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Types of literature

### Rhythm and Metre

Rhythm is an essential quality of poetry, it is the pulse of poetry, as the hearts beats are the pulse of life. The word rhythm is derived from the Greek. It means 'motion' or 'flow'. In poetry, rhythm is marked by accents or stresses placed on certain syllables which need to be emphasized.

The terms rhythm and metre are often used interchangeably. Metre is organized rhythm. That is, when rhythm follows a definite pattern, so that the number of syllables between accents is regular, we have metre. In other words, rhythm is the larger term; metre, the smaller, the more particular. Metres means 'measure' and it applies mainly to poetry. In English poetry, metre is made up of recurring patterns of stressed and un stressed syllables. Take these two lines from Keats:





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In poetry, these feet are usually grouped in certain definite patterns to form lines which are named according to the number of feet in each line.

A line of poetry with one foot is called monometer; with two feet, dimeter; with three, trimeter; with four, tetrameter; with five, pentameter; with six, hexameter (also called an Alexandrine); with seven, heptameter; with eight, octameter. Lines of one foot and nine feet are rare in English verse. The most common meters are tetrameter and pentameter.

There are many different patterns of syllables which make up the various feet used in English poetry. The most common is the iambic foot.

An iambic foot, or an iamb, is one composed of two syllables:

unstressed followed by stressed (v -), as in:

v - v - v -  
infer, correct, delight:

v - v - v - v -  
My heart/ is like/ a sin/ ing bird.



v - v - v - v -

My heart/ is like/ a sin/ ing bird.

The other types are:

A trochaic foot, or a trochee, is one composed of two syllables: one stressed followed by one unstressed (-v) as in:

-v - v - v  
accent, gather, laughter:

- v - v - v - v

Soft and/ easy/ is thy / cradle

A Dactylic foot, or a dactyl, is one composed of three syllables, one stressed followed by the two unstressed (- v v), as in:

- v v - v v  
mystical, happiness:

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