

Identifying and Pronouncing Syllables

Important Letter Pairs

- **Diphthong** A single smoothly changing vowel sound made from two or more different vowels.
Diphthong examples:
 - “ou” in the word “mouth”
 - “io” in the word “onion”
 - “ea” in the word “hear”
 - “oy” in the word “boy”
 - “oi” in the word “oil”
 - “ai” in the word “fair”

- **Consonant Pair** Two or more consonants together that make a single sound, not a smoothly changing sound like a diphthong. The formal name for this is “consonant diagraph.” Consonant pair examples:
 - ck (“clock”)
 - sh (“fish”)
 - ch (“church”)
 - th (“that”, “teeth”)
 - ng (“sing”)
 - ph (“phone”)

Syllable A basic part of written and spoken language that has a single sound with no interruption.

Every syllable has exactly one vowel sound. Syllable examples:

- “Hat” – one syllable.
- “Came” – one syllable. It has only one vowel sound because the “e” at the end is silent.
- “Outside” – two syllables. It has two vowel sounds:
 - “Out” has two vowels but only one vowel sound because “ou” is a diphthong.
 - “side” has only one vowel sound because the “e” at the end is silent.

Types of Syllables Major types of syllables in English:

Syllable Type	Syllable Rule	Examples	
Closed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ends with one or more consonants • Has only one vowel with a short vowel sound 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask • Truck • Stretch 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fall • Think • Twelfth
Open	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ends with a vowel • Has only one vowel with a long vowel sound 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No • She • <u>Ta</u> - ble 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Try • <u>Ba</u> - <u>by</u> • <u>Pro</u> - gram
Silent-E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ends with a silent “e” • Has one consonant before the silent “e” • Has one vowel with a long vowel sound before the consonant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ice • Ate • Tune 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These • Hope • Com - <u>pete</u>
Vowel-R	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ends with “r”, or • Ends with “r” and silent “e” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Car • <u>Star</u> - <u>ter</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Col - <u>or</u> • <u>Air</u> - <u>fare</u>
Consonant-LE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Always three letters, usually at the end of a two-syllable word • Ends with “le,” and the “e” is silent • Begins with a consonant • The vowel sound schwa (“ə”) occurs before the “le” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lit - <u>tle</u> • Sim - <u>ple</u> • Sin - <u>gle</u> • Bi - cy - <u>cle</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can - <u>dle</u> • A - <u>ble</u> • Waf - <u>fle</u> • Cir - <u>cle</u>
Vowel Combination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has two or more vowels together that make one sound (such as diphthongs) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rain • Pie • Out 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noise • See • True
(Exceptions)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Usually the last syllable in the word and not accented • Often has an unusual spelling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dam - <u>age</u> • Act - <u>ive</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Na - <u>tion</u>

Finding Syllables in Words Rules for dividing a word into its syllables:

Rule	Examples		Exceptions
Divide between two middle consonants.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hap - <u>p</u>en • Din - <u>n</u>er • Pan - da 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bas - <u>k</u>et • Den - <u>t</u>al • Ur - <u>g</u>ent 	Consonant pairs have one sound, so do not divide them: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tel - e - <u>ph</u>one • Some - <u>wh</u>ere
Divide before a single middle consonant.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • O - pen • I - tem • U - nite 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re - port • Be - have • A - gain 	When the first syllable has an obvious short sound: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cab - in • Col - or
Divide before the consonant in a Consonant-LE syllable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A - ble • I - dle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cra - dle • Bun - dle 	Don't divide "ckle": <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ti - ckle • Pi - ckle
Divide compound words	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sports - car 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • House - boat 	
Divide prefixes ("Un - ...") and suffixes ("... - ly")	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Un</u> - known • <u>Pre</u> - cook 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teach - <u>ers</u> • Quick - <u>ly</u> 	