

What is Word Stress?

When a word has more than two syllables in English, one syllable will receive more importance than the others when it is pronounced. This is the syllable that receives the **primary word stress**. This means that, compared to the other ones, the vowel sound of that syllable will be slightly:

- **louder,**
- **longer,**
- **at a higher pitch.**

For example, the word *chapter* is stressed on the first syllable. The first syllable, *chap-*, will be louder and slightly longer than the last syllable *-ter*. The intensity of each syllable in this example can be illustrated as follows:



In this document, the syllable that is written in capital letters (big letters) represents the syllable that receives the primary word stress. Example: CHAPter.

For more detailed information about word stress, visit <http://www.wordstress.info>

This document provides very useful rules regarding the placement of word stress according to the word structure.