

SPELLING RULES (that work most of the time)

I. I before E except after C and when sounding like A as in neighbor and sleigh.

i before e:	except after c:	sounding like a:
chief	ceiling	weigh
lenient	deceive	reign
piece	receive	eight

BUT, the **shent** sound is spelled **-ient**.

Examples: ancient
sufficient
deficient

There are many exceptions to this rule, so be careful. When in doubt, use **i** before **e**.

II. Adding suffixes to words ending with y.

A. If there is a **consonant** before the **y**, change the **y** to **i**, then add the suffix.

Examples: reply—replies
deny—denies
decry—decries

B. If there is a **vowel** before the **y**, the **y** stays the same when adding a suffix.

Examples: key—keys
boy—boys
stay—staying

C. When adding **-ing** to words ending in **y**, the **y** stays the same.

Examples: study—studying
stay—staying
play—playing

D. If a word ending in **y** has only **one syllable**, the **y** stays the same when adding **-ness** and **-ly**.

Examples: dry—dryness dry—dryly
shy—shyness shy—shyly
coy—coyness coy—coyly

E. If a word ending in **y** has **more than one syllable**, the **y** changes to **i** when adding **-ness** and **-ly**.

Examples: arbitrary—arbitrariness arbitrary—arbitrarily
pretty—prettiness pretty—prettily
dreamy—dreaminess dreamy—dreamily

III. Plural Endings

A. Words ending in a sound that can be smoothly joined with **s** form their plural by adding **s**.

Examples: mistake—mistakes
car—cars
trip—trips

If a word cannot join smoothly with **s**, add **-es** instead. Words that end in **s**, **x**, **z**, **ch**, and **sh** take **-es**.

Examples: box—boxes
peach—peaches
dish—dishes

B. If a word ends in **y** preceded by a vowel, add **-s** to form the plural.

Examples: journey—journeys
monkey—monkeys
toy—toys

If a word ends in **y** preceded by a consonant, change the **y** to **i** and add **-es**.

Examples: party—parties
jelly—jellies
try—tries

C. For words ending in **o**, add **-es**.

Examples: potato—potatoes
echo—echoes
hero—heroes

IV. Suffixes

A. If a word ends with **-dge**, and the suffix begins with a consonant, drop the **e** and add the suffix.

Examples: acknowledge—acknowledgment
judge—judgment
argue—argument

B. If a word ends with **-ce** or **-ge** and the suffix begins with a vowel, leave the **e**.

Examples: knowledge—knowledgeable
outrage—outrageous
notice—noticeable

C. If a one-syllable word ends in a consonant-vowel-consonant pattern and the suffix begins with a vowel, the last consonant of the word is doubled.

Examples: CVC
plan—planning
CVC
swim—swimming
CVC
beg—begging

If a two or more syllable word ends with a vowel-consonant pattern, double the last consonant **only** if the last syllable is stressed.

Examples: VC
occur—occurring
VC
refer—referring
VC
begin—beginning

D. If a word ends in consonant **-e** pattern and the suffix begins with **y** or a vowel, drop the **e** and add the suffix.

Examples: Ce
adore—adorable
Ce
love—lovable
Ce
desire—desirable

E. If a word ends in a consonant **-e** pattern and the suffix begins with a consonant, leave the **e**.

Examples: Ce
love—lovely
Ce
sparse—sparsely
Ce
severe—severely

V. There is only one word in the English language that ends with **-sede**. That word is **supersede**. There are only three words that end in **-ceed**. They are **exceed**, **proceed**, and **succeed**. All the other words with the “seed” sound end in **-cede**. There are no exceptions to this rule.

Examples: recede
precede
secede