



Parents' Guide to Spelling Year 3-4



Spelling – work for years 3 and 4

Revision of work from years 1 and 2

Pay special attention to the rules for adding suffixes.

New work for years 3/4 and 4

<i>Statutory requirements</i>	<i>Rules and guidance (non-statutory)</i>	<i>Example words (non-statutory)</i>
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	These words should be learnt as needed.	myth, gym, Egypt, pyramid, mystery
The /ʌ/ sound spelt ou	These words should be learnt as needed.	young, touch, double, trouble, country
More prefixes	<p>Most prefixes are added to the beginning of root words without any changes in spelling, but see in- below.</p> <p>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'.</p>	<p>dis-: disappoint, disagree, disobey mis-: misbehave, mislead, misspell (mis + spell)</p> <p>in-: inactive, incorrect</p>

<i>Statutory requirements</i>	<i>Rules and guidance (non-statutory)</i>	<i>Example words (non-statutory)</i>
	<p>Before a root word starting with l, in- becomes il.</p> <p>Before a root word starting with m or p, in- becomes im-.</p>	<p>illegal, illegible</p> <p>immature, immortal, impossible, impatient, imperfect</p>
<i>Statutory requirements</i>	<i>Rules and guidance (non-statutory)</i>	<i>Example words (non-statutory)</i>
	<p>Before a root word starting with r, in- becomes ir-.</p> <p>re- means 'again' or 'back'.</p> <p>sub- means 'under'.</p> <p>inter- means 'between' or 'among'.</p> <p>super- means 'above'.</p> <p>anti- means 'against'.</p> <p>auto- means 'self' or 'own'.</p>	<p>irregular, irrelevant, irresponsible</p> <p>re-: redo, refresh, return, reappear, redecorate</p> <p>sub-: subdivide, subheading, submarine, submerge</p> <p>inter-: interact, intercity, international, interrelated (inter + related)</p> <p>super-: supermarket, superman, superstar</p> <p>anti-: antiseptic, anticlockwise, antisocial</p> <p>auto-: 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
The suffix -ly	<p>The suffix -ly is added to an adjective to form an adverb. The rules already learnt still apply.</p> <p>The suffix -ly starts with a consonant letter, so it is added straight on to most root words.</p>	sadly, completely, usually (usual + ly), finally (final + ly), comically (comical + ly)

Statutory requirements	Rules and guidance (non-statutory)	Example words (non-statutory)
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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. happily, angrily

(2) If the root word ends with **-le**, the **-le** is changed to **-ly**. gently, simply, humbly, nobly

(3/4) If the root word ends with **-ic**, **-ally** is added rather than just **-ly**, except in the word *publicly*. basically, frantically, dramatically

Statutory requirements	Rules and guidance (non-statutory)	Example words (non-statutory)
	(4) The words <i>truly, duly, wholly</i> .	
Words with endings sounding like /ʒə/ or /tʃə/	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. <i>teacher, catcher, richer, stretcher</i> .	measure, treasure, pleasure, enclosure creature, furniture, picture, nature, adventure
Endings which sound like /ʒən/	If the ending sounds like /ʒən/, it is spelt as -sion .	division, invasion, confusion, decision, collision, television
The suffix -ous	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' of the root word 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 .	poisonous, dangerous, mountainous, famous, various tremendous, enormous, jealous humorous, glamorous, vigorous courageous, outrageous serious, obvious, curious hideous, spontaneous, courteous

Statutory requirements	Rules and guidance (non-statutory)	Example words (non-statutory)
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.</p> <p>-tion is the most common spelling. It is used if the root word ends in t or te.</p> <p>-ssion is used if the root word ends in ss or -mit.</p> <p>-sion is used if the root word ends in d or se.</p> <p>Exceptions: <i>attend – attention, intend – intention.</i></p> <p>-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</p> <p>musician, electrician, magician, politician, mathematician</p>
Words with the /k/ sound spelt ch (Greek in origin)		scheme, chorus, chemist, echo, character
Words with the /ʃ/ sound spelt ch (mostly French in origin)		chef, chalet, machine, brochure
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)	<p>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/.</p>	science, scene, discipline, fascinate, crescent
Words with the /eɪ/ sound spelt ei, eigh, or ey		vein, weigh, eight, neighbour, they, obey

Statutory requirements	Rules and guidance (non-statutory)	Example words (non-statutory)
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<p>Possessive apostrophe with plural words</p>	<p>The apostrophe is placed after the plural form of the word; –s is not added if the plural already ends in –s, but <i>is</i> added if the plural does not end in –s (i.e. is an irregular plural – e.g.</p>	<p>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</p>
<p><i>Statutory requirements</i></p>	<p><i>Rules and guidance (non-statutory)</i></p>	<p><i>Example words (non-statutory)</i></p>
	<p>children's).</p>	<p>population)</p>
<p>Homophones and nearhomophones</p>		<p>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</p>

Word list – years 3 and 4

accident(ally)	forward(s) fruit	potatoes
actual(ly)	grammar	pressure
address	group guard	probably
answer	guide heard	promise
appear arrive	heart height	purpose
believe	history	quarter
bicycle breath	imagine	question
breathe build	increase	recent
busy/business	important	regular reign
calendar	interest	remember
caught centre	island	sentence
century	knowledge	separate special
certain circle	learn length	straight strange
complete	library	strength
consider	material	suppose surprise
continue	medicine	therefore
decide describe	mention	though/although
different	minute	thought through
difficult	natural	various weight
disappear	naughty	woman/women
early earth	notice	
eight/eighth	occasion(ally)	
enough	often	
exercise	opposite	
experience	ordinary	
experiment	particular	
extreme	peculiar	
famous	perhaps	
favourite	popular	
February	position	
	possess(ion)	
	possible	

Notes and guidance (non-statutory)

Teachers should continue to emphasise 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 guidance for adding prefixes and suffixes are also known.

Examples:

business: once *busy* is learnt, with due attention to the unusual spelling of the /i/ sound as 'u', *business* can then be spelt as **busy + ness**, with the **y** of **busy** changed to **i** according to the rule.

disappear: the root word *appear* contains sounds which can be spelt in more than one way so it needs to be learnt, but the prefix **dis-** is then simply added to **appear**.

Understanding the relationships between words can also help with spelling. Examples:

- *bicycle* is *cycle* (from the Greek for *wheel*) with **bi-** (meaning 'two') before it.
- *medicine* is related to *medical* so the /s/ sound is spelt as **c**.
- *opposite* is related to *oppose*, so the schwa sound in *opposite* is spelt as **o**.

*This is taken from the 2014 National Curriculum – English Appendix 1 Spelling