

# Spelling Rules

- Rule 1.** q is always written with two letters, qu, when we say “kw”. The u is not considered a vowel here.
- Rule 2.** When c by itself has a sound (not part of a two-letter phonogram) it always says “s” if followed by e, i, or y (cent, city, cyclone). If not followed by one of these letters its sound is “k” (cat, claw, cyclone).
- Rule 3.** When g has a sound by itself it can say “j” only when followed by e, i, or y. When followed by any other letter it says “g”. (Get, girl, and give show that e and i following g do not always make the g say “j”. In spelling, if g is used to say “j” it must be followed by e, i, or y (pigeon, religious, energy).
- Rule 4.** Vowels a, e, o, u usually say “a”, “e”, “o”, “u” at the end of a syllable. This is one of but three ways a vowel may say “a”, “e”, “i”, “o”, or “u”.
- Rule 5.** i and y can say “i” at the end of a syllable but usually they say “i”. This is shown at the end of the second syllable of both Indian and baby.
- Rule 6.** y, not i, is used at the end of an English word. (Taxi is short for taxicab and macaroni is an Italian word.)
- Rule 7.** There are five kinds of silent final e’s.
- 1) Vowel-consonant-vowel
  - 2) English words cannot end with v or u
  - 3) Change the sound of c and g
  - 4) Every syllable must contain at least one vowel
  - 5) No job e
- Rule 8.** or may say “er” when w comes before the or, as in work.
- Rule 9.** After c we use ei.

- Rule 10.** sh may be used at the beginning or end of a base word and at the end of a syllable (she, finish) but except in the ending –ship (friendship, worship) not at the beginning of a syllable after the first one.
- Rule 11.** ti, si, ci are the spellings most frequently used to say “sh” at the beginning of a second or subsequent syllable in a base word.
- Rule 12.** si is used to say “sh” when the syllable before it ends in an s (ses sion) and when the base word has an s where the base word changes (tense, ten sion).
- Rule 13.** si (not ti or ci) can also say “zh”, as in vision.
- Rule 14.** Words of one syllable (like hop) ending in one consonant, which have only one vowel before this last consonant, need another consonant before adding an ending that begins with a vowel.  
Short vowel words - *Double the consonant and add –ing, –ed, –er, –est.*
- Rule 15.** Words of two syllables, like begin, where the second syllable gin is like hop, having one consonant at the end and one vowel before it, also need another consonant before adding an ending that begins with a vowel, *if* the accent is on the last syllable.
- Rule 16.** Words ending with one of the five kinds of silent e’s are written without the e when adding an ending that begins with a vowel.  
*Drop the e and add –ing, –ed, –er, –est.*
- Rule 17.** In English we often double l, f, s following a single vowel at the end of a word of one syllable as in will, off, glass, roll.
- Rule 18.** Base words do not end with the letter a saying “a”. ay is used most often.
- Rule 19.** The i and o vowels *may* say “i” and “o” if followed by two consonants (find, old).
- Rule 20.** s never follows x. There is an s sound in x, “ks”. Unless a c followed by e, i, or y can be used there cannot be a second “s” sound (except)

- Rule 21.** All, written alone, has double l, but written with another syllable only one l is written (also, almost).
- Rule 22.** When till and full are added to another syllable we write one l (until, beautiful).
- Rule 23.** dge may be used *only* after short vowel (badge, ledge, bridge, lodge).
- Rule 24.** When adding an ending to a word that ends with y that has a sound alone, change the y to i unless the ending is -ing: carry is changed to carried and carries, but in carrying we keep the y. In English we almost never have an i follow i. In the words played or boys, we do not change the y since it is ay and oy, and not y alone for the sound.
- Rule 25.** ck may be used only after a short vowel.
- Rule 26.** Words which are the individual names or titles of people, places, books, days, months, etc., are capitalized.
- Rule 27.** z (never s) is used to say “z” at the beginning of a base word (zoo).
- Rule 28.** ed says “d” or “t” as the past-tense ending of any base word which does not end in the sound “d” or “t” (lived, jumped). If a base word ends in the sound “d” or “t”, adding ed makes another syllable which says “ed” (sided, parted).
- Rule 29.** Double consonants within base words of more than one syllable should both be sounded for spelling.