

## KNOW YOUR ENGLISH

# Know your English – How is the word ‘panache’ pronounced?

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**In sports, the word ‘choker’ is used to refer to a non-performer. What is the opposite of ‘choker’?**

*(Ajay Gupta, New Delhi)*

Someone who lets his nerves get the better of him during the crucial moments in a game is usually dubbed a ‘choker’. Ever since the South African cricket team lost the semi final match to Australia in the 1999 World Cup, they have been branded ‘chokers’. People who perform exceedingly well in tense and critical situations – when the game is on the line – are labelled ‘clutch’ players.

\*Laxman and Dravid were good players to have in the clutch.

\*The captain, as expected, turned to his clutch bowler.

**How is the word ‘panache’ pronounced?**

*(J. Aparna, Bangalore)*

The ‘a’ in the first syllable is pronounced like the ‘a’ in ‘china’, while the second syllable rhymes with the words ‘cash’, ‘dash’ and ‘bash’. The word is pronounced ‘pe-NASH’ with the stress on the second syllable. When you do something with panache, you do it with flair and confidence. Your stylish and skillful ways of doing things – driving, cooking, dressing, etc. – wins you the admiration of many.

\*Richards strode to the crease with great panache.

\*I’m told Sathvika used to play the flute with panache.

The word comes from the Latin ‘pinnaculum’ meaning ‘tuft of feathers’. During Roman times, it was common practice for soldiers to appear distinguished and stylish by wearing colourful feathers on their helmets. Later, feathers began to adorn hats, and it is from this practice that we get the expression ‘a feather in one’s cap’.

**What is the meaning and origin of ‘kingpin’?**

*(T. Venkat Rao, Nellore)*

The most important individual in a group or an organisation is usually referred to as the 'kingpin'. It is this person who makes the organisation what it is; without him, it would most likely collapse. The word is frequently used to refer to the 'boss' of a criminal organisation.

\*After several months of hard work, the police caught the mob kingpin.

\*Suresh is one of the kingpins of the movie industry.

The word comes from the sport of bowling. In this sport, one is expected to knock down ten pins with a ball. The single pin that is placed in front of the others is called the 'kingpin' or 'headpin'. If one is able to hit this pin hard enough, it will knock down the remaining pins.

### **What is the difference between 'condole' and 'console'?**

*(V. Jagan, Vishakapatnam)*

When a person loses someone who is very close to him, you 'condole' with him. In other words, you express sympathy. In order to show this, you don't really need to talk; you can show it by being with the person who has suffered the loss. 'Condole' is normally used in situations when someone is grieving. When you 'console' someone, you try to provide 'comfort'. In this case, the person may not be necessarily grieving; he may be just disappointed or angry about something. For example, you can attempt to console a child who has lost his favourite toy and is crying, or you can console someone who is disappointed because he didn't perform well on a test. You attempt to comfort the individual by talking.

\*All members of the staff condoled with him in his loss.

\*Raj tried to console Anita, but it was no use.

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*"Playing polo is like trying to play golf during an earthquake."* – **Sylvester Stallone**

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