

Silent letters in words

What is a silent letter?

- Can you think of some examples?
- Some letters are:

– really silent	examples:
– almost silent	– pneumonia
– silent themselves, but change the sound of other letters (usually 'lengthening' the sound)	– hotel
	– care (= cār, instead of car)
	light (= līt, instead of lit)

Silent letters in words

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "kn" at the start of a word is usually said "n"
[silent 'k'] | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "mn" at the end of a word is often said "mm"
[silent 'n'] |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "wr" at the start of a word is usually said "r"
[silent 'w'] | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "gn" is usually said "n"
[silent 'g'] |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "mb" is often said "mm"
[silent 'b'] | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "dg" is often said "j"
[silent 'd'] |

Where are the silent letters?

On Wednesday, I had a salmon sandwich with a handsome plumber who climbed into my castle

Many **silent letters** change the neighbouring sounds = “magic” letters

- “e” at the end of a word
 - hat hate
 - dun dune
 - poll pole
 - sit site
- “u” after g
 - george guess
- “gh” after “i”
 - lit light
 - simple sigh
- “d” before “g” after a vowel
 - dog dodge
 - egg edge

Silent “t” words

- | | | | |
|-----------|---------|------------|----------|
| • Costly | Costly | • Mortgage | Morgage |
| • Pistol | Pistol | • Fasten | Farssen |
| • Instant | Instant | • Apostle | Apossle |
| • Listen | Lissen | • Debut | Deb-you |
| • Castle | Cassle | • Ballet | Bal-ay |
| • Whistle | Wissle | • Buffet | Buff-ay |
| | | • Chalet | Shall-ay |

Silent “b” words

- | | | | |
|-----------|---------|----------|--------|
| • Bomb | Bom | • Doubt | Dowt |
| • Comb | Cōm | • Debt | Det |
| • Lamb | Lam | • Subtle | Suttle |
| • Climb | Clīm | | |
| • Crumb | Crum | | |
| • Thumb | Thum | | |
| • Numb | Num | | |
| • Plumber | Plummer | | |

Silent “d” words

- Wednesday Wensday
- Sandwich San-wich
- Handsome Hansome
- Edge Ej
- Ridge Rij
- Bridge Brij
- Fridge Frij

Silent “g” words

- Gnome Nome
 - Gnat Nat
 - Sign Sīn
 - Design Desīn
 - Consign Consīn
 - Reign Rayn
 - Foreign Forayn
- The “g” in “gn” at the end of the word changes the vowel sound ... it’s a ‘magic’ g

Silent “h” words

- Ghost Gōst *h almost sounds, but not quite*
- Gherkin Gerkin
- Rhinoceros Rino....
- Rhubarb Rubarb
- Rhyme Ryme
- Ve' icle
- Vehicle – *h gives us a pause inside the word*
- Honest 'onest
- Honour 'onour
- h does sound, but only a tiny bit!*
- Hotel (H)ōtel

Silent “k” words

- Knee Nee
- Knit Nit
- Knob Nob
- Know + Knowledge No + Noll-edge
- Knot Not

Silent “l” words

- Calm Carm
- Palm Parm
- Half Harf
- Chalk Chawk
- Talk Tawk
- Walking Wawking
- Folk Fōk
- Salmon Samon
- Would Wood
- Should Shood

The “l” some of these words
‘stretches’ the vowel sound ...
it’s a ‘magic’ “l”

Silent “n” words

- Autumn Autumm
- Column Columm
- Solemn Solemm
- Hymn Hymm

Silent “p” words

- Psychiatrist Sy-chiatriist
- Pneumonia New-monia
- Pneumatic New-matic
- Psalm Sarm
- Receipt Ree-ceet
- Raspberry Rars-berry

Sometimes native speakers differ

- Christmas or Chris-mas
- Often or Offen
- Hōtel or 'ōtel
- Quarter or Korter

And what about place names?

The map shows the East Midlands and East of England regions. A red arrow points to Lincoln. Other red arrows point from the following place names on the map to the corresponding entries in the list: Newark, Ilkeston, Edinburgh, and Loughborough.

Lincoln	Link-con
Leicester	Le-ster
Southwell	Suth'll
Newark (in Nottinghamshire)	Newak
Ilkeston	Ilsson
Edinburgh	Edinbr
Loughborough	Luff-br