

a T M sj G C e l
r b A
F h D
X
U
G m t g w J z E P
o i n d r k n h g C g P

SPELLING
STUDY
GUIDE

Prepared by Gerarda Carlin and Arleigh Trail
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This spelling study package is a *work in progress*. Feel free to make comments to improve the learning process and the study skills package.

HOW TO STUDY SPELLING

SEE - SAY - WRITE

This method is one that will help all students learn effectively:

1. Look at the word.
2. Say the word to yourself, noticing syllables, silent letters, and likely “trouble” spots.
3. Write each word, taking care to see the difficult spots. (Some students close their eyes and spell the word aloud or silently.)
4. Check the word.
5. Copy the word.
6. Cover the word.
7. Write the word again.
8. If correct, go on to the next word. If wrong, repeat the steps.

Another technique that may be helpful is to check the word meanings and pronunciation in a dictionary. This often helps to remember the word and its spelling.

Some Spelling Patterns

1. **ff ll ss zz**

In a one-syllable word with a short vowel, double the final f, l, s, and z after a single vowel. **miss, staff, buzz**

Exceptions: **bus, gas**

2. **ck or k**

Using ck to spell the (k) sound after one short vowel at the end of a one-syllable word and also in a few two-syllable words.

If the (k) sound follows immediately after the vowel, then use **ck**. **back**

If the (k) sound follows a consonant, then use **k**. **bank**

3. **tch or ch**

Use tch to spell the (ch) sound after one short vowel at the end of a one-syllable word and also in a few two-syllable words.

Generally think of the rule above for **ck**.

If the (ch) sound follows immediately after the vowel, then use **tch**. **fetch**

If the (ch) sound follows a consonant, then use **ch**. **bench**

4. **dge or ge**

Again, this is very similar to the rule for tch or ck. Use **dge** to spell the (j) sound after one short vowel on the end of a one-syllable word and also in a few two-syllable words.

If the (j) sound follows immediately after the short vowel, then use **dge**. **badge lodge**

If the (j) sound follows a consonant, then use **ge** **plunge tinge**

5. **Ble, tle, fle, etc.**

If the short vowel is alone, double the letter. **bubble huddle battle**

If the short vowel is followed by a consonant, then use a single letter. **handle candle**

6. **Change y to i**

Change final **y** to **i** when the word ends in **y** and the letter before the **y** is a consonant.

noisy + ly = noisily

fly + er = flier

Except when the suffix begins with a y or an i.

cry + ing = crying

fly + ing = flying

If the letter before the y is a vowel, the y never changes.

joy + ful = joyful

play + ing = playing

Some Spelling Rules

1. Prefixes

Add prefix to root

dis	+	appear	=	disappear
un	+	usual	=	unusual
im	+	mortal	=	immortal
dis	+	appoint	=	disappoint
mis	+	spent	=	misspent
re	+	elect	=	re-elect (or reelect)

2. Suffixes

Add suffix to root

real	+	ly	=	really
manage	+	ment	=	management
like	+	ly	=	likely
like	+	ness	=	likeness
use	+	ful	=	useful
care	+	fully	=	carefully
safe	+	ty	=	safety
entire	+	ly	=	entirely
immediate	+	ly	=	immediately
formal	+	ly	=	formally
usual	+	ly	=	usually
wool	+	ly	=	woolly

Note: If root (desire) ends in vowel and suffix begins with a vowel (e), drop the final vowel of the root before adding the suffix (desirable).

combine	+	ation	=	combination
fame	+	ous	=	famous
scarce	+	ity	=	scarcity
lose	+	ing	=	losing
write	+	ing	=	writing
shine	+	ing	=	shining
move	+	able	=	movable

Words ending in **ce** or **ge** usually keep the **e** before a suffix beginning with **a** or **o** in order to retain the soft sound of the **c** or **g**:

change	changeable
advantage	advantageous
knowledge	knowledgeable
courage	courageous
service	serviceable

Before suffixes beginning with **i**, the **e** is usually chopped:

force	forcing
reduce	reducible
finance	financial

Exceptions:

age	ageing
singe	singeing

Reference: (Gregg 707)

When to double a final consonant

1. One syllable words ending in a consonant

drag	+ ed	= dragged
hid	+ en	= hidden
shop	+ er	= shopper
stun	+ ing	= stunning

Note: The reason we do this is to “protect” the short vowel sound of the root word.

2. Multi-syllable words that have the stress on last syllable.

begin	+ ing	= beginning
abhor	+ ent	= abhorrent
refer	+ al	= referral
occur	+ ence	= occurrence
regret	+ able	= regrettable

Note: The following multi-syllable words do NOT have the stress on the last syllable and therefore, do NOT have the last consonant of the root doubled before adding a suffix.

edit	+ ed	= edited
benefit	+ ed	= benefited
refer	+ ence	= reference
profit	+ ed	= profited

Double a final single consonant before a suffix beginning with a vowel (*a*) if the consonant ends a stressed syllable or a word of one syllable and (*b*) if the consonant is preceded by a single vowel. Otherwise, do not double the consonant.

One-syllable words:

drag	dragged
hid	hidden
shop	shoppers
stun	stunning
wet	wettest

Words stressed on last syllable:

abhor	abhorrent
begin	beginning
occur	occurrence
regret	regrettable
unwrap	unwrapped

Compare: benefited, reference [stressed on first syllable]

As a rule, change final *y* to *i* before adding a suffix, but keep the *y* before adding *-ing*

apply	applies, applied, appliance	but: applying
study	studies, studied	but: studying
happy	happily, happiness, happier, happiest	

Exceptions:

Verbs ending in *y* preceded by a vowel do not change the *y* before *-s* or *-ed*:
stay, stays, stayed

Following the same pattern of spelling, nouns like *joys* or *days* have *y* before *s*.

The following irregularities in spelling are especially troublesome, and special attention needs to be used with the following irregularities:

lays, laid pays, paid [*Compare*: says, said]

Add *ly* even when root ends in *l*

formal	formally	real	really
usual	usually	wool	woolly

3. Plurals

As a rule, form the plural of nouns by adding *s* or *es* to the singular.

Form the plural of most nouns by adding *s* to the singular.

Two boys, many nations, a few scientists, several safes, three cupfuls, all the radios
both sisters-in-law [*chief word pluralized*]
the Dudleys and the Berrys [*proper names pluralized*]

Note: To form the plural of some nouns ending in *f* or *fe*, change the ending to *ve* before adding the *s*:

a thief, two thieves; one life, our lives

Add *es* to singular nouns ending in *s*, *ch*, *sh*, or *x*.

many losses; these mailboxes; the Rogerses
two approaches; a lot of ashes; two Dorises

[Note that each plural above makes an extra syllable.]

Add *es* to singular nouns ending in *y* preceded by a consonant, after changing the *y* to *i*.

eighty	eighties
strawberry	strawberries
company	companies
industry	industries

Note: Although es is often added to a singular noun ending in o preceded by a consonant, usage varies:

echoes	heroes	potatoes	vetoed	[-es only]
autos	memos	pimentos	pros	[-s only]
mottos/mottoes		zeros/zeroes	[-s or -es]	

Exceptions:

Irregular plurals (including retained foreign spellings) are not formed by adding s or es.

Singular:	woman	goose	analysis	alga	species	cactus	index
Plural:	women	geese	analyses	algae	species	cacti	indexes or indices

“Schwa” ə

The “schwa” sound is that *indefinite* vowel sound that sometimes sound like “a” (academy), sometimes like “e” (deficit), sometimes like “i” (aristocracy), and sometimes like “u” (arithmetic).

It is important to note that the “schwa” sound is **always** an unaccented short vowel sound and that your ear does not always give a clue to the correct vowel; it is a neutral sound. Think of the word *medicine*: does that first “i” sound like “a”, “e”, “i”, or “u”?

The trick is to **unmask** the “schwa” by finding a related word in which the vowel in question appears in an accented syllable.

məˈdɛsɪn...	med í cin al	... i
ˌækədəˈmi...	a cad ém ic	... e
ˈɔːθər ...	auth ór it y	... o
kʌstədi ...	cust ó di an	... o
ˈnuːtrəl ...	neu trál it y	... a
ˈremədi ...	rem é di al	... e

Now try these – change to find the correct vowel for each of the following:

persənəl	person ál ity
sɪmɪlər	simil ár ity
metəl	metál lic
ɔrgən	orgán ic
hʌmən	humán ity
legəl	legál ity
edɪtər	edítór ial
tʊtər	tutór ial
parənt	parént al
ɔrɪdʒɪnəl	originál ity
sɪvəl	cívil ian
ɪdiət	idiót ic
brʊtəl	brutál ity
tɒtəl	totál ity

Spelling “ei/ie” words

1. Erase from your memory the “half rule” you learned in grade two.
2. Learn the “exceptions” first:
 - a. pie lie tie die
 - b. **friend** (tip: friend to the end)
 - c. **weird** (tip: we are weird!)
 - d. **either, neither** (tip: just try misspelling these...they look weird!)
 - e. **seize** (tip: see it and seize it!)
 - f. **science** (tip: the “i” is actually sounded first: sci ence)
 - g. **ancient** (tip: the “e” is actually sounded second: an ci ent)

3. After “c” it is “ei”

ceiling

ceive words: receive, conceive, deceive (also other forms when the vowel sound is long: receipt, conceived, etc.)

4. Note that when the vowel sounds short, spelling is changed: receive - reception, conceive - conception, etc.
5. If sound is long “e”, it is “ie”
niece, piece, chief, thief, grief, retrieve, relief, achieve, field, brief, believe
6. If sound is not long “e”, it is “ei”
eight, rein, neighbour, vein, weigh, freight, foreign, their, height, leisure (short e)

Frequently Misspelled Words (Check *How-To-Study* notes on Page 1)

absence	behalf	calendar	embarrass
accept	beneficial	campaign	empty
accidentally	benefit	capital	entitled
accommodate	bleeding	cemetery	encounter
accompanied	brilliant	clothes	endeavour
accompanying	beginning	coarse	equipment
acquaintance	belief	column	escape
across	believe	competent	especially
advice	bicycle	consistent	essential
advise	Britain	corporation	esteemed
affect	bulletin	course	evidence
aggressive	bureau		exaggerated
aisles	buried	deceive	exceedingly
allege	business	decided	exceptions
allocate	busy	defeat	excessive
all right		develop	exclusive
along	cafeteria	development	experience
all ready	cancel	divine	extension
already	candles	doesn't	extremely
alright	captain	definite	effect
always	carbon	definitely	emphasize
amateur	caricature	definition	excellent
analyse	catalogue	describe	except
annoying	caution	description	eligible
answer	certain	desert	
anxious	chairs	desirable	faithfully
apparatus	champagne	despair	familiar
appearance	changeable	desperate	fascinating
applied	character	dessert	*favourable
appointment	chasing	devote	*favourite
appreciate	chauffeur	diagnosis	federal
approach	chemistry	dictator	finally
approve	choose	different	firmly
arctic	climbed	disappear	foreign
arduous	confirm	disappoint	freight
argument	coming	disapprove	friend
arrangement	committee	disastrous	February
arrival	communities	discipline	fastidious
ascent	compelled	discussed	flexible
assistant	completely	discrepancy	fourth
assistance	conceive	dispute	
asthma	conscience	disturbed	gains
athletics	conscientious	diving	generally
atmosphere	consensus	doctor	genuine
attract	convenience	drains	genius
average	courteous		groceries
awareness	courtesy	eighth	government
awkward	criticism	equipped	governor

grammar	loose	pastime	remember
gradations	lose	peculiar	resources
gregarious	losing	perfume	respectfully
guarantee		perhaps	realize
guidance	magazine	permanent	recognize
guilty	maintenance	persuade	recommend
	marriage	physical	recommendation
handsome	material	physician	reliable
happiness	meant	piece	religious
hardware	medicine	planned	repetition
heard	memory	pleasant	responsible
height	method	plumbing	restaurant
holiday	military	pneumonia	reticent
human	mineral	poison	referral
hungry	minimum	possess	reverse
humorous	minute	postpone	review
	mathematics	practically	rhythm
identification	mischievous	prepared	
imagine	misspell	principal	safety
immediately	morning	principle	sandwich
inaudible	mortgage	privilege	sane
incessant	miscellaneous	process	scarce
incline	magnificent	professional	Saturday
indefinite	manufacturer	probably	saving
indigestion		prodigy	schedule
individual	naturally	professor	scrap
instead	necessary	profitable	secretary
interchangeable	nickel	pronunciation	sentence
interested	niece	propriety	seize
interfere	nineteen	psychology	separate
independent	ninety	purchase	several
installed	nocturnal	purpose	sheriff
interrupt	northern		shining
introduce	notice	quarrel	sincerely
irritated	noticeable	quiet	similar
issued	nuisance	quite	speech
itemized			spontaneous
its	occasion	reality	sophomore
it's	occurred	really	straight
	occurring	receipt	studying
jealous	omitted	recipe	succeed
jewellery	opinion	recently	success
knowledge	opportunity	reference	sufficient
	opposite	referred	superintendent
laid	original	regular	surprise
laboratory	paid	relative	surely
leisure	pamphlet	relief	surveillance
length	parallel	relieve	subtle
library	parliament	remained	spontaneous

tariff
temperament
their
there
they're
thoroughly
to
together
too
tragedy
transferred
tried
tries
truly
Tuesday
typical
two
temperament

until
usually

valuable
vegetable
volunteer

weather
Wednesday
whether
whose
woman
writing
written