

Syllable Rules

1. If the word is a compound word, divide it between the two smaller words. If either or both of the two smaller words have more than one syllable, follow the general rules below.
2. Endings such as *ing*, *er*, *est*, and *ed* often form separate syllables. The remaining portion of the word is a root word.
3. When two or more consonants appear in the middle of the word, divide the word between them. Then try the short sound for the vowel in the first syllable. This rule does not apply if the two consonants form a digraph such as *ch*, *tch*, *ph*, *sh*, or *th*. The digraphs can't be separated.
4. When only one consonant appears between two vowels, divide the word before the consonant. Then try the long sound of the first vowel. This works about 55% of the time. If a recognizable word is not formed using the long sound, divide the word after the consonant and try the short sound for the first syllable. This works about 45% of the time.
5. When a two syllable word ends in a consonant plus *le*, the consonant and *le* form the last syllable. If the preceding syllable ends in a consonant, try the short sound of the vowel (ex. Wiggle) If the preceding syllable ends with a vowel, try the long sound of the vowel. (ex. Table)
6. When a two syllable word ends in a consonant plus *re*, the consonant and *re* form the last syllable. If the preceding syllable ends with a vowel, try the long sound of that vowel. (ex. Acre)
7. Never break apart vowel digraphs or diphthongs such as *ai*, *ay*, *ea*, *ee*, *oa*, *ow*, *oo*, *oi*, *oy*, *ou*, *ie*, and *ei*.
8. Syllables that end in a consonant usually have a short vowel sound. (ex. Rabbit)
9. Syllables that end in a vowel usually have a long vowel sound. (ex. Tiger)
10. When a vowel is followed by an *r*, the *r* affects the vowel sound and appears in the same syllable.
11. When a syllable has the CVCe pattern, the long vowel sound is often heard.