

SPELLING GENERALIZATIONS

A. When adding a suffix, double the final consonant:

1. In a one-syllable word if
 - a. it ends in a single consonant preceded by a single vowel.
 - b. it does not end in x.
 - c. the suffix begins with a vowel or is the suffix y.
2. For words of more than one syllable, the preceding rule applies if the stress (accent) is on the last syllable.

EX. cup-cupped, cupful
link-linked (two consonants at end)
hail-hailed (two vowels)

EX. compel-compelled
instill-instilled
exploit-exploited (two vowels)
benefit-benefited (accent wrong)

EXCEPTIONS: equip-equipped, equipping, equipage
chagrin-chagrined (means mental distress)
excel-excellence, excellent (even though the accent shifts)
refer-reference, referred (accent shifts for reference)

B. Final E

1. When a suffix beginning with a vowel is added to a word that ends in a silent e, usually the e is dropped.

EX. desire-desiring
dense-density

EXCEPTIONS: Some silent e words with soft g and soft c retain the ge and ce before certain suffixes, like able and ous.

EX. change-changeable, changing, changed
manage-manageable, managing
notice-noticeable, noticing

2. When a suffix beginning with a consonant is added, generally the e is retained

EX. use-using
advertise-advertisement

EXCEPTIONS: nine-ninth
argue-argument, arguing, arguable

3. Words ending in oe follow the general rule for keeping the e before a suffix that begins with a consonant. Also keep the e when adding ing.

EX. shoe-shoeing, shoes, shoed
canoe-canoeing

4. Due, true, and whole follow the rule for a suffix beginning with a consonant, except for ly.

EX. true-truly
due-duly

C. Final Y

1. When the final y is preceded by a vowel, keep the y before adding the suffix.

EX. journey-journeyed, journeying
enjoy-enjoyable

D. IE or EI

1. If a word has a long e sound and the consonant preceding it is not c, then use ie. If the consonant is c, use ei.

EX. piece deceive
chief receive

2. These words are exceptions; link them with the ei after c rule:

EX. weird seize either
leisure neither seizure

3. Words with the long a sound, use the ei combination.

EX. sleigh, neighbor, reign, weight, and height (though it doesn't fit)

4. Words with a short i use ei.

EX. counterfeit, foreign, sovereign

5. Words that have a shent sound use the letters cie.

EX. efficient, sufficient

E. Plurals

1. Most words take the letter s to make the word plural. Words that use es to form the plural end in these letters or sounds: s, sh, tch, x, z, soft ch.

2. Words ending in o or a usually add the letter s to make the word plural.

EXCEPTIONS: echo, hero, negro, potato, tomato, torpedo, and veto. (Add es).

3. Some nouns, Latin in origin, take the Latin plural ending. Words ending in um, such as datum, take a to form the plural: data. Words ending in is, such as crisis, take es to form the plural: crises.

EX. hypothesis-hypotheses
analysis-analyses
medium-media

Some general rules

1. You can remember stationery (that you write on) by associating it with the word paper. Just remember that both end in er.
2. The principal is your pal.
3. They're = they are
There has "here" in it. Both refer to places.
Their has an "heir." Both refer to persons.

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