



### Sentence Stress in English

Sentence stress can help you understand spoken English, especially when spoken fast. English is a stress-timed language. This means that stress in a spoken sentence occurs at regular intervals.

The basic rules of sentence stress are:

1. **content** words are stressed
2. **function** words are unstressed and mostly swallowed
3. the **time between stressed words** is always the same.

Content words include main verbs, nouns, adjectives, adverbs, negative words, demonstratives, and question words. These are words that must be included in the sentence for it to make sense. They contrast with function words, such as articles, prepositions, conjunctions, auxiliary/be verbs, and pronouns. If you remove the function words from a sentence, you will still understand the sentence.

To summarize, focus on the content words of a sentence to understand spoken English.