

## Lecture 4: STRESS PLACEMENT IN COMPOUND WORDS

### Introduction:

Compound words are formed from a combination of two or more elements that constitutes on semantic unit. They normally contain a single primary accent on one syllable, another syllable carrying a secondary accent. There are three types of compound words in English as follows:

- **Use of hyphen:** Good-hearted, life-saver, one-way, well-done, part-time.
- **Closed compounds:** Armchair, postman, teapot, crossword, goodwill.
- **Open compounds:** Cassette recorder, coffee machine, phone call, ice age.

### 1. Stress in compound words composed of two nouns or gerund +noun

Compound words composed of two nouns usually receive stress on the first element.

**E.g:** Airplane /'eəpleɪn/; Deadline /'dedlaɪn/; classroom /'klɑ:sru:m/ ; timetable /'aɪtɪməbl/

Home-builder /'həʊbɪldə/; rock-climber/'rɒk,klaɪmə/; front-runner /'frʌnt,rʌnə/

Air conditioner /'eə kən,dɪʃnə/; olive oil /'ɒlɪv,ɔɪl/; credit card; swimming pool

**Exceptions:** headmaster                      week-end                      mankind

**Activity:** transcribe the following words and mark stress

Word	Transcription	Word	Transcription
Air-raid		Backache	
Clothes brush		Earthquake	
Tea cup		Button hole	
Copyright		Shopkeeper	
Waiting-room		Dining -room	
Cleaning cloth		Shopping- bag	

**More practice:** stress these compound nouns

Notebook, bookstore, toothbrush, keyboard, armchair, mailbox, headphones, headquarters, rainbow, battery charger, suitcase, lipstick, bus stop, hometown

### 2. Stress in compound words composed of adjective and 'ed'

Compound words composed of an **adjective** and **'ed'** morpheme at the end receive stress on the second element.

**Activity:** transcribe the following words and mark stress

Word	Transcription	Word	Transcription
Bad-tempered		Full-grown	
Well-educated		Heavy-hearted	
Barefooted		Blue-eyed	
Well-dressed		Long-sighted	

### 3. Stress in compound words composed of adjective and gerund

Compound words composed of an **adjective** and a **gerund** at the end receive stress on the second element.

**E.g:** good- 'looking , easy- 'going , ,global 'warming, ,central 'heating

### 4. Compounds in which the first element is a number: the second element is stressed

**Activity:** transcribe the following words and mark stress

Word	Transcription	Word	Transcription
Three-wheeler		One-eyed	
Second class		Three cornered	

### 5. Compounds functioning as adverbs are usually finally stressed

**E.g:** ,North – 'east , down- 'stream , a ,bove- 'mentioned ; ,good 'bye

### 6. Compounds which function as verbs and have an adverbial element first

Compound words which function as **verbs** and have an adverbial element first take final stress.

**E.g:** ,ill- 'treat, ,back- 'pedal, ,down- 'grade, ,upside 'down, ,back- 'pedal, ,look 'like, ,get 'through

**Activity:** transcribe the following compound adverbs and mark stress

Word	Transcription	Word	Transcription
Upstairs		Hereby	
Uphill		Outside	

### 7. Phrasal verbs are stressed on the second element

**E.g:** ,Let 'down ,take 'over ,turn 'off

But the same words can be used as nouns, in this case the first element is stressed like: 'make up 'take off

### 8- Compounds which include past participle + noun are stressed on the second element

**E.g:** lost property, in ,verted 'comma, split infinitive

