

There are three possible arrangements of the three-syllable group:

1. The Dactylic Foot, having the accent on the first syllable:

Hail to the | chief who in | triumph ad | vances.

2. The Amphibrachic, accent on the middle syllable:

So this is | your cradle | why surely | my Jenny.

3. Anapaestic, accent on the last syllable:

'Tis the last | rose of sum | mer left bloom | ing alone.

Some writers use the term Spondee to apply to two-syllable groups in which the length of the syllables is equal, but this in English versification is a meaningless classification. It must be borne in mind that the Latin and Greek system measured feet by their syllabic length, and in adopting the above system it must be clearly understood that time and accent are the governing principles. We cannot have in the same measure two syllables having equal stress.

A line or verse of poetry is a combination of feet. Very rarely we find a line of one foot, occasionally, two feet; but an ordinary line in English poetry does not contain less than three or more than six feet. Sometimes lines are found containing seven or eight feet. The lines are named as follows:

1. Monometer, containing one foot.
2. Dimeter, two feet.