

Word-class pairs / Homographs

These are pairs of two-syllable words with identical spelling which differ from each other in stress placement, apparently according to word class (noun, verb or adjective). In this case, the stress is placed on the second syllable of the verb but on the first syllable of the noun or adjective. Some common examples are given below (V = verb, A = adjective, N = noun):

Spelling Form	Noun/Adjective	Verb
abstract	'æbstrækt (A)	æb'strækt (V)
conduct	'kɒndʌkt (N)	kən'dʌkt (V)
contract	'kɒntrækt (N)	kən'trækt (V)
contrast	'kɒntrɑːst (N)	kən'trɑːst (V)
desert	'dezət (N)	dɪ'zɜːt (V)
escort	'eskɔːt (N)	ɪ'skɔːt (V)
export	'ekspɔːt (N)	ɪk'spɔːt (V)
import	'ɪmpɔːt (N)	ɪm'pɔːt (V)
insult	'ɪnsʌlt (N)	ɪn'sʌlt (V)
object	'ɒbdʒekt (N)	əb'dʒekt (V)
perfect	'pɜːfɪkt (A)	pə'fekt (V)
permit	'pɜːmɪt (N)	pə'mɪt (V)
present	'preznt (N, A)	pri'zent (V)
produce	'prɒdjuːs (N)	prə'djuːs (V)
protest	'prəʊtest (N)	prə'test (V)
rebel	'rebl (N)	ri'bel (V)
record	'rekɔːd (N, A)	ri'kɔːd (V)
subject	'sʌbdʒekt (N)	səb'dʒekt (V)

Exercise 1 : Transcribe the following words and mark the stress

Nouns	transcription	Verbs	Transcription
a) language b) captain c) career d) paper		a) protect b) clamber c) festoon d) detest	

Exercise 2 : Fill in the table with missing form, and mark the stress.

Spelling	Nouns	Verbs
abstract conduct contract contrast desert escort export import		
	'ɪnsʌlt (N) 'ɒbdʒekt (N) 'pɜ:fɪkt (A) 'pɜ:mɪt (N) 'preznt (N, A)	
		prə'dju:s (V) prə'test (V) rɪ'bel (V) rɪ'kɔ:d (V) səb'dʒekt (V)

