

# Classic Spelling Guidelines

| <b>Dropping the final “e”</b>   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| If final “e” follows a consonant, drop the final “e” before any suffix beginning with a vowel           | take → taking<br>believe → believing<br>hate → hated, hating                      |  |
| Keep the “e” in order to keep the “soft” sound of “c” or “g” before suffixes beginning with a, u, or o  | charge → chargeable<br>notice → noticeable<br>courage → courageous                |  |
| <b>Changing the final “y” to “i”</b>  |   |  |
| For the plural, third person singular (present) or simple past, change the “y” to “i” and add es or ed. | try → tries/tried<br>carry → carries/carried                                      | sky → skies<br>theory → theories                                       |
| If the suffix begins with an i (ing), do not change the y to i  | try → trying<br>cry → crying  | study → studying   |
| For words that end with “y” preceded by a vowel, keep the “y” before adding a suffix                    | say → saying<br>boy → boyish<br>stay → stayed                                     | enjoy → enjoying<br>play → player<br>tray → trays                      |
| For words that end in “y” preceded by a consonant, change the “y” to “i” before adding a suffix .       | happy → happiest<br>beauty → beautiful  | easy → easier, easily<br>study → studies                               |
| There are some irregular exceptions to make note of   | lay → laid<br>say → said  | pay → paid<br>day → daily  |
| <b>Plurals: When to add s, and when to add es.</b>  |   |  |
| Most words will take a simple s ending:   | book → books<br>hope → hopes  | dog → dogs<br>sing → sings   |
| Words that end in s, z, ch, sh, or x add es   | dress → dresses<br>buzz → buzzes<br>watch → watches                               | dish → dishes<br>box → boxes   |
| Some words that end in o take es  | potato → potatoes<br>tomato → tomatoes  | echo → Echoes<br>mango → mangoes                                       |
| Words that have an o ending preceded by a vowel will take an s ending                                   | zoo → zoos<br>patio → patios  | radio → radios<br>kangaroo → kangaroos                                 |
| Short forms of longer words, and words that originate in latin languages, also take s endings           | kilo (kilogram) → kilos<br>Photo (photograph) → photos<br>Logo (logotype) → logos | piano (ital.) → pianos<br>solo (ital.) → solos<br>taco (span.) → tacos |
| <b>Changing f to v in the plural form</b>   |   |  |
| Change the f to v in many common words. When using v, make it plural with an es ending.                 | knife → knives<br>leaf → leaves<br>wolf → wolves                                  | wife → wives<br>life → lives<br>scarf → scarves                        |
| Words that end in ff do not change to v. Just add s   | cliff → cliffs<br>cuff → cuffs  | sniff → sniffs<br>whiff → whiffs                                       |
| There are many exceptions   | roof → roofs<br>chief → chiefs  | wharf → wharfs   |

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| <b>Irregular plurals</b>  |   |   |                  |
|---|---|---|------------------|
| Some nouns do not take s at all, and instead have a unique spelling. Remember these words.  | child→children<br>man→men<br>woman→women<br>fish→fish<br>moose→moose              | deer→deer<br>mouse→mice<br>goose→geese<br>ox→oxen   |                  |
| <b>Doubling final consonants (usually verbs)</b>  |   |   |                  |
| Note: These 8 consonants NEVER double: h,j,k,q,v (except “revving”), w, x, y  |   |   |                  |
| Final stressed Syllable:<br>If a word ends in a single vowel and a single consonant, double the final consonant before adding a suffix beginning with a vowel | hop→hopped<br>begin→beginning<br>prefer→preferred<br>occur→occurring,<br>occurred | transmit→transmitting,<br>transmitted<br>fat→fattest, fatter<br>forget→forgettable,<br>forgetting |                  |
| Exceptions to the above rule:   | box→boxed,<br>boxing,   | snow→snowed,<br>snowing   |                  |
| If the stress shifts towards the beginning of the word with a suffix then the consonant remains single:   | prefer→preference<br>infer→inference  |   |                  |
| If a multi-syllable word does not have a final stressed syllable, there is no change with suffixation.  | occur→occurrence<br>enter→entered<br>system→systematic                            | question→questionin<br>g<br>interpret→interpreted   |                  |
| When you have words that end in a vowel consonant and if the vowel says its own alphabet name, then the final consonant before the dropped e is NOT doubled   | hope→hoped,<br>hoping<br>bake→baked   | compare→comparabl<br>e<br>like→likeable   |                  |
| If a word ends in a double vowel preceding a single consonant, there is no change in the final consonant with suffixation                                     | tear→tearing<br>roof→roofing, roofer  | bear→bearable<br>sleep→sleeping   |                  |
| If a word ends in a double or triple consonant, there is no change in the final consonant with suffixation  | work→worked,<br>working, workable<br>back→backed,<br>backing                      | dark→darker, darken<br>light→lighting,<br>lighten, lightly  |                  |
| <b>ie vs ei</b>   |   |   |                  |
| “i” before “e” except after “c”...  | belief<br>friend  | receive<br>ceiling  | receipt<br>grief |
| or when pronounced “ay”   | neighbor  | sleigh  | weigh            |
| However, there are so many exceptions to this rule that it really can’t be relied on very often .   | Seize<br>leisure  | height<br>science   | weird            |