Dividing and Accenting Words: VERGIL

> *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 underline before a single consonant or underline between two consonants. You also divide between two vowels. The few exceptions are reviewed below.

Understanding how to divide and accent words will greatly help you understand how to scan a line of poetry.

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 dipthong (ae, au). Place an accent above the first syllable. The first one is done for you.

ca´|nō	Trōiae	prīmus	ōrīs
fātō	vēnit	saevae	īram
quoque	deōs	genus	Rōmae
Mūsa	mihī	causās	laesō
dolēns	deum	cāsūs	virum

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.

ar´|ma	multum	ille	terrīs
altō	multa	bellō	passus
urbem	unde	patrēs	quidve

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

vi|rum´|que	iactātus	Iūnōnis	Latīnum
rēgīna	īnsignem	adīre	labōrēs
tantaene			

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.

pro´|fu|gus	lītora	superum	memorem
conderet	Latiō	moenia	memorā
nūmine	volvere	animīs	

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.

Ītaliam	Lāvīniaque	īnferretque	Albānīque
pietāte	impulerit	caelestibus	

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SCANNING LINES OF VERSE

Dactylic Hexameters consist of lines with six feet that are either dactyls or spondees. Dactyls are feet which consist of a long syllable followed by two short syllables; spondees are feet which consist of two long syllables. They are marked as follows:

     dactyl: – ᴗ ᴗ   spondee: – –

The last two feet in a line of dactylic hexameter will end with a dactyl and a spondee, though sometimes it is not a true spondee because the last syllable may not truly be long, though because of the natural pause taken at the end of a line it is regarded as long. The first four feet can be either dactyls or spondees.

1st foot	2nd foot	3rd foot	4th foot	5th foot	6th goot
– ᴗ ᴗ or – –	– ᴗ ᴗ or – –	– ᴗ ᴗ or – –	– ᴗ ᴗ or – –	– ᴗ ᴗ	– –

Dactyls and spondees can spread over two or more words. Sometimes two words elide or contract, thus effecting the type of foot. Elisions occur when one word ends with a *vowel* or a *diphthong* or a *vowel* followed by an *-m*, and the following word begins with a *vowel* or *diphthong* or an *h-* (h's were like breathing and not fully acting like a consonant). Words ending with a *vowel* plus *-m* and followed by *est* were pronounced *-m'st*.

Here are some word pairs that elide :

- multum ille > mult'ille
- atque altae > atqu'altae
- tantaene animīs > tantaen'animīs
- animam hanc > anim'anc

When scanning a line of poetry, write the long or short marks above the corresonding syllable and then put a vertical mark to divide the feet, dividing according to the rules used for dividing words. This first line has no elisions:

   – ᴗ ᴗ| –   ᴗ ᴗ|–   –|–   –| – ᴗ ᴗ|– –
   Arma vi|rumque ca|nō, Trō|iae quī| prīmus ab| ōrīs

But this line has two:

   – ᴗ ᴗ| –   – | –   –|–   –|– ᴗ ᴗ|– –
   lītora|—mult~~um~~ il|l~~e~~ et ter|rīs iac|tātus et| altō

Helpful hints for scanning:
1. Read outloud at least once or twice (helps to determine if you have a consonantal or vocalic i).
2. Mark all elisions when reading either first or second time and before marking anything else.
3. Mark the meter on the last two feet, since they will always be a dactyl followed by a spondee.
4. Scan the first four feet; if you have problems work backwards through the line.

Scanning Practice

Mark the following lines indicating elisions, dactyls, spondees, and the 6 feet per line.

Arma virumque canō, Trōiae quī prīmus ab ōrīs

Ītaliam fātō profugus Lāvīniaque vēnit

lītora—multum ille et terrīs iactātus et altō

vī superum, saevae memorem Iūnōnis ob īram,

multa quoque et bellō passus, dum conderet urbem

īnferretque deōs Latiō—genus unde Latīnum

Albānīque patrēs atque altae moenia Rōmae.

Mūsa, mihī causās memorā, quō nūmine laesō

quidve dolēns rēgīna deum tot volvere cāsūs

īnsignem pietāte virum, tot adīre labōrēs

impulerit. Tantaene animīs caelestibus īrae?