

	spelling	Statutory requirements	Rules and guidance (non-statutory)	examples [www.morewords.com is a really useful site]
1	-cious	Endings which sound like /ʃəs/ spelt –cious or –tious.	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 – vicious, grace – gracious, space – spacious, malice – malicious.	conscious precious unconscious suspicious delicious vicious spacious gracious subconscious ferocious malicious judicious vivacious luscious atrocious precocious tenacious auspicious audacious
2	-tious			Exception: anxious
3	-cial	Endings which sound like /ʃəl/	–cial is common after a vowel letter	social special official financial commercial crucial judicial artificial provincial racial beneficial superficial unofficial facial glacial especial psychosocial sacrificial prejudicial antisocial multiracial
4	-tial		–tial after a consonant letter. Exceptions: initial, financial, commercial, provincial (the spelling of the last three is clearly related to finance, commerce and province).	potential essential initial substantial residential presidential partial influential differential spatial confidential martial sequential impartial preferential consequential celestial existential circumstantial prudential torrential referential exponential palatial inertial inconsequential insubstantial interstitial experiential quintessential evidential deferential
5	-ant	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.	important significant defendant servant assistant constant sergeant relevant tenant pleasant peasant consultant merchant giant infant applicant brilliant participant accountant dominant warrant instant distant covenant unpleasant elephant pregnant protestant reluctant elegant inhabitant variant ant irrelevant attendant descendant claimant migrant occupant informant ignorant dependant extravagant pollutant triumphant
6	-ance			performance importance finance distance insurance balance advance appearance circumstance dance glance significance assistance resistance alliance entrance substance allowance acceptance instance enhance assurance appliance attendance stance ambulance relevance guidance compliance inheritance disturbance ignorance renaissance romance nuisance utterance clearance surveillance tolerance resemblance abundance reassurance annoyance avoidance elegance grievance reliance maintenance
7	-ancy			pregnancy fancy redundancy consultancy tenancy expectancy discrepancy vacancy accountancy occupancy infancy truancy malignancy conservancy ascendancy constancy militancy hesitancy poignancy vibrancy buoyancy
8	-ent		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.	government development different went moment management present department president patient movement event student agreement environment treatment parent statement investment employment argument extent represent parliament equipment element comment prevent client current document recent

			<p>There are many words, however, where the above guidelines don't help. These words just have to be learnt.</p>	<p>payment accident assessment content involvement commitment requirement agent arrangement independent spent improvement appointment settlement experiment incident establishment component rent sent</p>
9	-ence			<p>experience evidence difference influence defence science conference reference presence sentence confidence existence silence audience absence consequence violence sequence offence licence intelligence preference hence independence essence fence residence incidence competence correspondence conscience interference pence dependence negligence occurrence emergence obedience coincidence convenience commence insistence excellence inference prominence patience prevalence</p>
10	-ency			<p>agency emergency currency efficiency tendency frequency constituency presidency consistency deficiency urgency dependency contingency insolvency potency decency inconsistency sufficiency transparency regency proficiency complacency delinquency latency solvency insurgency expediency insufficiency indecency residency fluency immunodeficiency competency excellency leniency patency clemency inefficiency</p>
11	-able	<p>Words ending in –able and –ible Words ending in –ably and –ibly</p>	<p>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 obvious; 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).</p>	<p>adorable advisable agreeable avoidable capable breakable changeable comfortable disposable employable enjoyable fashionable identifiable inexcusable manageable miserable noticeable portable probable reliable remarkable replaceable respectable sociable valuable vegetable</p>
12	-ible			<p>accessible audible credible destructible edible flexible horrible impossible indestructible invincible legible possible responsible reversible sensible susceptible terrible visible</p>
13	-ably			<p>probably presumably reasonably inevitably considerably notably invariably remarkably comfortably preferably suitably arguably understandably uncomfortably unreasonably noticeably conceivably reliably irritably miserably predictably unmistakably undeniably unquestionably inextricably regrettably justifiably unbelievably profitably admirably inexplicably improbably unavoidably uncontrollably impeccably inescapably agreeably amiably ably appreciably</p>
14	-ibly			<p>possibly terribly audibly forcibly sensibly visibly ostensibly horribly imperceptibly impossibly plausibly irresistibly indelibly invisibly responsibly flexibly perceptibly incredibly</p>

15	Suffixes	-fer stressed	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.	conferring deferring inferring misinferring misreferring preferring referring retransferring transferring
				conferred deferred inferred misinferred misreferred preferred referred retransferred transferred	
		conferral deferral referral transferral			
		referencing refereeing preferencing buffering chaffering coffering differing goffering offering proffering reoffering suffering chamfering interfering pilfering			
16		-fer unstressed		The r is not doubled if the -fer is no longer stressed.	buffered chaffered chamfered coffered differed goffered interfered offered pilfered proffered reoffered suffered unbuffered conferencing
					feral transferal
					circumference conference countertransference deference difference indifference inference interference misreference nonconference non-interference preference reference teleconference transference videoconference
17		- hyphen	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. Compounds with these prefixes are sometimes (but not always) hyphenated to avoid doubling a vowel or tripling a consonant, and sometimes even to prevent initial misreading or mispronunciation. 1. To avoid doubling a vowel: anti-art anti-administration co-opt (but cooperation) de-emphasize 2. To avoid tripling a consonant: shell-like 3. To prevent initial reading or mispronunciation: re-cover vs. recover (I will re-cover the sofa when I recover from the flu.)	co-ordinate re-enter co-operate co-own
18		ee:ei	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:/. Exceptions: protein, caffeine, seize (and either and neither if pronounced with an initial /i:/ sound).	ceiling conceit deceive perceive receive receipt conceited conceive deceit

	-ough	or	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.	ought bought thought nought brought fought
		u f			rough tough enough chough
		o			cough
		o-e			though although dough
		oo			through breakthrough
		u			thorough borough
		ow			plough bough
		silent			Words with ‘silent’ letters (i.e. letters whose presence cannot be predicted from the pronunciation of the word)

				<p>t - asthma ballet castle gourmet listen rapport ricochet soften apostle bristle bustle fasten glisten hustle jostle listen moisten mortgage often * nestle rustle soften * thistle trestle whistle wrestle</p> <p>u - guess guard guide guilt guitar baguette biscuit build built circuit disguise guest guide guild guile guillotine guilty guise rogue silhouette</p> <p>w - answer sword two whole wrist write who awry playwright sword wrack wrangle wrap wrapper wrath wreak wreath wreck wreckage wren wrench wrest wrestle wretch wretched wriggle wring wrinkle wrist writ write writhe wrong wrote wrought wrung wry</p> <p>x – faux pas</p> <p>z - rendezvous</p>
		<p>Homophones and other words that are often confused</p>	<p>In these pairs of words, nouns end –ce and verbs end –se. Advice and advise provide a useful clue as the word advise (verb) is pronounced with a /z/ sound – which could not be spelt c. advice/advise device/devise licence/license practice/practise prophecy/prophesy</p>	<p>Alphabetically</p> <p>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 the other compliment: to make nice remarks about someone (verb) or the remark that is made (noun) complement: related to the word complete – to make something complete or more complete (e.g. her scarf complemented her outfit) descent: the act of descending (going down) dissent: to disagree/disagreement (verb and noun) desert: as a noun – a barren place (stress on first syllable); as a verb – to abandon (stress on second syllable) dessert: (stress on second syllable) a sweet course after the main course of a meal draft: noun – a first attempt at writing something; verb – to make the first attempt; also, to draw in someone (e.g. to draft in extra help) draught: a current of airfarther: further</p>

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				<p>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 previous 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: cautious weary: tired who's: contraction of who is or who has whose: belonging to someone (e.g. Whose jacket is that?)</p>
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Word list for years 5 and 6

accommodate accompany according achieve aggressive amateur ancient apparent appreciate attached available average awkward
 bargain bruise
 category cemetery committee communicate community competition conscience* conscious* controversy convenience correspond criticise (critic + ise) curiosity
 definite desperate determined develop dictionary disastrous
 embarrass environment equip (–ped, –ment) especially exaggerate excellent existence explanation
 familiar foreign forty frequently
 government guarantee
 harass hindrance
 identity immediate(ly) individual interfere interrupt
 language leisure lightning
 marvellous mischievous muscle
 necessary neighbour nuisance
 occupy occur opportunity

parliament persuade physical prejudice privilege profession programme pronunciation
queue
recognise recommend relevant restaurant rhyme rhythm
sacrifice secretary shoulder signature sincere(ly) soldier stomach sufficient suggest symbol system
temperature thorough twelfth
variety vegetable vehicle
yacht

Teachers should continue to emphasis to pupils the relationships between sounds and letters, even when the relationships are unusual. Once root words are learnt in this way, longer words can be spelt correctly if the rules and guidelines for adding prefixes and suffixes are also known. Many of the words in the list above can be used for practice in adding suffixes.

Understanding the history of words and relationships between them can also help with spelling. Examples:

Conscience and conscious are related to science: conscience is simply science with the prefix con- added. These words come from the Latin word scio meaning I know.

The word desperate, meaning 'without hope', is often pronounced in English as desp'rate, but the –sper- part comes from the Latin spero, meaning 'I hope', in which the e was clearly sounded.

Familiar is related to family, so the /ə/ sound in the first syllable of familiar is spelt as a.