

Homographs - One written word, two different pronunciations

(from Latin: "homo"="same", "graph"="written")

Sometimes in English, one word can have two meanings and **different pronunciations**. They are called "homographs". Here are some examples:

- 1a. John **lives** in California. 1b. Cats have nine **lives**.
2a. I **read** a book every week. 2b. I **read** a book yesterday.
3a. The Sahara **desert** is enormous. 3b. I will never **desert** you.
4a. I received a birthday **present**. 4b. I would like to **present** my wife, Alice.
5a. My English is almost **perfect**. 5b. I need to **perfect** my English.

Rule (for 2-syllable words): *For nouns or adjectives, the first syllable is stressed.
For verbs, the second syllable is stressed.*

Examples:

<u>Noun/Adjective</u>	<u>Verb</u>
<u>desert</u>	to <u>desert</u>
<u>present</u>	to <u>present</u>
<u>perfect</u>	to <u>perfect</u>
<u>protest</u>	to <u>protest</u>
<u>record</u>	to <u>record</u>

Exercise 1. Say the following words, firstly as a noun or adjective and secondly as a verb:

1. insult	2. desert	3. object	4. perfect
5. reject	6. present	7. progress	8. produce

Exercise 2. Read these sentences:

1. The soldier decided to **desert** when he was in the **desert**.
2. This is a good time to **present** my wife with her birthday **present**.
3. The lawyer did not **object** to the new **object**.
4. I must **produce** a plan for the new **produce** section.
5. I need to **perfect** my English - it's not **perfect** yet.
6. My doctor is fantastic! He **lives** to save **lives**!

Suggested video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ozqluN8Eg0s> (15 mins)