Syllable Rules

Rule #1
Every syllable has one vowel sound.

Rule #2
The number of vowel sounds in a word equals the number of syllables.

\[
\text{home} = 1 \quad \text{sub} \cdot \text{ject} = 2 \quad \text{pub} \cdot \text{lish} \cdot \text{ing} = 3
\]

Rule #3
A one syllable word is never divided.

\[
\text{stop} \quad \text{feel} \quad \text{bell}
\]

Rule #4
Consonant blends and digraphs are never separated.

\[
\text{rest} \cdot \text{ing} \quad \text{bush} \cdot \text{el} \quad \text{reach} \cdot \text{ing}
\]

Rule #5
When a word has a ck or an x in it, the word is usually divided after the ck or x.

\[
\text{nick} \cdot \text{el} \quad \text{tax} \cdot \text{i}
\]

Rule #6
A compound word is divided between the two words that make the compound word.

\[
\text{in} \cdot \text{side} \quad \text{foot} \cdot \text{ball} \quad \text{tooth} \cdot \text{brush}
\]
Rule #7
When two or more consonants come between two vowels in a word, it is usually divided between the first two consonants.

sís·ter  bu·ter  hun·gry

Rule #8
When a single consonant comes between two vowels in a word, it is usually divided after the consonant if the vowel is short.

lev·er  cab·in  hab·it

Rule #9
When a single consonant comes between two vowels in a word, it is usually divided before the consonant if the vowel is long.

ba·sin  fe·ver  ma·jor

Rule #10
When two vowels come together in a word, and are sounded separately, divide the word between the two vowels.

ra·di·o  di·et  i·dea
Rule #11
When a vowel is sounded alone in a word, it forms a syllable itself.

grad • u • ate    a • pron    u • nit

Rule #12
A word that has a prefix is divided between the root word and the prefix.

dis • count    mis • fit    un • tie

Rule #13
When be, de, ex and re are at the beginning of a word, they make a syllable of their own.

be • oame    de • fend    ex • hale    re • main

Rule #14
A word that has a suffix is divided between the root word and the suffix.

kind • ness    thank • ful    stuff • ing

Rule #15
When a word ends in le, preceded by a consonant, the word is divided before that consonant.

pur • ple    fum • ble    mid • dle
Rule #16
When -ed comes at the end of a word, it forms a syllable only when preceded by d or t.

start - ed  fund - ed

Rule #17
When a word or syllable ends in al or el, these letters usually form the last syllable.

lev - el  us - u - al

Rule #18
The suffixes able and ible form their own syllable.

print - able  con - vert - ible

Rule #19
When ture and tion are at the end of a word, they make their own syllable.

lo - tion  pos - ture

Rule #20
A word should be divided between syllables at the end of a line. The hyphen (-) stays with the syllable at the end of the line.

By the time they decided to go to the supermarket, it was already dark.