

Progression of Spelling



EYFS and Year 1

Spellings are taught through the Unlocking Letters and Sounds phonics programme.

EYFS tricky words	Year 1 tricky words
	the, a, do, to, today, of, said, says, are, were, was, is, his, has, I, you, your, they, be, he, me, she, we, no, go, so, by, my, here, there, where, love, come, some, one, once, ask, friend, school, put, push, pull, full, house, our – and/or others, according to the programme used

Year 2

Spelling Pattern	Spelling Rule	Examples
<p>The /dʒ/ sound spelt as ge and dge at the end of words, and sometimes spelt as g elsewhere in words before e, i and y</p>	<p>The letter j is never used for the /dʒ/ sound at the end of English words. At the end of a word, the /dʒ/ sound is spelt -dge straight after the /æ/, /ɛ/, /ɪ/, /ɒ/, /ʌ/ and /ʊ/ sounds (sometimes called 'short' vowels). After all other sounds, whether vowels or consonants, the /dʒ/ sound is spelt as -ge at the end of a word. In other positions in words, the /dʒ/ sound is often (but not always) spelt as g before e, i, and y. The /d / ʒ sound is always spelt as j before a, o and u.</p>	<p>The letter j is never used for the /dʒ/ sound at the end of English words. At the end of a word, the /dʒ/ sound is spelt -dge straight after the /æ/, /ɛ/, /ɪ/, /ɒ/, /ʌ/ and /ʊ/ sounds (sometimes called 'short' vowels). After all other sounds, whether vowels or consonants, the /dʒ/ sound is spelt as -ge at the end of a word. In other positions in words, the /dʒ/ sound is often (but not always) spelt as g before e, i, and y. The /d / ʒ sound is always spelt as j before a, o and u.</p>
<p>The /s/ sound spelt c before e, i and y</p>		<p>Race, ice, sell, city and fancy</p>
<p>The /n/ sound spelt kn and (less often) gn at the beginning of words</p>	<p>The 'K' and 'G' at the beginning of these words was sounded out hundreds of years ago.</p>	<p>Knock, know, knee, gnat and gnaw</p>
<p>The /r/ sound spelt wr at the beginning of words</p>	<p>The spelling probably also reflects an old pronunciation.</p>	<p>Write, written, wrote, wrong and wrap</p>
<p>Words ending -il</p>	<p>There are not many of these words.</p>	<p>pencil, fossil, nostril</p>
<p>The /aɪ/ sound spelt -y at the end of words</p>	<p>This is by far the most common spelling for this sound at the ends of words.</p>	<p>Cry, fly, dry, try, reply and July</p>
<p>The / :/ ɔ sound spelt a before l and ll</p>	<p>The / :/ ɔ sound ('or') is usually spelt as a before l and ll.</p>	<p>All, ball, call, walk, talk and always</p>
<p>The /ʌ/ sound spelt o</p>		<p>Other, mother, brother, nothing and Monday</p>
<p>The /i:/ sound spelt -ey</p>	<p>The plural of these words is formed by the addition of -S</p>	<p>Donkey, monkey, chimney and valley</p>
<p>The /ɒ/ sound spelt a after w and qu</p>	<p>a is the most common spelling for the /ɒ/ ('hot') sound after w and qu.</p>	<p>Want, watch, wander, quantity and squash</p>
<p>The /ɜ:/ sound spelt or after w</p>	<p>There are not many of these words.</p>	<p>Word, work, worm, world and worth</p>

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The /ɔ:/ sound spelt ar after w	There are not many of these words.	War, warm and towards
The /z/ sound spelt s		Television, treasure and usual
The possessive apostrophe (singular nouns)		Megan's , Ravi's, the girl's, the child's and the man's
Words ending in -tion		Station, fiction, motion, national and section
*The /l/ or /əl/ sound spelt -le at the end of words	The -le spelling is the most common spelling for this sound at the end of words.	table, apple, bottle, little, middle
*The /l/ or /əl/ sound spelt -el at the end of words	The -el spelling is much less common than -le. The -el spelling is used after m, n, r, s, v, w and more often than not after s.	camel, tunnel, squirrel, travel, towel, tinsel
*The /l/ or /əl/ sound spelt -al at the end of words	Not many nouns end in -al, but many adjectives do.	metal, pedal, capital, hospital, animal
*Adding -es to nouns and verbs ending in -y	The y is changed to i before -es is added.	flies, tries, replies, copies, babies, carries
*Adding -ed, -ing, -er and -est to a root word ending in -y with a consonant before it.	The y is changed to i before -ed, -er and -est are added, but not before -ing as this would result in ii.	The only ordinary words with ii are skiing and taxiing. copied, copier, happier, happiest, cried, replied ...but copying, crying, replying
*Adding the endings -ing, -ed, -er, - est and -y to words ending in -e with a consonant before it	The -e at the end of the root word is dropped before -ing, -ed, -er, -est, -y or any other suffix beginning with a vowel letter is added.	The exception is being. hiking, hiked, hiker, nicer, nicest, shiny
*Adding -ing, -ed, -er, -est and -y to words of one syllable ending in a single consonant letter after a single vowel letter	The last consonant letter of the root word is doubled to keep the vowel 'short'. Exception: The letter 'x' is never doubled:	patting, patted, humming, hummed, dropping, dropped, sadder, saddest, fatter, fattest, runner, runny mixing, mixed, boxer, sixes.
*The suffixes -ment, -ness, -ful , - less and '-ly'	If a suffix starts with a consonant letter, it is added straight on to most root words without any change to the last letter of those words. Exceptions: (1) argument (2) root words ending in -y with a consonant before it but only if the root word has more than one syllable.	enjoyment, sadness, careful, playful, hopeless, plainness (plain + ness), badly merriment, happiness, plentiful, penniless, happily
*Contractions	In contractions, the apostrophe shows where a letter or letters would be if the words were written in full (e.g. can't – cannot). It's means it is (e.g. It's raining) or sometimes it has (e.g. It's been raining), but it's is never used for the possessive. The possessive apostrophe (singular nouns) Megan's, Ravi's, the girl's,	can't, didn't, hasn't, couldn't, it's, I'll

Spelling Progression

	the child's, the man's	
*Homophones and near-homophones	It is important to know the difference in meaning between homophones.	there/their/they're, here/hear, quite/quiet, see/sea, bare/bear, one/won, sun/son, to/too/two, be/bee, blue/blew, night/knight
Door, floor, poor, because, find, kind, mind, behind, child, children*, wild, climb, most, only, both, old, cold, gold, hold, told, every, everybody, even, great, break, steak, pretty, beautiful, after, fast, last, past, father, class, grass, pass, plant, path, bath, hour, move, prove, improve, sure, sugar, eye, could, should, would, who, whole, any, many, clothes, busy, people, water, again, half, money, Mr, Mrs, parents, Christmas – and/or others according to programme used. Note: 'children' is not an exception to what has been taught so far but is included because of its relationship with 'child		

Year 3 & 4

Spelling Pattern	Spelling Rule	Examples
Adding suffixes beginning with vowel letters to words of more than one syllable	If the last syllable of a word is stressed and ends with one consonant letter which has just one vowel letter before it, the final consonant letter is doubled before any ending beginning with a vowel letter is added. The consonant letter is not doubled if the syllable is unstressed.	Forgetting, forgotten, beginning, beginner, prefer, preferred gardening, gardener, limiting, limited, limitation
The / ɪ / sound spelt y elsewhere than at the end of words	Words to be learnt as needed.	myth, gym, Egypt, pyramid, mystery
The /ʌ/ sound spelt ou	Words to be learnt as needed.	young, touch, double, trouble, country
Prefixes	Most prefixes are added to the beginning of root words without any changes in spelling, but see in- below. Like un-, the prefixes dis- and mis- have negative meanings. The prefix in- can mean both 'not' and 'in'/'into'. In the words given here it means 'not'. Before a root word starting with l, in- becomes il Before a root word starting with m or p, in- becomes im-. Before a root word starting with r, in- becomes ir-. re- means 'again' or 'back'. sub- means 'under'. inter- means 'between' or 'among'. super- means 'above'. anti- means 'against'. auto- means 'self' or 'own'.	dis-, mis-: disappoint, disagree, disobey misbehave, mislead, misspell (mis + spell) in-: inactive, incorrect illegal, illegible immature, immortal, impossible, impatient, imperfect irregular, irrelevant, irresponsible re-: redo, refresh, return, reappear, redecorate sub-: subdivide, subheading, submarine, submerge inter-: interact, intercity, international, interrelated (inter + related) super-: supermarket, superman, superstar anti-: antiseptic, anti-clockwise, antisocial auto-: autobiography, autograph
The suffix -ation	The suffix -ation is added to verbs to form nouns. The rules already learnt still apply.	information, adoration, sensation, preparation, admiration
Suffix -ly	The suffix -ly is added to an adjective to form an adverb. The rules already learnt still apply. The suffix	sadly, completely, usually (usual + ly), finally (final + ly), comically (comical + ly)

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	<p>-ly starts with a consonant letter, so it is added straight on to most root words.</p> <p>Exceptions: (1) If the root word ends in -y with a consonant letter before it, the y is changed to i, but only if the root word has more than one syllable. (2) If the root word ends with -le, the -le is changed to -ly. (3) If the root word ends with -ic, -ally is added rather than just -ly, except in the word publicly. (4) The words truly, duly, wholly.</p>	<p>happily, angrily gently, simply, humbly, nobly basically, frantically, dramatically</p>
Words with endings sounding like /ʒə/ or /tʃə/	<p>The ending sounding like /ʒə/ is always spelt -sure. The ending sounding like /tʃə/ is often spelt -ture, but check that the word is not a root word ending in (t)ch with an er ending – e.g. teacher, catcher, richer, stretcher.</p>	<p>measure, treasure, pleasure, enclosure creature, furniture, picture, nature, adventure</p>
Endings which sound like /ʒən/	<p>If the ending sounds like /ʒən/, it is spelt as -sion</p>	<p>division, invasion, confusion, decision, collision, television</p>
The suffix -ous	<p>Sometimes the root word is obvious and the usual rules apply for adding suffixes beginning with vowel letters. Sometimes there is no obvious root word. -our is changed to -or before -ous is added. A final 'e' must be kept if the /dʒ/ sound of 'g' is to be kept. If there is an /i:/ sound before the -ous ending, it is usually spelt as i, but a few words have e.</p>	<p>poisonous, dangerous, mountainous, famous, various tremendous, enormous, jealous humorous, glamorous, vigorous courageous, outrageous serious, obvious, curious hideous, spontaneous, courteous</p>
Endings which sound like /ʃən/, spelt -tion, -sion, -ssion, -cian	<p>Strictly speaking, the suffixes are -ion and -ian. Clues about whether to put t, s, ss or c before these suffixes often come from the last letter or letters of the root word. -tion is the most common spelling. It is used if the root word ends in t or te. -ssion is used if the root word ends in ss or -mit. -sion is used if the root word ends in d or se.</p> <p>Exceptions: attend – attention, intend – intention. -cian is used if the root word ends in c or cs.</p>	<p>invention, injection, action, hesitation, completion expression, discussion, confession, permission, admission expansion, extension, comprehension, tension musician, electrician, magician, politician, mathematician</p>
Words with the /k/ sound spelt ch (Greek in origin)		<p>Scheme, chorus, chemist, echo, character</p>
Words with the /ʃ/ sound spelt ch (mostly		<p>Chef, chalet, machine and brochure</p>

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French in origin)		
Words ending with the /g/ sound spelt – gue and the /k/ sound spelt –que (French in origin)		league, tongue, antique, unique
Words with the /s/ sound spelt sc (Latin in origin)	In the Latin words from which these words come, the Romans probably pronounced the c and the k as two sounds rather than one – /s/ /k/.	Science, scene, discipline, fascinate, crescent
Words with the /ei/ sound spelt ei, eigh, or ey		Vein, weight, eight, neighbour, they and obey
Possessive apostrophe with plural words	The apostrophe is placed after the plural form of the word; –s is not added if the plural already ends in –s, but is added if the plural does not end in –s (i.e. is an irregular plural – e.g. children’s)	Girls’, boys’, babies’, children’s, men’s, mice’s (Note: singular proper nouns ending in an s use the ’s suffix e.g. Cyprus’s population)
Homophones and near homophones		accept/except, affect/effect, ball/bawl, berry/bury, brake/break, fair/fare, grate/great, groan/grown, here/hear, heel/heal/he’ll, knot/not, mail/male, main/mane, meat/meet, medal/meddle, missed/mist, peace/piece, plain/plane, rain/rein/reign, scene/seen, weather/whether, whose/who’s

Word list for years 3 and 4

accident(ally)	circle	Fam	island	peculiar	sentence
actual(ly)	complete	favourite	knowledge	perhaps	separate
address	consider	February	learn	popular	special
answer	continue	forward(s)	length	position	strange
appear	decide	fruit	library	possess(ion)	strength
arrive	describe	grammar	material	possible	suppose
believe	different	group	medicine	potatoes	surprise
bicycle	difficult	guard	mention	pressure	therefore
breath	disappear	guide	minute	probably	though/although
breathe	early	heard	natural	promise	thought

Spelling Progression

<p>build busy/business calendar caught centre century certain</p>	<p>earth eight/eighth enough exercise experience experiment extreme</p>	<p>heart height history imagine increase important interest</p>	<p>naughty notice occasion(ally) often opposite ordinary particular</p>	<p>purpose quarter question recent regular reign remember</p>	<p>through vari weight woman/women</p>
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Year 3 Year 4

Year 5 & 6

Spelling Pattern	Spelling Rule	Examples
Endings which sound like /ʃəs/ spelt -ci or -ti	Not many common words end like this. If the root word ends in -ce, the /ʃ/ sound is usually spelt as c e.g. vice – vici, grace – graci, space – spaci, malice – malici. Exception: anxi.	Vicious, precious, conscious, delicious, malicious, suspicious ambitious, cautious, fictitious, infectious, nutritious
Endings which sound like /ʃəl/ -cial is common after a vowel letter and -tial after a consonant letter, but there are some exceptions.	Exceptions: initial, financial, commercial, provincial (the spelling of the last three is clearly related to finance, commerce and province).	official, special, artificial, partial, confidential, essential
Words ending in -ant, -ance/-ancy, -ent, -ence/-ency	Use -ant and -ance/-ancy if there is a related word with a /æ/ or /e?/ sound in the right position; -ation endings are often a clue. Use -ent and -ence/-ency after soft c (/s/ sound), soft g (/dʒ/ sound) and qu, or if there is a related word with a clear /ʃ/ sound in the right position. There are many words, however, where the above guidelines don't help. These words just have to be learnt.	Observant, observance, (observation), expectant (expectation), hesitant, hesitancy (hesitation), tolerant, tolerance (toleration), substance (substantial) innocent, innocence, decent, decency, frequent, frequency, confident, confidence (confidential) assistant, assistance, obedient, obedience, independent, independence

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		Words
Words ending in -able and -ible Words ending in -ably and -ibly	The -able/-ably endings are far more common than the -ible/-ibly endings. As with -ant and -ance/-ancy, the -able ending is used if there is a related word ending in -ation. If the -able ending is added to a word ending in -ce or -ge, the e after the c or g must be kept as those letters would otherwise have their 'hard' sounds (as in cap and gap) before the a of the -able ending. The -able ending is usually but not always used if a complete root word can be heard before it, even if there is no related word ending in -ation. The first five examples opposite are obvi; in reliable, the complete word rely is heard, but the y changes to i in accordance with the rule. The -ible ending is common if a complete root word can't be heard before it but it also sometimes occurs when a complete word can be heard (e.g. sensible).	adorable/adorably (adoration), applicable/applicably (application), considerable/considerably (consideration), tolerable/tolerably (toleration) changeable, noticeable, forcible, legible dependable, comfortable, understandable, reasonable, enjoyable, reliable possible/possibly, horrible/horribly, terrible/terribly, visible/visibly, incredible/incredibly, sensible/sensibly
Adding suffixes beginning with vowel letters to words ending in -fer	The r is doubled if the -fer is still stressed when the ending is added. The r is not doubled if the -fer is no longer stressed.	referring, referred, referral, preferring, preferred, transferring, transferred reference, referee, preference, transference
Use of the hyphen	Hyphens can be used to join a prefix to a root word, especially if the prefix ends in a vowel letter and the root word also begins with one.	co-ordinate, re-enter, co-operate, co-own
Words with the /i:/ sound spelt ei after c	The 'i before e except after c' rule applies to words where the sound spelt by ei is /i:/. Exception: protein, caffeine, seize (and either and neither if pronounced with an initial /i:/ sound).	deceive, conceive, receive, perceive, ceiling
Words containing the letter-string ough	ough is one of the trickiest spellings in English – it can be used to spell a number of different sounds.	string ough ough is one of the trickiest spellings in English – it can be used to spell a number of different sounds. ought, bought, thought, nought, brought, fought rough, tough, enough cough though, although, dough through thorough, borough plough
Words with 'silent' letters (i.e. letters whose presence cannot be predicted from the pronunciation of the word)	Words with 'silent' letters (i.e. letters whose presence cannot be predicted from the pronunciation of the word)	doubt, island, lamb, solemn, thistle, knight
Homophones and other words	In these pairs of words, nouns end -ce and verbs end -se. Advice and	Advise/advice

Spelling Progression

<p>that are often confused</p>	<p>advise provide a useful clue as the word advise (verb) is pronounced with a /z/ sound – which could not be spelt c. aisle: a gangway between seats (in a church, train, plane) isle: an island aloud: out loud allowed: permitted affect: usually a verb (e.g. The weather may affect our plans) effect: usually a noun (e.g. It may have an effect on our plans). If a verb, it means 'bring about' (e.g. He will effect changes in the running of the business.). altar: a table-like piece of furniture in a church alter: to change ascent: the act of ascending (going up) assent: to agree/agreement (verb and noun) bridal: to do with a bride at a wedding bridle: reins etc. for controlling a horse cereal: made from grain (e.g. breakfast cereal) serial: adjective from the noun series – a succession of things one after someone (e.g. to draft in extra help) draught: a current of air</p>	<p>device/devise licence/license practice/practise prophecy/prophesy farther: further father: a male parent guessed: past tense of the verb guess guest: visitor heard: past tense of the verb hear herd: a group of animals led: past tense of the verb lead lead: present tense of that verb, or else the metal which is very heavy (as heavy as lead) morning: before noon mourning: grieving for someone who has died past: noun or adjective referring to a previ time (e.g. In the past) or preposition or adverb showing place (e.g. he walked past me) passed: past tense of the verb 'pass' (e.g. I passed him in the road) precede: go in front of or before proceed: go on principal: adjective – most important (e.g. principal ballerina) noun – important person (e.g. principal of a college) principle: basic truth or belief profit: money that is made in selling things prophet: someone who foretells the future stationary: not moving stationery: paper, envelopes etc. steal: take something that does not belong to you steel: metal wary: cauti weary: tired who's: contraction of who is or who has whose: belonging to someone (e.g. Whose jacket</p>
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Spelling Progression

		is that?)
Adding suffixes beginning with vowel letters to words of more than one syllable	Words to be learnt as needed.	myth, gym, Egypt, pyramid, mystery
The /ʌ/ sound spelt ou	Words to be learnt as needed.	young, touch, double, trouble, country
Prefixes	<p>Most prefixes are added to the beginning of root words without any changes in spelling, but see in- below. Like un-, the prefixes dis- and mis- have negative meanings.</p> <p>The prefix in- can mean both 'not' and 'in'/'into'. In the words given here it means 'not'. Before a root word starting with l, in- becomes il</p> <p>Before a root word starting with m or p, in- becomes im-. Before a root word starting with r, in- becomes ir-. re- means 'again' or 'back'. sub- means 'under'. inter- means 'between' or 'among'. super- means 'above'. anti- means 'against'. auto- means 'self' or 'own'.</p>	<p>dis-, mis-: disappoint, disagree, disobey</p> <p>misbehave, mislead, misspell (mis + spell)</p> <p>in-: inactive, incorrect illegal, illegible</p> <p>immature, immortal, impossible, impatient, imperfect irregular, irrelevant, irresponsible re-:</p> <p>redo, refresh, return, reappear, redecorate sub-:</p> <p>subdivide, subheading, submarine, submerge</p> <p>inter-: interact, intercity, international, interrelated (inter + related) super-:</p> <p>supermarket, superman, superstar anti-:</p> <p>antiseptic, anti-clockwise, antisocial auto-:</p> <p>autobiography, autograph</p>
The suffix -ation	The suffix -ation is added to verbs to form nouns. The rules already learnt still apply.	information, adoration, sensation, preparation, admiration
Suffix -ly	<p>The suffix -ly is added to an adjective to form an adverb. The rules already learnt still apply. The suffix -ly starts with a consonant letter, so it is added straight on to most root words.</p> <p>Exception: (1) If the root word ends in -y with a consonant letter before it, the y is changed to i, but only if the root word has more than one syllable. (2) If the root word ends with -le, the -le is changed to -ly. (3) If the root word ends with -ic, -ally is added rather than just -ly, except in the word publicly. (4) The words truly, duly, wholly.</p>	<p>sadly, completely, usually (usual + ly), finally (final + ly), comically (comical + ly)</p> <p>happily, angrily</p> <p>gently, simply, humbly, nobly</p> <p>basically, frantically, dramatically</p>

Year 5 and 6 word lists

accommodate accompany	communicate community	environment equip (-ped, - ment)	individual interfere	privilege profession	suggest symbol
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Spelling Progression

<p>according achieve aggressive amateur ancient apparent appreciate attached available average awkward bargain bruise category cemetery committee</p>	<p>competition conscience* consci* controversy convenience correspond criticise (critic + ise) curiosity definite desperate determined develop dictionary disastr embarrass</p>	<p>especially exaggerate excellent existence explanation familiar foreign forty frequently government guarantee harass hindrance identity immediate(ly)</p>	<p>interrupt language leisure lightning marvell mischief muscle necessary neighbour nuisance occupy occur opportunity parliament persuade physical prejudice</p>	<p>programme pronunciation queue recognise recommend relevant restaurant rhyme rhythm sacrifice secretary shoulder signature sincere(ly) soldier stomach sufficient</p>	<p>system temperature thorough twelfth variety vegetable vehicle yacht</p>
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