ gets the greater emphasis than the second /spɔ:t/, while in *to transport goods*, it's the second which gets the greater emphasis. This emphasis is called **stress**. Thus, we can say that in the noun TRANsport /^ˈtrænsɔ:t/ the first syllable is stressed, while in to transPORT /træn^ˈspɔ:t/, the second syllable is stressed.

E.g: potato /pə^ˈteɪtəʊ/ beautiful /^ˈbju:tɪfl/ teacher /^ˈti:tʃə/ continue /kən^ˈtɪnju:/

1- Two Syllabic Words: (verbs, nouns, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions)

- ✓ If the **second syllable** contains a **long vowel** or **diphthong** or ends with a **consonant cluster**, the **second syllable** is **stressed**.
- ✓ If the **second syllable** contains a **short vowel** or the **diphthong /əʊ/**, stress is on **the first syllable**.
 - **Verbs:** apply /ə^ˈplɑɪ/ attract /ə^ˈtrækt/ arrive /ə^ˈrɑɪv/ complete /kəm^ˈpli:t/
Receive /rɪ^ˈsi:v/ withdraw /wɪð^ˈdrɔ:/ correct /kə^ˈrekt/ assist /ə^ˈsɪst/
open /^ˈəʊpən/ enter /^ˈentə/ envy /^ˈenvɪ/ borrow /^ˈbɒrəʊ/ follow /^ˈfɒləʊ/
 - **Nouns:** balloon /bə^ˈlu:n/ finger /^ˈfɪŋgə/ money /^ˈmʌni/ estate /ɪ^ˈsteɪt/
 - **Adjectives:** correct /kə^ˈrekt/ alive /ə^ˈlaɪv/ lovely /^ˈlʌvli/ pretty /^ˈpri:tɪ/
 - **Adverbs:** hardly /^ˈhɑ:dlɪ/ outside /aʊt^ˈsɑɪd/ above /ə^ˈbʌv/ over /^ˈəʊvə/
 - **Prepositions:** among /ə^ˈmʌŋ/ beyond /bɪ^ˈjɔ:nd/ until /ən^ˈtɪl/ along /ə^ˈlɒŋ/

2- Three Syllabic Words: (verbs, nouns, adjectives)

- ✓ If the **third syllable** contains a **long vowel, diphthong**, or a **consonant cluster**, the **third syllable** is **stressed**.
- ✓ If the **third syllable** contains a **short vowel, diphthong /əʊ/** it is unstressed and the **second syllable** is **stressed**.
 - **Verbs:** entertain /entə`teɪn/ encounter /ɪn`kaʊntə/ resurrect /rezə`rekt/
Determine /dɪ`tɜ:mɪn/ encourage /ɪn`kʌrɪdʒ/ consider /kən`sɪdə/
 - **Nouns:** synopsis /sɪ`nɒpsɪs/ disaster /dɪ`zɑ:stə/
- ✓ If the **3rd syllable** contains a **short vowel** and the **2nd** contains a **short vowel** and do not end with a **consonant cluster**, both 2nd and 3rd syllables are unstressed, stress on the 1st syllable.
 - Emperor /`empərə/ parody /`pærədi/ insolent /`ɪnsələnt/
opportune /ɒpə`tju:n/ infamous /`ɪnfəməs/

II) - Function/Content Words:

Words are divided into two categories: **Function words** and **Content Words**. **Function words** are words that have very little meaning such as (prepositions, pronouns, determiners, auxiliary verbs, modal verbs, and conjunctions) almost the functional words are weakened (unstressed). **Content words** are words which carry the most meaning in sentences such as (verbs, nouns, adjectives, and adverbs), typically receive stress.

Function Words:

Prepositions: of, at, in, with, without, between, on, to, from etc.

Pronouns: she, they, it, anybody etc.

Determiners: a/an, the, that, these, my, his, more, much, either, neither etc.

Auxiliary Verbs: be (am, is, are), have/has, do, got.

Modal Verbs: can, could, must, may, might, will, should, need, ought to etc.

Particles: no, not, nor, as etc.

Content Words:

Full Verbs: search, grow, hold, have etc.

Nouns: John, room, answer etc.

Adverbs: really, completely, very, also, enough etc.

Adjectives: happy, new, large, grey etc.

Numerals: one, thousand, first etc.

Interjections: eh, ugh, phew etc.