

FOREIGN SYLLABLE STRESS PATTERNS

Many foreign words have been added to English over the years from many different languages, especially from French, Latin, and Greek. These words are often academic, technical, scientific, or medical. Although we have adopted these words into English we have developed our own stress system for pronouncing these words. The stress often depends on the ending of the word. If you change the ending, you might have to change the stress pattern. For example:



PHOtograph	photoGRAPHic	phoTOGraphy	phoTOGrapher
REal	reaLISTic	reALity	realiZation
VOLuntary	volunTEER	volunTARily	
NECessary	neCESSity	necesSARily	
eCONomy	ecoNOMics	ecoNOMical	
eLECTric	electRICity	electRONic	eLECTrical

The exercises on the next few pages will help you find some rules about stress patterns in foreign words. However, **learning rules will not change your pronunciation. Learn to listen and copy what you hear.** Make loud, clear stressed vowels and remember to listen for, and copy saying, the reduced vowel. Don't over pronounce this weak vowel. Usually the reduced vowel is just before or just after the stressed vowel (sometimes both).

Example: ability = a **BIL** ity

Reduced vowels are usually pronounced as [ə] but sometimes as [ɪ]

Example: women **[WIM ə n]** or **[WIM ɪ n]**

historic **[hɪs TOR ə c]** or **[hɪs TOR ɪ c]**

To keep things simple, all reduced vowels in this chapter are underlined [_] and pronounced [ə] (sounds like "uh").

Learning proper pronunciation means learning, not only individual sounds, but also the correct syllable stress. If the listener doesn't hear the stressed syllables, or the stress is on the wrong syllable, they may not hear or understand you.

CHANGING STRESS PATTERNS IN WORDS

Drill: Listen to the following words on the tape. Practice shifting the stress from one syllable in the first word to a different syllable in the second. Watch for the reduced sound of [ə]. Don't over pronounce it.



	ity
RE <u>a</u> l	re <u>a</u> l <u>i</u> ty
POSS <u>i</u> ble	poss <u>i</u> bl <u>i</u> ty
PROB <u>a</u> ble	prob <u>a</u> bl <u>i</u> ty
ST <u>a</u> ble	stab <u>i</u> l <u>i</u> ty
ACT <u>i</u> ve	act <u>i</u> vl <u>i</u> ty

	ation
TRAN <u>s</u> late	transl <u>a</u> ti <u>o</u> n
APP <u>r</u> eciate	appreci <u>a</u> ti <u>o</u> n
LEG <u>i</u> slate	legisl <u>a</u> ti <u>o</u> n
COMM <u>u</u> nicate	communi <u>c</u> ati <u>o</u> n
ED <u>u</u> cate	educati <u>o</u> n

	eer
ENG <u>i</u> ne	engin <u>e</u> er
PROF <u>i</u> t	profite <u>r</u>
AUC <u>t</u> ion	auction <u>e</u> er
MOUN <u>t</u> ain	mountain <u>e</u> er
RAC <u>k</u> et	racket <u>e</u> er

	ee
AB <u>s</u> ent	absent <u>e</u> e
EMP <u>l</u> oy	employ <u>e</u> e
TR <u>a</u> in	train <u>e</u> e
TR <u>u</u> st	trust <u>e</u> e
DRA <u>f</u> t	draft <u>e</u> e

	ial
CONF <u>i</u> dence	confid <u>i</u> ntial
PROVIN <u>c</u> e	provinci <u>a</u> l
INDUSTR <u>y</u>	industri <u>a</u> l
ED <u>i</u> tor	edit <u>i</u> orial
MEM <u>o</u> ry	mem <u>o</u> ri <u>a</u> l

	arily
NECESS <u>a</u> ry	necessari <u>a</u> ly
ORD <u>i</u> nary	ordinari <u>a</u> ly
TEMP <u>o</u> rary	temporari <u>a</u> ly
VOLUNT <u>a</u> ry	voluntari <u>a</u> ly

	ic
ENER <u>g</u> y	energet <u>i</u> c
ALCOH <u>o</u> l	alcohol <u>i</u> c
SYMB <u>o</u> l	symbol <u>i</u> c
ECON <u>o</u> my	econom <u>i</u> c
ATH <u>l</u> ete	athlet <u>i</u> c
DEMOCRAT	democrat <u>i</u> c

	ical
HIST <u>o</u> ry	histori <u>a</u> l
POL <u>i</u> tics	politi <u>a</u> l
ECON <u>o</u> my	econom <u>i</u> cal
HIST <u>o</u> ry	histori <u>a</u> l
GRAMMAR	grammat <u>i</u> cal
PSYCH <u>o</u> logy	psychol <u>o</u> gic <u>a</u> l

	ian
ITAL <u>y</u>	itali <u>a</u> n
MUS <u>i</u> c	musici <u>a</u> n
DIET	dietici <u>a</u> n
MAG <u>i</u> c	magici <u>a</u> n
ELEC <u>t</u> ric	electrici <u>a</u> n
CALG <u>a</u> ry	calgari <u>a</u> n

	ental
PARENT	parent <u>a</u> l
ACCIDENT	accident <u>a</u> l
DEVELOPMENT	developm <u>e</u> nt <u>a</u> l
GOVERNMENT	governm <u>e</u> nt <u>a</u> l
DEPARTMENT	departm <u>e</u> nt <u>a</u> l
INSTRUMENT	instrum <u>e</u> nt <u>a</u> l

Suggestion to the teacher: Have students close their books. Tell the students you will give them a word and they must change it to a word with a specific ending (i.e. "____ity" or "____ian").

Teacher: real	Student: reality
Teacher: possible	Student: possibility

FINDING FOREIGN SYLLABLE STRESS PATTERNS

The stress in the words in this exercise depends on the ending of the word. In each group you are to find words with a common ending. Notice the clues that are given. These will either be a word with a similar base (root) or they will be definitions. You don't need to know all the words in each group. Some vocabulary is difficult or technical. Just find enough words to be able to identify a common stress pattern. Is the stressed vowel:

- one syllable before the ending? _ ()logy psyCHOlogy
- two syllables before the ending? ()__tude ATtitude
- part of the ending? ____ () employEE

a. _____ity Example: able - ability

Change these root words: capable, active, advise, diverse, flexible, mature, stable, captive, product, probable, obese, rare, severe, possible.

b. _____ial What is the rule? Example: air - aerial

Change these root words: circumstance, confident, editor, face, judge, palace, prejudice, province, substance, matter, memory, initiate.

c. _____ional What is the rule? Example: add - additional

Change these root words: educate, except, intent, profess.

d. _____graph What is the rule? Example: a three dimensional picture - holograph

Use these definitions: to sign your name, a group of sentences, something that plays records, a picture from a camera, a lie detector test, something that records an earthquake.

e. _____eer What is the rule? Example: someone who works in an auction - auctioneer

Use these definitions: someone who drives a train, climbs mountains, the first people to come West, someone who makes excessive profits, a criminal involved in rackets (gambling, prostitution).

What is the rule?

ADVANCED VOCABULARY SYLLABLE STRESS PRACTICE

DRILL Close your eyes and listen to the tape. Try and copy exactly the stress pattern of each word. Even if you don't understand all of the words, you are learning to copy the music of English. Exaggerate the **STRESSED** vowel (louder and longer) and reduced the weak vowel. The stressed vowel will be in capital letters and the reduced vowel is underlined.



1. ____ity	2. ____ial	3. ____ional	4. ____ient ____iency ____ience	5. ____ic
act <u>IV</u> ity	mem <u>OR</u> ial	edu <u>CA</u> tional		ath <u>LE</u> Tic
ob <u>ES</u> ity	fac <u>IA</u> l	prof <u>ES</u> sional		ener <u>GE</u> Tic
cap <u>TIV</u> ity	in <u>IT</u> ial	ex <u>CE</u> ptional	con <u>VEN</u> ient	real <u>IS</u> Tic
stab <u>IL</u> ity	prov <u>IN</u> cial	int <u>EN</u> tional	eff <u>ICI</u> ency	opt <u>IM</u> istic
product <u>IV</u> ity	edit <u>OR</u> ial		Pat <u>IE</u> nce	pess <u>IM</u> istic
6. ____ible	7. ____ian	8. ____inal	9. ____ical	10. ____logy
<u>SEN</u> sible	opt <u>IC</u> ian	med <u>IC</u> inal	<u>LOG</u> ical	psy <u>CH</u> ology
cor <u>RUP</u> tible	diet <u>IC</u> ian	<u>CRIM</u> inal	<u>TECH</u> nical	geo <u>LO</u> gy
irres <u>IS</u> tible	phys <u>IC</u> ian	abd <u>OM</u> inal	<u>ELEC</u> trical	tech <u>NO</u> logy
im <u>PO</u> ssible	pol <u>IT</u> ician	<u>NOM</u> inal	math <u>EM</u> atical	phys <u>IO</u> logy
pos <u>SI</u> ble	mus <u>IC</u> ian		pol <u>IT</u> ical	
11. ____omy	12. ____ify	13. ____ion	14. ____graphy	15. ____ia
astr <u>ON</u> omy	pur <u>IF</u> ify	comp <u>ET</u> ition	phot <u>OG</u> raphy	<u>AN</u> emia
eco <u>NOM</u> y	terr <u>IF</u> ify	poll <u>UT</u> ion	geo <u>GR</u> aphy	ins <u>OM</u> nia
tonsill <u>EC</u> tomy	hor <u>RI</u> fy	prev <u>EN</u> tion	choreo <u>GR</u> aphy	milit <u>IA</u>
app <u>EN</u> de <u>CT</u> omy	un <u>IF</u> y	conv <u>IC</u> tion	bio <u>GR</u> aphy	pneum <u>ON</u> ia
hyster <u>EC</u> tomy		sub <u>SCR</u> ption	calli <u>GR</u> aphy	Calif <u>OR</u> nia
16. ____sion	17. ____ious			
	____eous			
dec <u>IS</u> ion	____uous			
disc <u>US</u> sion				
exp <u>RE</u> sion	cour <u>TE</u> ous			
sup <u>ER</u> vision	gor <u>GE</u> ous			
	stre <u>NU</u> ous			
	prom <u>IS</u> cu <u>US</u>			
	rel <u>IG</u> ious			
	super <u>ST</u> itious			

Which is the stress pattern rule for each of the endings above:

1. Stress is one syllable before the ending?
2. Stress is two syllables before the ending?
3. Stress is part of the ending?



18. ____graph	19. ____ary	20. _ate (adj,n)	21. ____ate (v)	22. ____tude
Autograph	SEcretary			ALTitude
PHotograph	SOLitary	FORTunate	commUNicate	SOLitude
POLygraph	vocabUlary	consIDerate	DUPlicate	GRATitude
HOLograph	SANitary	SEParate	IRritate	APTitude
	NEcessary	imMEdiate	acCElerate	
23. ____ist	24. ____ize ____ise	25. ____ous		
PHARMacist		ridICulous		
PHYSicist	CRITicize	DANGerous		
sciEntist	REALize	monOTonous		
archaeOLOGist	LEGALize	adVENTurous		
	PENalize			

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26. ____eer	27. ____ee	28. ____ation	29. ____arily
engiNEER	employEE	co-operATIOn	necessARily
pionEER	refereE	expectATIOn	ordinARily
profiTEER	trainEE	populATIOn	tempORARily
auctionEER	refugeEE	appreciATIOn	voluntARily

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3. Stress is part of the ending?

3 ↑

EXERCISE 1 Add some words to each group on the previous two pages.

4 ↑

EXERCISE 2 What do each of the endings of these words mean? What part of speech does the ending make the word?

	<u>Ending:</u>	<u>Meaning:</u>	<u>Part of speech:</u>
Example:	_____ology	the study of.....	noun
	_____eer		
	_____ee		
	_____ous		
	_____ist		
	_____graph		
	_____ia		
	_____ize		
	_____graphy		
	_____omy		
	_____inal		
	_____ian		
	_____ible		
	_____ic		
	_____ity		
	_____ial		
	_____ional		
	_____ical		
	_____ify		

4 ↑

EXERCISE 3 After you have had a chance to practice with the tape, ask a partner some questions using any words that you know from the list on the previous pages. This exercise is also good for advanced vocabulary development. Be careful how you stress the words.

1. Are you an **optimist** or a **pessimist**?
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

Advanced Exercise 4. In the following sentences, mark the main stressed syllable (ˈ) and underline the reduced syllables in each of the underlined words. Notice how the stress pattern changes depending on the ending of the word.



1. He was able to increase his ability.
2. It's not necessarily an absolute necessity.
3. The electrician fixed the electrical outlet.
4. Are you going to publish a new publication?
5. Could you please explain your previous explanation?
6. The magician showed his magic tricks.
7. An alcoholic should avoid alcohol.
8. Are you going to compete in today's competition?
9. Those athletes don't look very athletic.
10. She was active in many different activities.
11. His apology doesn't sound very apologetic.
12. This photographer's photographs are an excellent example of photography.
13. Do you realize that this movie is not really a good example of reality.
14. The probability of success will probably increase with time.
15. Did you voluntarily volunteer to do it?
16. He was accused of murder, but the accusation won't hold up in court.
17. The vibration from outside caused the floor to vibrate.
18. The chief editor wrote today's editorial.
19. The memorial service is dedicated to the memory of the dead soldiers.
20. In politics the politicians usually avoid making controversial political statements.
21. There were over 2,000 Democrats at the Democratic convention.
22. The economists were discussing an economical solution to the problems with the economy.