

Teacher's Copy

English Pronunciation: Stress and Rhythm

What is word stress?

English words have stress patterns and can be pronounced in different ways. The way words are pronounced gives meaning. If words are pronounced incorrectly it can be difficult to understand what the speaker is saying.

- (1) Part of correct spelling: **backpack**, **backpack**, **backpack**

(2) We can show stress by using a large 'b' on stressed syllables and small 'b' on unstressed syllables:

back**pack** back**pack** back**pack**

1. Say the following words a few times and show where the stress is in the word:

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How many syllables do these words have? _____

2. Look at these three-syllable words. Say them and show where the stress is:

ex**per**iment ex**er**cise busi**ness** im**por**tant busi**ness**

3. Think of the name of 5 international cities. Write them and show where the stress is.
Example: Lon**don**

4. Sentences also have stressed words and syllables. Strong and weak syllables together in a sentence create rhythm.

Examples of rhythm:

- It is for **books**, with **spare** on his **back**, who **lives** in the **open**, and **grazes** **easy**, **quick**.

5. Listen to the following poem, and underline the stressed words or syllables: