How to Know Which Syllable Should Receive the Primary Word Stress?

1. Can you use your intuition to place the stress accurately?
   - “Yeah, sure!”
   - “Err... not sure!”

2. How many syllable does the word have?
   - One
   - More than 1

3. Does the word have any affixes?
   - No
   - Yes

4. Does the word have any non-neutral suffix?
   - No
   - Yes

5. Does it have a contemporary or historical prefix?
   - Historical
   - Contemporary

Then, if you are sure about it, place the stress according to your intuition!

If you are not sure, follow the steps below:

- Place the stress according to the Normal Stress Rule.
- The prefix is usually not stressed. Place the stress according to the Normal Stress Rule, not including the prefix when you consider the number of syllables.
- The prefix is not stressed. Place the stress according to the Normal Stress Rule, not including the prefix when you consider the number of syllables.

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This flowchart provides you with an overview of the approach to follow to determine the placement of primary word stress in English. If you still don’t know what to do once you have reached the last steps on the right....