

Classic Spelling Guidelines

Dropping the final “e”	Example
If final “e” follows a consonant, drop the final “e” before any suffix beginning with a vowel	take: taking believe: believing 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 notice: noticeable courage: courageous

Changing the final “y” to “i”	Example	Example
For the plural, third person singular (present) or simple past, change the “y” to “i” and add es or ed.	try: tries/tried carry: carries/carried	sky: skies theory: theories
If the suffix begins with an i (ing), do not change the y to i	try: trying cry: crying	study: studying
For words that end with “y” preceded by a vowel, keep the “y” before adding a suffix	say: saying boy: boyish stay: stayed	enjoy: enjoying play: player tray: trays
For words that end in “y” preceded by a consonant, change the “y” to “i” before adding a suffix.	happy: happiest beauty: beautiful	easy: easier, easily study: studies
There are some irregular exceptions to make note of.	lay: laid say: said	pay: paid day: daily

Plurals: When to add s, and when to add es.	Example	Example
Most words will take a simple s ending:	book: books hope: hopes	dog: dogs sing: sings
Words that end in s, z, ch, sh, or x add es	dress: dresses buzz: buzzes	dish: dishes box: boxes

Plurals: When to add s, and when to add es.	Example	Example
	watch: watches	
Some words that end in o take es	potato: potatoes tomato: tomatoes	echo: Echoes mango: mangoes
Words that have an o ending preceded by a vowel will take an s ending	zoo: zoos patio: patios	radio: radios kangaroo: kangaroos
Short forms of longer words, and words that originate in latin languages, also take s endings	kilo (kilogram): kilos Photo (photograph): photos Logo (logotype): logos	piano (ital.): pianos solo (ital.): solos taco (span.): tacos

Changing f to v in the plural form	Example	Example
Change the f to v in many common words. When using v, make it plural with an es ending.	knife: knives leaf: leaves wolf: wolves	wife: wives life: lives scarf: scarves
Words that end in ff do not change to v. Just add s	cliff: cliffs cuff: cuffs	sniff: sniffs whiff: whiffs
There are many exceptions	roof: roofs chief: chiefs	wharf: wharfs

Irregular plurals	Example	Example
Some nouns do not take s at all, and instead have a unique spelling. Remember these words.	child: children man: men woman: women fish: fish moose: moose	deer: deer mouse: mice goose: geese ox: oxen

Doubling final consonants (usually verbs) Note: These 8 consonants NEVER double: h, j, k, q, v (except “revving”), w, x, y	Example	Example
Final stressed Syllable: 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 begin: beginning prefer: preferred occur: occurring, occurred	transmit: transmitting, transmitted fat: fattest, fatter forget: forgettable, forgetting
Exceptions to the above rule:	box: boxed, boxing,	snow: snowed, snowing
If the stress shifts towards the beginning of the word with a suffix then the consonant remains single:	prefer: preference infer: inference	
If a multi-syllable word does not have a final stressed syllable, there is no change with suffixation.	occur: occurrence enter: entered system: systematic	question: questioning 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, hoping bake: baked	compare: comparable 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 roof: roofing, roofer	bear: bearable sleep: sleeping

ie vs ei	Example	Example	Example
“i” before “e” except after “c”...	belief friend	receive ceiling	Receipt 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 leisure	height science	weird