

Chapter Two: The Stress

Complex Word Stress

➤ *Complex words are of two major types:*

- ❖ words made from a basic word form (which we will call the stem), with the addition of an affix; and
- ❖ **compound words**, which are made of two (or occasionally more) independent English words (e.g. 'icecream', 'armchair').

1. **Words with affixes:** affixes are of two sorts in English:

1.1. **prefixes**, which come before the stem (e.g. prefix 'un-' + stem 'pleasant' → 'unpleasant')

1.2. **suffixes**, which come after the stem (e.g. stem 'good' + suffix '-ness' → 'goodness').

○ Affixes have one of three possible effects on word stress:

1.The affix itself receives the primary stress	2.The word is stressed as if the affix were not there	3.The stress remains on the stem, not the affix, but is shifted to a different syllable
Eg : semi+circle → 'semɪsɜ:kəl:	Eg : market –marketing → 'mɑ:kɪtɪŋ	Eg : magnet-magnetic → mæg'netɪk

○ There are so many suffixes that it will only be possible here to examine a small proportion of them: we will concentrate on those which are common and productive - that is, are applied to a considerable number of stems and could be applied to more to make new English words

➤ *Table 1:*

Suffixes carrying primary stress themselves
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● '-ee': 'refugee' ,refjʊ'dʒi:; 'evacuee' ɪ,vækju'i: ● '-eer': 'mountaineer' ,maʊntɪ'nɪə; 'volunteer' ,vɒlən'tɪə ● '-ese': 'Portuguese' ,pɔ:tʃə'gi:z; 'journalese' ,dʒɜ:nli:z

➤ Table 2

Suffixes that do not affect stress placement	
•	'-able': 'comfort' 'kɒmfət; 'comfortable' 'kɒmfətəbl
•	'-age': 'anchor' 'æŋkə; 'anchorage' 'æŋkɪdʒ
•	'-al': 'refuse' (verb) rɪ'fju:z; 'refusal' rɪ'fju:zl
•	'-en': 'wide' 'waɪd; 'widen' 'waɪdn
•	'-ful': 'wonder' 'wʌndə; 'wonderful' 'wʌndəflɪ
•	'-ing': 'amaze' ə'meɪz; 'amazing' ə'meɪzɪŋ
•	'-like': 'bird' 'bɜ:d; 'birdlike' 'bɜ:dlɪk
•	'-less': 'power' 'paʊə; 'powerless' 'paʊələs
•	'-ly': 'hurried' 'hʌrɪd; 'hurriedly' 'hʌrɪdli
•	'-ment' (noun): 'punish' 'pʌnɪʃ; 'punishment' 'pʌnɪʃmənt
•	'-ness': 'yellow' 'jeləʊ; 'yellowness' 'jeləʊnəs
•	'-ous': 'poison' 'pɔɪzn; 'poisonous' 'pɔɪznəs
•	'-fy: 'glory' 'glɔ:ri; 'glorify' 'glɔ:rɪfaɪ
•	'-wise': 'other' 'ʌðə; 'otherwise' 'ʌðəwaɪz
•	'-y' (adjective or noun): 'fun' 'fʌn; 'funny' 'fʌni

Note:

- ('-ish' in the case of adjectives does not affect stress placement: 'devil' 'devl; 'devilish' 'devlɪʃ; however, verbs with stems of more than one syllable always have the stress on the syllable immediately preceding 'ish' - for example, 'replenish' rɪ'plenɪʃ, 'demolish' dɪ'mɒlɪʃ)

Suffixes that influence stress in the stem			
Primary stress is on the last syllable of the stem.			
•	'-eous':	'advantage' əd'vɑ:ntɪdʒ;	'advantageous' ,ædvən'teɪdʒəs
•	'-graphy':	'photo' 'fəʊtəʊ;	'photography' fa'tɒɡrəfi
•	'-ial':	'proverb' 'prɒʌz:b;	'proverbial' prə'vɜ:biəl
•	'-ic':	'climate' 'klaɪmət;	'climatic' klaɪ'mætɪk
•	'-ion':	'perfect' 'pɜ:fɪkt;	'perfection' pə'fekʃn
•	'-ious':	'injure' 'ɪndʒə;	'injurious' ɪn'dʒʊəriəs
•	'-ty':	'tranquil' 'træŋkwɪl;	'tranquillity' træŋ'kwɪləti
•	'-ive':	'reflex' rɪ'fleks;	'reflexive' rɪ'fleksɪv

Note: when the suffixes '-ance', '-ant' and '-ary' are attached to single-syllable stems, the stress is almost always placed on the stem (e.g. 'guidance', 'sealant', 'dietary').

○ **Prefixes:**

Because prefixes do not affect stress placement, the best treatment seems to be to say that stress in words with prefixes is governed by the same rules as those for polysyllabic words without prefixes

Exercise:

Mark the stress on the following words with justification according to the influence of suffixes .

Word	Stress placement	Justification
refugee		
mountaineer		
Portuguese		
cigarette		
arabesque		
Advantageous		
photography'		
proverbial climatic		
perfection injurious		
tranquility reflexive		
comfortable		
refusal		
wonderful		
birdlike		
glorify		
otherwise		
poisonous		
punishment		