



## Sentence Stress

To be used with video: <https://youtu.be/tZbcYTYkCNk>

### What is sentence stress?

English is a stress-timed language. This means some syllables have more stress than other syllables.

Stressed syllables are **longer**, **louder** and at a **higher pitch**.

In general, content words are stressed, and function words are unstressed.

<b>Content Words</b> (carry meaning)	<b>Function Words</b> (grammar)
nouns	verbs (be, have, auxiliary)
verbs (main)	pronouns
adjectives	prepositions
adverbs	conjunctions
question words	modal verbs
negatives	determiners

I. Underline the content words in each sentence. Read the underlined words only. Notice that you can understand the meaning perfectly.

1. You should call the doctor because my leg is broken.



2. Send me some money because I've lost my wallet.



II. Read the following sentences. Each sentence should take equal time to say.

**Cats chase mice.**

The **cats** chase the **mice**.

The **cats** are **chasing** the **mice**.

The **cats** have been **chasing** the **mice**.



**Birds fly south.**

The **birds** fly to the **south**.

The **birds** are **flying** to the **south**.

The **birds** will be **flying** to the **south**.



III. Match the sentences with the appropriate stress pattern.

1 ● ● ● ●

3 ● ● ● ●

2 ● ● ● ●

4 ● ● ● ●

The bus is late.      4

Misha made it.      \_\_\_\_\_

English is hard.      \_\_\_\_\_

It's not a game.      \_\_\_\_\_

Books are useful.      \_\_\_\_\_

I don't see it.      \_\_\_\_\_

He saw her there.      \_\_\_\_\_

Larissa laughs.      \_\_\_\_\_

IV. Mark sentence stress with circles. ● ●

● ● ● ● ●  
I drove to the beach.

I like to have pizza.

I saw my family.

I love hamburgers and fries.

I was at my cottage.

I always eat salad.