

Lecture 10 Phrase stress, compound stress

1. A word or phrase, spoken in isolation, has one and only one **primary stress**. (Conventionally, it is ignored in the dictionary entry for a monosyllable.) Exceptions: **clitics**, which have no stress. There may be other, **secondary**, stresses.

2. Every word has a (primary or secondary, lexical) stress on one of its first two syllables. Hence many words are **double-stressed**. *ˌinterˈnational, ˌasˌsɒʃiˈeɪʃən*.

3. **Inflectional** suffixes have no effect on stress placement: *-(e)s, -ed, -ing, -er, -est*. However, **derivational** suffixes do often have an effect: *-ic(al), -ation, -ity, -esque*.

4. Where two elements (typically, words) are strung together, the resultant combination receives either **early** or **late** stress. Early stress is typical of **compounds**, late stress of **phrases**.

5. In an early-stressed combination, primary stress appears on the first element, while the stress level in the second element is lowered. A monosyllabic second element may lose stress entirely. *ˈbarrow → ˈwheelˌbarrow; (ˈ)box → ˈmoney(ˌ)box*.

NB many **compounds** are written as two words.

<i>sunshine</i>	<i>ˈsʌn ʃaɪn</i>	<i>firewood</i>	<i>ˈfaɪə wʊd</i>
<i>frostbitten</i>	<i>ˈfrɒstˌbɪtən</i>	<i>soakaway</i>	<i>ˈsəʊk əˌweɪ</i>
<i>safety valve</i>	<i>ˈseɪftɪ vælv</i>	<i>running shoes</i>	<i>ˈrʌnɪŋ ʃuːz</i>

6. In a late-stressed combination, stress levels in the first element are lowered.

ˈgood → ˌgood ˈmanners ˌnoʊðər → ˌnoʊðər ˈcup

phrases: *second course ˌsekənd ˈkɔːs ˌrunning ˈwater ˌrʌnɪŋ ˈwɔːtə*

7. These patterns, and all stress patterns, can be overridden to show **contrastive focus**.

ˈrunning ˌwater, | ˌnot ˈstagnant (ˌwater)

8. Compound versus phrase:

<i>ˈdarkroom</i>	<i>a ˌdark ˈroom</i>
<i>a ˈmoving ˌvan</i> (removals)	<i>a ˌmoving ˈvan</i> (not stationary)
<i>a ˈtoy ˌfactory</i> (production)	<i>a ˌtoy ˈfactory</i> (plaything)

9. **Stress shift**. Where the first element of a late-stressed combination is multi-stressed, the original primary and secondary stresses in this first element are often swapped round. *ˌacaˈdemic → ˌaca(ˌ)ˈdemic ˈyear* (as if *ˈacademic*); *ˌTɒtənˈhæm ˈCourt → ˌTɒtənˈhæm (ˌ)Court ˈRoad*

10. Confusingly, some compounds are late-stressed. This is often the case if the first element names a place or time, or an ingredient or material. *ˌTown ˈHall, ˌsummer ˈholiday, ˌapple ˈdumpling, ˌnylon ˈjacket*.