

Many OE words derived from Latin have not survived, e.g. *cylle* from Latin *culleus* (leather bottle), *mese* from *mensa* (table), and *sigel* from *sigillum* (brooch).

It is often possible to determine when Latin loanwords entered English by phonological evidence. One important sound change known as *i-mutation* (sometimes *i-umlaut*) can give important clues. When *i*-mutation occurred (around the seventh century), a vowel in the accented syllable moved forward in the mouth, anticipating an /i/ or /j/ sound in the following syllable. *I*-mutation often caused morphological alternations in noun declensions. For instance, the primitive OE form **manni* ‘men’ became *menn*. The form *men* is not the only remnant of *i*-mutation in Modern English. We also say *goose*, *geese* and *mouse*, *mice*. Many examples have disappeared due to analogies with other, non-mutating words, e.g. OE *bōc*, *bēc*, MnE *book*, *books*. The following changes resulted from *i*-mutation:

a > e	ā > ē
ō > ē	ū > y
ea and eo > ie	ēa and ēo > iē

Words borrowed from Latin before the operation of *i*-mutation will be affected by it. Words borrowed after this sound change will not. Here are some examples. Were they borrowed before or after *i*-mutation?

<i>balteus</i> ‘belt’	<i>belt</i>
<i>cucīna</i> ‘kitchen’	<i>cyçene</i>
<i>puteus</i> ‘pit’	<i>pytt</i>
<i>strāta</i> ‘paved road’	<i>stræt</i>
<i>uncia</i> ‘twelfth part’	<i>ynce</i> ‘inch’

Two earlier sound changes called *fronting* and *breaking* also provide evidence. Fronting changed *a* > *æ*, and breaking changed *æ* > *ea* before *l* or *r* + consonant, and before *b*. For example, West Germanic **all-* > primitive OE *æll* > OE *eall*. Which of the forms below were borrowed before breaking and which after breaking?

<i>altare</i> ‘high place’	<i>alter</i> ‘altar’
<i>arca</i> ‘chest’	<i>earc</i> ‘ark’
<i>cantor</i> ‘singer’	<i>cantere</i>
<i>calcem</i> ‘lime’	<i>cealc</i> ‘chalk’
<i>falsus</i> ‘false’	<i>fals</i>
<i>martyr</i> ‘martyr’	<i>martyr</i>
<i>palma</i> ‘palm’	<i>palm</i>
<i>vallum</i> ‘wall’	<i>weall</i>