

Let's Talk... Spelling



Rules
for
Year 6

Statutory Requirements	Rules and Guidance	Example Words
Endings which sound like 'shus' and spelt –cious or –tious	Not many common words end like this. If the root word ends in –ce , the sound is usually spelt as cious e.g. vice – vicious, grace – gracious, space – spacious, malice – malicious. Exception: anxious.	vicious, precious, conscious, delicious, malicious, suspicious ambitious, cautious, fictitious, infectious, nutritious
Endings which sound like 'shul' and are spelt 'tial' or 'cial'	–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, or –ent, –ence/–ency	Use –ant and –ance/–ancy if there is a related word with a /æ/ or /eɪ/ 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 /ɛ/ sound in the right position.	observant, observance, (observation), expectant (expectation), hesitant, hesitancy (hesitation), tolerant, tolerance (toleration), substance (substantial) innocent, innocence, decent, decency, frequent, frequency, confident, confidence (confidential)

	<p>Surprise, Surprise! There are many words, however, where the above guidance does not help. These words just have to be learnt.</p>	<p>assistant, assistance, obedient, obedience, independent, independence</p>
<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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>The –able ending is usually but not always used if a complete root word can be heard before it. 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.</p> <p>The –ible ending is common if a complete root word can’t be</p>	<p>adorable/adorably (adoration), applicable/applicably (application), considerable/considerably (consideration), tolerable/tolerably (toleration)</p> <p>changeable, noticeable, forcible, legible</p> <p>dependable, comfortable, understandable, reasonable, enjoyable, reliable</p> <p>possible/possibly, horrible/horribly, terrible/terribly,</p>

	heard before it but it also sometimes occurs when a complete word can be heard (e.g. sensible).	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 /ee/ sound spelt ei after c	The ‘i before e except after c’ rule applies to words where the sound spelt by ei is /ee/. Exceptions: protein, caffeine, seize (and either and neither if pronounced with an initial /ee/ 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.	ought, bought, thought, nought, brought, fought rough, tough, enough cough though, although, dough through thorough, borough plough, bough
Words with ‘silent’ letters (i.e. letters whose presence cannot be predicted from the pronunciation of the word)	There are no useful rules about silent letters – they just need to be learnt.	doubt, island, lamb, solemn, thistle, knight

<p>Homophones and other words that are often confused</p>	<p>In the pairs of words opposite, nouns end –ce and verbs end –se.</p> <p>Advice and advise provide a useful clue as the word advise (verb) is pronounced with a /z/ sound – which could not be spelt c.</p> <p>More examples:</p> <p><u>aisle</u>: a gangway between seats (in a church, train, plane) / <u>isle</u>: an island.</p> <p><u>aloud</u>: out loud / <u>allowed</u>: permitted.</p> <p><u>affect</u>: usually a verb (e.g. The weather may affect our plans) / <u>effect</u>: 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).</p> <p><u>altar</u>: a table-like piece of furniture in a church / <u>alter</u>: to change.</p> <p><u>ascent</u>: the act of ascending (going up) / <u>assent</u>: to agree/agreement (verb and noun).</p> <p><u>bridal</u>: to do with a bride at a wedding / <u>bridle</u>: reins etc. for controlling a horse.</p>	<p>advice/advise device/devise licence/license practice/practise prophecy/prophesy</p> <p><u>farther</u>: further / <u>father</u>: a male parent <u>guessed</u>: past tense of the verb guess / <u>guest</u>: visitor <u>heard</u>: past tense of the verb hear / <u>herd</u>: a group of animals <u>led</u>: past tense of the verb lead <u>lead</u>: present tense of that verb, or else the metal which is very heavy (as heavy as lead) <u>morning</u>: before noon / <u>mourning</u>: grieving for someone who has died <u>past</u>: 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) / <u>passed</u>: past tense of the verb ‘pass’ (e.g. I passed him in the road) <u>precede</u>: go in front of or before <u>proceed</u>: go on <u>principal</u>: adjective – most important (e.g. principal ballerina) noun – important person (e.g. principal of a college) /</p>
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	<p><u>cereal</u>: made from grain (e.g. breakfast cereal) / <u>serial</u>: adjective from the noun series – a succession of things one after the other.</p> <p><u>compliment</u>: to make nice remarks about someone (verb) or the remark that is made (noun) / <u>complement</u>: related to the word complete – to make something complete or more complete (e.g. her scarf complemented her outfit).</p> <p><u>descent</u>: the act of descending (going down). <u>dissent</u>: to disagree/disagreement (verb and noun).</p> <p><u>desert</u>: as a noun – a barren place (stress on first syllable); as a verb – to abandon (stress on second syllable) / <u>dessert</u>: (stress on second syllable) a sweet course after the main course of a meal.</p> <p><u>draft</u>: 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 air.</p>	<p><u>principle</u>: basic truth or belief</p> <p><u>profit</u>: money that is made in selling things / <u>prophet</u>: someone who foretells the future</p> <p><u>stationary</u>: not moving / <u>stationery</u>: paper, envelopes etc.</p> <p><u>steal</u>: take something that does not belong to you / <u>steel</u>: metal</p> <p><u>wary</u>: cautious / <u>weary</u>: tired <u>who's</u>: contraction of who is or who has / <u>whose</u>: belonging to someone (e.g. Whose jacket is that?)</p>
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Tips on how to learn these rules:

I think it is all about unpicking the rule and understanding it. This will help children apply it, rather than just memorise it.

I would choose one rule and really work on it; practise the rule on a range of words – play games: stand for a ‘tion’, sit for a ‘sion’, put your hands on your head for a ‘cian’; involve other family members – they might learn something!

When it is secure – move onto the next.

We will be practising and reinforcing at school.

Good Luck!

