

## Silent Letter Chart

| Silent Letter Pattern | Examples                                  | Notes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| kn                    | know, knee, knife, knock,<br>knit         | The k is silent now, but it used to be pronounced.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| gn                    | gnat, gnaw, sign, design,<br>foreign      | The g is silent now, but it used to be pronounced.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| mb                    | lamb, comb, thumb,<br>climb, crumb        | The b is silent now, but it used to be pronounced.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| lk                    | walk, talk, chalk, stalk,<br>yolk         | The l is silent now, but it used to be pronounced.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| mn                    | autumn, column, hymn,<br>solemn, condemn  | The n is silent now, but it used to be pronounced.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| t                     | listen, fasten, castle,<br>whistle, often | Sometimes, the t is silent because it is sandwiched between two consonant sounds, making it hard to say. Other times, the t is silent because adding a suffix makes it hard to say, so it is dropped. Even more confusing, different dialects/accents pronounce or leave off the /t/ sound in some words. |

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|----|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| h  | honest, honor                       | Words borrowed from Romance languages, such as French and Spanish, that originated in Latin can retain an unpronounced letter h as a relic of their origins.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| h  | ghost                               | William Caxton was an English printer in the 1400s. At the time, English spelling was not standardized. The word ghost was often spelled "gost" and derived from older forms like "gast". Some of the people who helped set the type on his machines had experience with Flemish spelling. The gh spelling appears in Caxton's printing and was probably influenced by the Flemish word gheest. Other Flemish-influenced spellings appeared during this period, but ghost is one of the few that stayed. |
| wr | write, wrong, wrist, wrap,<br>wreck | The w is silent now, but it used to be pronounced.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| wh | who, whole, whom, whose             | In these words, the spelling comes from an older /hw/ sound. Over time, the pronunciation shifted, and in words like who and whole, the w is no longer pronounced.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| w  | two, sword, answer                  | These are word-specific historical spellings. The w was once pronounced or reflects an older form of the word, but pronunciation changed while spelling stayed more stable.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |