

LONG ONE-SYLLABLE WORDS

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There are quite a few common 9-letter words pronounced with a single syllable, for instance: **SCHLEPPED, SCHMOOZED** (or **SCHMOOSED**), **SCRATCHED, SCREECHED, SCROUNGED, SCRUNCHED, SPLOTCHED, SQUELCHED, STRAIGHTS, STRENGTHS, STRETCHED**

Here are some rarer examples, all of which are acceptable in international Scrabble:

SCHLUMPED, SCHMEARED, SCHMEERED, SCHNORRED, SCRAICED, SCRAIGHED, SCRAUGHED, SCRITCHED, SCROOCHED, SCROWDGED, SQUINCHED, SQUOOSHED, THRUTCHED

Before moving on to longer examples, let's disallow drawn-out monosyllabic noises and utterances such as the 234-letter cry of anguish (230 A's followed by 4 H's) on the last page of *Portnoy's Complaint* (1967) by Philip Roth.

10 Letters

BROUGHAMED (*broomd*) transported by brougham (a one-horse closed carriage), first used in 1854 in *Household Words*, an English weekly magazine edited by Charles Dickens.

"So on and on until the doctor of today grows upon us, learned, skilful, knighted, **broughamed**, degreed, honoured,..." [Net]

SCHMALTZED imparted a sentimental atmosphere to. [OED]

SCHNAPPS loaded up on the alcoholic drink schnapps.

"We will get very Schnappsed - very, very Schnappsed! We will talk about the good things!" [*The Book of Kings*, J Thakara, 2000, p469]

SCHPRITZED attacked, slandered. [CDS]

SCHWARTZED responded 'Schwartz' to a player without making eye contact, in the drinking game Zoom Schwartz Profigliano. [Wiki]

SCRAUNCHED a dialectic word for 'crunched'. [Web3]

SCREECGHED Shetland Islands variant of 'screighed', shrieked. [EDD]

SCREETCHED variant of 'screeched'. [EDD]

SCRIETCHED early form of 'screeched'. [OED]

SCROANCHED a Cornish word meaning 'scraped'. [EDD]

SCROONCHED variant of 'scrunched', squeezed together. [Web3]

SCROOTCHED variant of 'scrooched', crouched. [RHD]

SCROUNCHED variant of 'scrunched', crunched. [EDD]

SKLEUTCHED slouched, a Scottish term. [EDD]

SKRIETCHED early form of 'screeched'. [OED]

SPLAUTCHED let a soft substance fall heavily on the floor. [EDD]

SPRAUNCHED exaggerated, told lies. [EDD]

SQUAITCHED squeezed out of shape. [EDD] The associated 17-letter **SQUAITCHED-MOUTHED** (lying, deceitful) is the longest known 2-syllable dictionary term.

SQUAWTCHED variant of 'squatched', betrayed, told a secret. [EDD]

SQUIRRELED variant of 'squirrelled' (see 11 Letters).

STHRITCHED strutted, put on airs. [EDD, stretch]

STRAUNCHED old variant of 'stranged', obsolete for 'estranged'. [OED]

STRENGTHED obsolete for 'strengthened'. [OED]

STREYGHTEs old form of 'straights', narrow passes. [MED, streit]

STROOTCHED variant of 'strooched', dragged the feet while walking. [EDD]

There are no doubt other 10-letter monosyllables that can be added to this list.

Now it is time to look at the small, curious collection of longer one-syllable terms, which comprises dialectic and obsolete words, English and part-foreign coinages, and examples of strained verbal inflections and regional pronunciation.

11 Letters

BROUGHAMMED (*broomd*) somewhat dubious double-m variant of **broughamed** (see 10 Letters), suggested by American poet William Harmon in a competition to find the longest monosyllabic word. [Wiki]

SCHWEPPESED a few years back American actress Uma Thurman starred in a raunchy global TV/cinema campaign for Schweppes soft drinks. The following comment was posted on brandchannel.com [Net] on 6 May 2011:

"[Thurman] is a little more offbeat than her typical characters and certainly more sexed up (or at least **Schweppered** up), than normally depicted on screen."

SPLAATCHED variant of 'splatched', splattered. [EDD]

SQUIRRELED (*squerld*) stored up for future used. A compressed American pronunciation sanctioned by the *Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary*. [Wiki, Net]

STRENGTHED variant of 'strengthened'. [MED, strengthen]

STREYNGTHES early form of 'strengths'. [OED]

12 Letters

SCHTROUMPED (*shtroompft*) the original French name for 'smurf' (you know, the cute little blue characters) is **schtroumpf**, which is used as an all-purpose noun and verb by Smurfs and in imitation of them. The form **schtroumpfed** is used in an English translation of an essay by Italian writer Umberto Eco:

"Let us suppose an English speaker of average culture hears a Schtroumpf poet reciting '**schtroumpfed** lonely as a *schtroumpf*.' "
However, this is intended to represent the Schtroumpf language rather than English. [Wiki]

STRENGTHEDST a possible archaic second person singular past tense of the obsolete verb 'strengthen', to strengthen. For example, the Bible contains the following:

'In the day when I cried thou answeredst me, and strengthenedst me with strength in my soul.' (Psalms 138:3)

The 12-letter form **strengthenedst** would be feasible, and indeed does appear (in error) on some websites and in a published book. [Net]

While the -edst ending would usually be pronounced as a separate syllable from the verb stem, it could conceivably be shortened to a single syllable.

STREYNGHTHED another variant of the old word 'strengthened', strengthened. The verbal stem **streynghth-** is listed in MED, and the following appears in a medieval manuscript held at Durham University Library, England:

"Alexander the grett conqueroure in all his conquest... and stallwardly **streynghthed** hyme in all vertu."
[www.dur.ac.uk (Net)]

13 Letters

SCHTROUMPFED a nonce-word based on **Schtroumpff**, variant of 'schtroumpf', French for 'smurf' (see 12 Letters). The double-f ending is used numerous times as a nickname by people registered on the social networking website Facebook (Net). For example, there is a **Schtroumpff** Blue, **Schtroumpff** Amoureux, **Schtroumpff** Grognon, and **Schtroumpff** Gourmand, as well as a Cynique **Schtroumpff**, Grand **Schtroumpff**, Marie Lola **Schtroumpff** Allizon, and others. One could easily say after being swamped by all those **Schtroumpffs**,
"We're just about **Schtroumpffed** out!"

STRENGHTHEDST possible Middle English variant of 'strengthenedst' (see 12 Letters), based on the form 'strengthened' (see 11 Letters), as in 'thou **strengthenedst**'.

14 Letters

HALFPENNYWORTH (*haypth*) as much as is sold for or is worth a halfpenny (*hape-nee*), a compressed British regional pronunciation. The word is often pronounced and spelt 'ha'porth or 'ha'p'orth (*hay-pith*). However, in a land where the surname Cholmondeley can be shortened to 'Chumley' and Featherstonehaugh to 'fenshaw', compression to a single syllable is possible, as suggested by the occasional spelling 'ha'p'th'. [Net]

"With the disappearance in the 1980s of the halfpenny..., the English are now denied the rich satisfaction of compressing 'halfpennyworth'

into 'haypth'." [*The Mother Tongue*, Bill Bryson, 1990]

STREYNGHTHEDST possible Middle English variant of 'strengthenedst' (see 12 Letters), based on the form 'streynghthed' (see 12 Letters), as in 'thou **streynghthedst**'.

15 Letters

HALFPENNYWORTHS (*haypths*) plural of 'halfpenny worth' (see 14 Letters).

References

- CDS *Cassell Dictionary of Slang*, Jonathon Green, 1998
EDD *English Dialect Dictionary*, Joseph Wright, 1970 ed.
MED *Middle English Dictionary*, 1959-2001
Net Internet, using Google search program
OED *Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd ed., 1989
RHD *Random House Dictionary of the English Language*, 2nd ed., 1987
Web3 *Webster's Third New International Dictionary*, 1976
Wiki *Wikipedia (Net)*

