

*Trying hard to divide a new word
 Keep in mind what you've already heard
 With consonants, be mean!
 Divide before or between
 And most of your fears will be cured.*

Dividing words into syllables is simple and logical. Use the poem to help you remember the most important rules—you always divide before a single consonant or between two consonants. You also divide between two vowels. The few exceptions are reviewed below.

TWO SYLLABLES

The accent on words with two syllables ALWAYS falls on the first syllable, which is also the next to last (penultimate) syllable.

Divide the following words into two syllables, between the vowel and the consonant, between two vowels, or a vowel and a diphthong (ae, au). Place an accent above the first syllable. The first one is done for you.

nō' men	plau de	me um	qua ere
crētā	scrī be	ego	tacē
valē	quaesō	īre	lege

Divide the following words into two syllables, between two consonants, unless you have -br-, -tr-, -cl-, -cr-, -ph-, -qu-, etc., (they naturally stay together). Then you divide between the vowel and the pair. Place an accent above the first syllable.

fus' te	quīnque	librum	tempus
ōrdō	tardus	spectā	quārtus
sextus	mēnsa	pēnsu m	quīntus

1) *Is the accent ever on the last syllable? NEVER.*

2) *Does the next to last syllable have a long vowel?*

yes – ACCENT IT!

no – go to question #3

3) *Is the next to the last syllable followed by two consonants?*

yes – ACCENT IT!

*no – move to the syllable **before** the next to last syllable and ACCENT IT!*

THREE SYLLABLES

Accent on the next to last (penultimate) syllable.

Divide the following words into three syllables based on the rules you used above. Put the accent on the next to last syllable if the vowel in that syllable is long or if it is followed by two consonants.

con clā' ve	facisne	habēsne	latrīnam
nōlīte	libellōs	minūtae	necesse
secundus	spectāsne	quaerisne	tacēte

Accent on the syllable before the next to last (antepenultimate) syllable.

Divide the following words into three syllables based on the rules you used above. Put the accent on the *syllable before the next to last syllable* if the vowel in next to last syllable is *short* and *not* followed by two consonants.

am' bu lā	tabulam	tinniā	facite
facere	faciō	spongiam	habeō
tangere	scribite	nōmina	terere

MORE THAN THREE SYLLABLES

The accent will either be on the next to last (penultimate) syllable or the syllable before the next to last (antepenultimate) syllable. Never on the last, and never anywhere else in the word.

Divide the following words into syllables and put the accent on the appropriate syllable.

per fē cis tī' ne	praeparātiōnem	computātrum	tintinnābulum
significat	susurrāre	hodiernus	hōrologium
incipite	intellegisne	labōrāte	vocābula

1) Is the accent ever on the last syllable? NEVER.

2) Does the next to last syllable have a long vowel?

yes – ACCENT IT!

no – go to question #3

3) Is the next to the last syllable followed by two consonants?

yes – ACCENT IT!

no – move to the syllable **before** the next to last syllable and ACCENT IT!