The structure of the English syllable Let us now look in more detail at syllable onsets.Any consonant may be a final consonant except h, w, j. The consonant r is a special case: it doesn't occur as a final consonant in BBC pronunciation, but there are many rhotic accents of English (see Section 7.3) in which syllables may end with this consonant.When we look at three-consonant clusters we can recognise a clear relationship between them and the two sorts of two-consonant cluster described above; examples of three-consonant initial clusters are: 'split' split, 'stream' strizm, 'square' skwes.One sort is composed of s followed by one of a small set of consonants; examples of such clusters are found in words such as 'sting' stig, 'sway' swei, 'smoke' sm?ok.If the first syllable of the word in question begins with a vowel (any vowel may occur, though o is rare) we say that this initial syllable has a zero onset.The s in these clusters is called the pre-initial consonant and the other consonant (t, w, min the above examples) the initial consonant.In fact, the number of possible initial three-consonant clusters is quite small and they can be set out in full (words given in spelling form) Table 2 Two-consonant clusters with pre-initial Table 3 Two-consonant clusters with post-initial 1, r, w, j We now have a similar task to do in studying final consonant clusters.If the syllable begins with one consonant, that initial consonant may be any consonant phoneme except 1); 3 is rare.The other sort begins with one of a set of about fifteen consonants, followed by one of the set 1, r, w, j as in, for example, 'play' ples, 'try' tras, 'quick' kwik, 'few' .fju:.Initial two-consonant clusters are of two sorts in English