



A guide to spelling rules

This booklet is designed to support with the learning and understanding of spelling rules. It is a summary of the common spelling rules and can be referred to when you are spelling an unknown word.

There are many exception words in the English language and as you develop your reading, writing and spelling skills you will learn these.

No English word ends in 'i'. Use y instead. Exceptions: macaroni, spaghetti, vermicelli (Italian) and taxi (short for taxicab)

'v' ending	No English word ends in 'v' except spiv. Use ve instead.
'j' ending	No English word ends in 'j'. Use ge or dge instead.
'dge', 'tch'	The word endings 'dge', 'tch', may only be used after a short vowel e.g. badge, hedge, lodge, fetch, Dutch, catch. Exceptions to this rule are: much, such, rich, which.
Double 'l', 'f', 's' and 'z'	We double 'l', 'f', 's' and 'z', after a single vowel at the end of a short word. <i>e.g. call, tell, toss, miss, stiff, stuff, fizz, jazz.</i> Exceptions to this spelling rule: us, bus, gas, if, of, this, yes, plus, nil, pal.
Two-syllable words that end with s.	Many words that end with s have the stress on the first syllable, e.g. crisis, bonus, crocus, circus. These follow the rule - <u>only use one 's' at the end of the word.</u> If the stress is on the final syllable of a word with more than one syllable, <u>the final 's' IS doubled</u> , e.g. address, redress, discuss, unless, dismiss, undress, remiss, amiss, recall, rebuff. Also, the letters re, dis and un in the examples above are prefixes, and the rule when adding these prefixes is to keep the root word the same and just add the prefix.
'ck'	The letters 'ck' are used at the end of one-syllable root words that have a single short vowel, e.g. sack, stick, clock.
Making plurals	Regular plurals are made by adding 's'. e.g. dogs, horses, monkeys, cliffs. To form plurals of words with a hissing ending, add 'es'. Use suffix ' <u>es</u> ' after <u>s, x, z, sh, ch, ss</u> in words like bonuses, boxes, fizzes, wishes, churches and misses. For nouns that end in a single 'f', change the 'f' to 'v' before adding 'es' to form the plural. e. g. loaf, loaves; wolf, wolves, shelf, shelves. Words ending in an 'o' preceded by a consonant usually end in suffix 'es' to form the plural e.g. potato-es, volcano-es, torpedo-es. <i>Some exceptions: pianos, solos, Eskimos.</i>

Soft 'c' and soft 'g'	<p>When the letter 'c' is followed by 'e', 'i', or 'y', it makes a 's' sound. Otherwise it makes a 'k' sound. <i>e.g. city, centre, ceiling, circle, cycle, receive, access.</i></p> <p>When the letter 'g' has an 'e', 'i', or 'y' after it, it sounds like a 'j'. Otherwise it says 'g' as in gas <i>e.g. gentle, giant, gymnastic,</i> <i>There are some exceptions to this rule: get, begin, girl, give, gear, geese, gift, girth.</i></p>
Rules for using 'w' and 'qu'.	<p>When 'w' or 'qu' comes before 'a' it often says (wo) or (kwa) as in wash, want, wander, wallet, quarrel and quads.</p> <p>When 'w' comes before 'or' it often says (wer) as in worm, word, work, worth, worship. Exceptions include worry, worried, wore, worn.</p> <p>When 'w' or 'qu' come before 'ar', it often says (wor) or (quor) as in war, ward, warden, quarter, quart,</p> <p>The sound (kw) is written as 'qu'. It never stands by itself.</p>
Using 'i' and 'e' to make one sound	<p>'i' comes before 'e' except after 'c', when it is pronounced 'ee'. <i>e.g. brief, field, priest, receive, deceive, ceiling.</i></p> <p>'e' comes before 'i' when sounded like (ay) <i>e.g. neighbour and weigh.</i></p> <p>The letters i and e are sometimes used together and sounded as separate vowels, e.g. in diet, quiet and client.</p>
Using ti, ci or si to make the sound (sh)	<p>'ti', 'ci', 'si', are used to say 'sh' at the beginning of all syllables in a word apart from the first. <i>e.g. nation, patient, torrential, infectious, spacious, ancient, optician, financial, tension, session, admission, pension, division.</i></p>
Doubling 'l' and 't' in multisyllabic words before suffixes	<p>In words that end with a single 'l' after a single vowel, double the 'l' before adding a suffix regardless of accent. <i>e.g. cancelled, levelling, travelled, signalling, metallic.</i></p> <p>If a word with more than one syllable ends in a 't' and is preceded by a single vowel, and has the accent (stress) on the last syllable, double the final consonant. <i>e.g. admit, admitted; regret, regretted;</i></p> <p>but do not double the final 't' in words like visit, visited; benefit, benefited because the stress is on the first syllable of the root word.</p>