

## Word Stress Rules

1. An appropriate word stress is essential for any kind of oral presentations or lectures. It relies on several rules, the most two basic ones are:

-> **One word has only one stress:** it implies that a word can't have two stresses. If there are two stresses, it means that you have two separate words. You can have a second stress in a word, but it's generally a much smaller stress than the main one, and it only occurs with long words.

-> **We can only stress vowels, not consonants:** The stress is concentrated on the vowel, and the surrounding consonants, but the peak of the stress is on the vowel.

2. Then, according to the nature of the word and its length, you can (most of the time) tell where the stress is. Here are some basic rules, but keep in mind that the best way to get the right stressing is to hear native speakers and practice yourself!

-> **Stress on the first syllable when:**

Most <b>2-syllable nouns</b>	PRESent, EXport, CHIna, TAbLe
Most <b>2-syllable adjectives</b>	PRESent, SLEnDer, CLEVer, HAPpy

-> **Stress on last syllable**

Most <b>2-syllable verbs</b>	preSENT, exPORT, deCIDE, beGIN
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\* Keep in mind that stressing is not for aesthetic purposes. A wrong stressing can totally change the meaning of a word. For instance, the word *present* is either a noun (a gift), or a verb (to display). If you stress the first syllable, it's the noun, and if you stress the last, it's the verb. \*

-> **Stress on penultimate syllable** (penultimate = pénultième, l'avant-dernier)

Words ending in <b>-ic</b>	GRAPHic, geoGRAPHic, geoLOGic
Words ending in <b>-sion</b> and <b>-tion</b>	teleVIsion, reveLAtion

-> **Stress on ante-penultimate syllable** (antépénultième, "avant-avant-dernier")

Words ending in <b>-cy</b> , <b>-ty</b> , <b>-phy</b> and <b>-gy</b>	deMOcracy, dependaBllity, phoTOgraphy, geOLOgy
Words ending in <b>-al</b>	CRItical, geoLOGical

-> **Compound words** (mots composés)

For compound <b>nouns</b> , the stress is on the <b>first</b> part	BLACKbird, GREENhouse
For compound <b>adjectives</b> , the stress is on the <b>second</b> part	bad-TEMpered, old-FASHioned
For compound <b>verbs</b> , the stress is on the <b>second</b> part	underSTAND, overFLOW