

Some Useful English Spelling Rules –

It does help to learn them!!

1. Remember vowels (a e i o u) can make a short sound or a long sound (like their name).
For example a as in apple [short – its sound], a as in ape [long – its names].
2. Have fun with words! Learn to build words from the root word, use prefixes (bits you add on the front) and suffixes (bits you add on the end).
For example: *stand*, *understand*, *understanding*, *misunderstanding*
3. 'q' always has 'u' with it and is written 'qu' like in 'quiz' and 'question'.
4. No word ends in 'v' **except** 'spiv' (a flashy man). Often 'e' comes after 'v' to prop it up like in 'active' and 'native'.
5. No word ends in 'j'.
6. Never write a 'k' before a 't'. Always write 'ct' as in 'fact' and 'direct'.
7. No English word ends in 'i'.
Watch out for rule breakers: taxi (short for taxicab) and ski, spaghetti and macaroni (but they aren't English!)
8. The 'ee' sound at the end of a word is mostly spelt 'y'.
Watch out for rule breakers: coffee and committee!
9. Double 'l' 'f' and 's' after a single vowel in a short word, e.g. spell, boss, stiff, puff. **Watch out for rule breakers:** us, bus, gas, if, of, this, yes, plus, nil, pal!
10. Add 's' to make a regular plural as in 'cat - cats'.
11. Add 'es' to make a plural if the word has a hissing ending like:
's - buses, x - foxes, sh - brushes, ch - churches, ss – fuses.
12. If a word ends in one 'f', change it to 'v' and add 'es' to make the plural.
For example: leaf - leav- leaves, wolf – wolv – wolves.
Watch out for rule breakers: dwarfs, chiefs, roofs!
13. For most words that end in 'o', add 'es' to make the plural. For example:
potato + es = potatoes.
Watch out for rule breakers: pianos, solos, Eskimos!
14. The prefix 'all' at the start of a word is only spelt with one 'l' – almost, altogether, also, already.

15. The suffixes 'full and till' at the end of the word only have one 'l' – helpful, until.
16. Remember the suffix to make an adverb is 'ly' **NOT** 'ley'!
17. Drop the final 'e' from the root word before adding a suffix that starts with a vowel. For example: move + ed = moved, like + ing = liking, drive + er = driver, muddle + ed = muddled.
18. If a word ends in a consonant + y, change the 'y' to 'i' before adding any ending except 'ing'. For example: marry + es = marries, funny +ly = funnily. **BUT** fly – ing = flying, carry - ing = carrying.
19. 'ck', 'dge', 'tch' are used after a short vowel (one that says its sound). For example: back, hedge, match.
Watch out for rule breakers: rich, much, such, which!
20. If a word is one syllable, has one final consonant and one short vowel always double the final consonant before adding a suffix that starts with a vowel. For example: stop + ed = stopped, fat + er = fatter, hot + est = hottest, rob + ing = robbing
21. 'ce', 'ci' 'cy' makes the /s/ sound.
For example: centre, circle, cycle
22. 'ge', 'gi', 'gy' makes the /j/ sound.
For example: gentle, giant, gym.
Watch out for rule breakers: get, begin, girl, give, gear, geese, gift, girth!
23. 'i' comes before 'e' except after c but not when it sounds like /a/ as in 'neighbour' and 'weigh'.
Watch out for rule breakers: neither, foreign, seized, sovereign, forfeit!

Ways to Learn Spellings

Hear it See it Say it Do it

To remember you must -

1. Think about the word that you are trying to learn and make sure you understand what it means.
2. Divide it into syllables (chunks). You can find where they are by putting your hand under your chin and counting how many times it goes down when you say it.
For example: Sat/ur/day = 3 syllables. Note that each syllable must have a vowel.
3. Talk about which parts of the word are hard to spell and highlight them.
4. Practise spelling the word at odd times. e.g. on the way to school.
5. Learn other words with the same pattern and then they will be easier to remember.
6. Use the learning style you like best.
If you are an auditory person: - say it aloud to yourself, sing it, turn it into a rap, quiz a friend
If you are a visual person practise writing it: - use different colours, look at the tall letters and short letters, draw pictures as clues,
pretend your eyes are a camera and take a photo of it. Can you see a little word inside it?
If you are a person who likes to learn by doing things, make huge letters in the air, walk up and down chanting it, do an action which links to the word, decide how many sounds are in the word and touch a finger as you say each sound
7. For irregular words, think of associations/mnemonics to trigger your memory. Remember, the more ridiculous your rhyme, the easier it is to remember how to spell it.
8. Talk about it and teach it to a friend or to a parent.