

Punctuation and Spelling Guides by Ella  
A Simple Guide to Punctuation

mark	use	examples
, comma	<i>for a slight pause or to separate items in a sentence</i>	<i>I love tea, coffee, hot chocolate and ginger ale. She took off her coat, shook the raindrops from her umbrella, found a comfortable chair and sat down.</i>
apostrophe Ella's worksheet	<i>to shorten words, to indicate belonging or worth</i>	Sarah's favourite hobby is reading. Sarah couldn't find her book. Sarah wouldn't find her book. She'll be happier when she has found her book. Sarah won't be going to the shop. The teachers' meeting lasted an hour. The children were good. The children's conduct was good. The lady's dress was blue. The ladies' dresses were blue. Sarah had two weeks' holiday. Sarah had four weeks' worth of train tickets to buy. (to denote value or worth)
. full stop	<i>to indicate the end of the sentence</i>	<i>I do not believe you meant to do that. He laughed.</i>
; semi-colon	<i>to divide your sentence into two equally important clauses OR when you need a more dramatic pause than that given by a comma</i>	<i>Mrs Sweeney loves Orwell's books; she also loves Shakespeare's plays. The two masked men burst in through the doorway; no-one dared move.</i>
: colon	<i>to introduce a list OR to show that what is about to come is directly linked to what has just gone before it</i>	<i>Please buy the following: cheese, eggs, ham, milk, bread and tomatoes. His sporting talents are impressive: he won both the tennis and the cricket cups.</i>
".." direct speech	<i>to indicate spoken words</i>	<i>"Are you always this rude or does it take practice?" "Please," began Tom, "help me with this French work."</i>
'...' indirect speech	<i>to include quotations in your work</i>	<i>Her favourite phrase in the classroom was 'silly boy', which she would say at least three times per lesson.</i>
? question mark	<i>to denote a question</i>	<i>"Are you sure?" he asked. She worked up the courage to ask, "Will you please come to the dance with me?"</i>
(...) parentheses	<i>to insert extra information in your sentence</i>	<i>The Three Musketeers (Les Trois Mousquetaires in French) is a novel by Alexandre Dumas.</i>

- dash	<i>can be used to indicate pauses in hesitant speech OR a dramatic effect</i>	<i>"But I don't want to-" "Go without me? I know." I warned you – but you wouldn't listen.</i>
- hyphen	<i>to create adjectives OR to denote the unusual use of a word / words</i>	<i>The water was still and blue-black. He wrote a first-rate essay. She gave a pro-American speech.</i>
!exclamation mark	<i>used to show the urgent nature of something spoken</i>	<i>This denotes something urgent or an interjection. "Help!" "No!"</i>

### Spelling Rules and Advice

able and ible	There is no clear rule to help you choose when to use the ending –able as in capable or –ible as in edible. But: 1. More words end in –able than in –ible 2. You can sometimes hear whether the ending is –able or –ible incredible, reasonable
apostrophes	All possible uses: Sarah's favourite hobby is reading. Sarah couldn't find her book. Sarah wouldn't find her book. She'll be happier when she has found her book. Sarah won't be going to the shop. The teachers held a meeting. The teachers' meeting lasted an hour. The children were quiet. The children's conduct was good. The lady's dress was blue. The ladies' dresses were blue. Sarah had two weeks' holiday. Sarah had four weeks' worth of train tickets to buy. (To denote value or worth. Only older children can handle this one.)
capital letters	Use capital letters for: ü the beginning of a sentence: The writer marked the final full stop on the page. ü all proper nouns: Scotland, Martha, Eastenders, Latin ü brand names: Heinz, Hoover, Sellotape ü words that come from proper nouns: Scottish, French, Londoner ü the pronoun I or any abbreviations involving I: I've yet to do that, I'm, I'll be seeing you ü initials: RSPCA WWF NATO ü days of the week and months of the year: Monday, July ü titles of specific events: Battle of Britain, World War One ü titles: Mrs Smith, Dr Black, Ms Wright ü NOTE: My mother likes knitting. (non-titular)

	<p>ü Father loves fishing and Mother likes knitting. (Capital M because you are using Mother as her name.) ü</p>
changing y to i	<p>When adding a suffix to words that end in y: if there is a vowel before the y, you just add the suffix. For example: enjoy = enjoyed pray = praying play = playful if there is a consonant before the y, change y to i, then add the suffix. For example: copy = copied reply = replied injury – injuries busy - busiest Exception ! If you add the suffix –ing to a word ending in y, whether it has a vowel or consonant before the y, always add the –ing. For example: carry = carrying hurrying</p>
ei or ie?	<p>The following rules are useful to remember: I before e except after c but only when the ie sound rhymes with ‘me’. I before e and rhymes with me: believe, field I after e because it doesn’t rhyme with me: eight, height I after e when after c: receive, ceiling Exceptions! Use Look, Say, Cover, Write and Check to learn them: seize protein weird caffeine neither counterfeit weird either science ancient Keith Neil Sheila</p>
f ff fe endings	<p>Any words that end in ff need an –s to make them plural, for example: sheriff – sheriffs cuff- cuffs Words that end in f or fe are tricky. Some are made plural by adding –s, such as: chief – chiefs reef – reefs Other words ending in f or fe change the f to v and add –es, such as: wife – wives leaf- leaves calf- calves Some words that end in f can be spelled with either an –fs or a –ves plural ending, such as: scarf – scarfs or scarves hoof- hoofs or hooves dwarf – dwarfs or dwarves handkerchief – handkerchiefs or handkerchieves There is no clear rule for how to spell the plural form of a word ending in f or fe. You should look them up in the dictionary and use one of the spelling strategies* your teacher has taught you to help you learn how to spell the words. cliffs – f sound calves- v sound</p>

ful to roots	<p>When the suffix –ful is added to a root word, it only needs one l. For example:  hopeful not hopefull X  beautiful not beautifull X  When you add a suffix y you should double the l.  ü beautifully (adverb) wonderfully (adverb)  hopefully(adverb)</p>
hyphens	<p>Hyphens are used to join two or more words to make a new word such as:  pre-season training  ready-to-wear football kit  The water was blue-black.  Hyphens are normally used after such prefixes as vice-, ex-, self, and non- and are usually needed before up and off:  He is an ex-serviceman.  In the run-up to the examination he panicked.  He must show his working-out in his exercise book.  She gave him the brush-off.</p>
its and it's	<p>It's = it is or it has  its denotes a quality or possession  ü It's going to be a long day. (It is going to be)  ü It's been a long day. (It has been a long day.)  ü Ludlow has its charms.  ü The dog wagged its tail. (The tail is a part of the dog)  (The dog wagged it is tail would not make sense.)  It's his bone so let him eat it. (It is the dog's bone.)</p>
ise or ize?	<p>The endings –ise and –ize are often interchangeable, likewise –isation and –ization. The –ise ending is usually safe (but note prize = meaning 'award') although the Oxford Dictionary prefers –ize.  Some words are INVARIABLE:  compromise  revise  supervise</p>
le el and al endings	<p>The endings –le, -el and –al are all used when you hear an –ul sound at the end of a word. For example:  castle, barrel and animal  -le endings  Most words ending in the –ul sound are spelled with –le, such as apple.  There are no clear spelling rules for this ending.  -el endings  The –el ending is commonly used after the following letters: n, r, s, v, w, soft c, soft g  barrel, weasel, revel, towel, parcel, angel</p>

o endings	<p>If a word ends in o, it usually needs an –s to make it plural, such as: disco – discos shampoo – shampoos</p> <p>But some words ending in o need an –es to make them plural, such as: potato – potatoes mosquito – mosquitoes</p> <p>There is no clear rule about how to spell the plural of a word ending in o. You should look them up in the dictionary and use one of the teaching strategies* your teacher has taught you to help you learn how to spell the words.</p> <p>You could group words that end in –oes together in a sentence and learn it: Eating too many mangoes, tomatoes and potatoes will make you sick!</p>
of an off	<p>I have of late lost all my mirth. He took off at speed. Most of us are happy. Lift off!</p>
ou letter patterns	<p>The ou letter pattern can have many different sounds: ow as in mouse u as in trouble or as in your er as in favour our as in devour</p> <p>When spelling words with the sound ou / ow: ow is used: before n or l when it is the last letter of a root such as: frown, prowl, gown and owl. at the end of a word or the end of a syllable such as: how, sow (pig) shower and vowel</p> <p>ou is used: for most other words with the sound ow: sprout, count, cloud</p> <p>Exceptions! crowd, foul and noun</p> <p>The short vowel sound u can be spelled using u as in cup, and ou as in courage. There are no clear rules to follow.</p>
ous ious and eous endings	<p>The ous sound at the end of many words can be spelled in three ways: -ous, -ious and -eous.</p> <p>Listen carefully to the word you are trying to spell, and you should be able to choose the correct ending.</p> <p>-ous endings</p> <p>This is the most common letter pattern at the end of an adjective or describing word, for example: noun adjective poison - poisonous danger - dangerous humour - humorous</p> <p>The ending –ious is mainly used in two cases:</p>

	<p>1. When you hear the sound shus at the end of a word, following the letters t, c or x as in: ambitious, delicious, or anxious</p> <p>2. 2. When you can hear the i as a syllable on its own, for example: curious, furious, mysterious</p> <p>Use the –eous ending when:</p> <p>a root ends in soft –ge as in: advantageous</p> <p>you can hear an e in a word as a syllable on its own: hideous</p>
past and passed	<p>A quarter past eight.</p> <p>He passed by my window.</p> <p>I have passed him my pen.</p> <p>He walked past the house (walked is the verb; past is used as an adverb)</p>
plurals	<p>Singular means there is only one: for example, one computer was sitting on the desk.</p> <p>Plural means there are more than one: for example, five computers were sitting on the desk.</p> <p>When to add ‘s’ or ‘es’</p> <p>The most common way to make a word plural is to add s, for example:</p> <p>book – books</p> <p>But there are times when you should add –es to make a plural. If a word ends in s, ss,ch,x,z or zz, add –es to make it plural:</p> <p>bench – benches dish – dishes hoax – hoaxes</p> <p>You can hear an –es plural because it adds another syllable to the word. For example:</p> <p>ad/dress – ad/dress/es</p> <p>‘bus – ‘buses</p>
prefixes	<p>Prefixes and Suffixes</p> <p>Many words are made from prefixes, roots and suffixes.</p> <p>For example:</p> <p>replayed</p> <p>re play ed</p> <p>prefix- fixed to root word suffix- fixed to the the beginning of end of the root and the root and changes changes its meaning its meaning</p> <p>replay played</p> <p>A prefix is a group of letters that is fixed to the front of a root word, changing its meaning. In most cases neither the root word nor the prefix changes its spelling when they are fixed together. For example:</p> <p>if view is the root word</p> <p>interview, preview, review and overview</p> <p>Try these:</p> <p>agree, growth, build, fasten, possible, dress, climax,</p>

	<p>behave, view</p> <p>Do not worry if the last letter of the prefix 'doubles up' with the first letter of the root when you follow the rule. Remember, neither the prefix nor the root changes when you fix them together:</p> <p>dis + solve = dissolve un+ necessary = unnecessary</p>
q letter patterns	<p>In English, the letter q is always followed by the letter u. These two letters are then followed by another vowel: qualify, quality, question, quiz, quizzical</p> <p>When the letter pattern –que appears at the end of words it makes a k sound. Most words with this pattern came into English from French. Look these words up in the dictionary:</p> <p>masque clique brusque opaque oblique statuesque</p>
sh ch and tch words	<p>The sounds made by the letter patterns sh and ch, and tch and ch can sound alike. For example:</p> <p>ship brochure switch chains</p> <p>tch and ch words</p> <p>As a very rough guide:</p> <p>Words are often spelled with the tch letter pattern if the ch sound follows immediately after a short vowel sound: switch hutch sketching patch batch wretched</p> <p>Exceptions! ch follows a short vowel sound in the following words:</p> <p>attach bachelor detach duchess much rich sandwich such touch which</p>
soft c spellings	<p>The letter c usually has a soft sound when it is followed by e, i or y, for example:</p> <p>city cylinder sauce</p> <p>The letter c has a hard sound when it is followed by a, o, u or a consonant:</p> <p>cat cot cut crack</p> <p>It is easy to confuse words ending with –ice and -iss.</p> <p>bliss hiss hospice justice poultice Swiss</p> <p>Count the number of syllables. How many do the words ending in iss have?</p> <p>Words that rhyme with –iss and have more than one syllable are usually spelled –ice.</p> <p>Exception! lettuce</p>
suffixes	<p>A suffix is a group of letters that is fixed to the end of a root word, changing its meaning. For example:</p> <p>if deliver is the root word</p> <p>delivery deliverance delivered delivers</p> <p>When a root word ends in a consonant, in many cases neither the root word nor the suffix changes its spelling when they are fixed together. For example:</p>

	rest resting restful restfully Try to match these: sound colour cool mix friend bright ed est ing ful ness ship
suffixes and roots: doubling	When you add a suffix that starts with a vowel, (-ed, -er, -ing) to a root that ends in a consonant, you usually need to double the last letter of the root. For example: chop + ed = chopped chop + ing = chopping chop +er = chopper This rule only applies to words that have: one syllable (chop) one short vowel: chop one consonant chop
suffixes and roots: the 'l' rule	If you add a suffix that starts with a vowel (-ed, -ing) to a root word that ends with an l: If the l follows a single vowel it is doubled, for example: cancel = cancelled travel = travelled If the l follows a pair of vowels it is never doubled, for example: appeal = appealed conceal = concealing If the l follows a vowel and an r it is never doubled: hurl = hurled curl = curling
there their and they're	There she goes. There are three pens. They gave me their fullest attention. Have you seen their coats? They're very happy children.
tion ssion cian and sion endings	The -shun sound at the end of some words can be spelled in the following ways: -tion emotion -cian beautician, magician, electrician -ssion confession, intermission -sion television, concision There are rules that will help you decide which ending to use. They help you to listen to word carefully and make the right choice. -tion endings Use -tion if you can hear a long vowel before the shun sound: station, completion, potion and revolution Use -tion if you if there is a consonant before the shun: instruction, fraction Use -tion after a short vowel i sound when the word doesn't end in mission: exhibition, condition -ssion endings Use -ssion if you can hear the short vowel sounds a, e or u before the shun sound: compassion, possession and

	<p>discussion</p> <p>Use –ssion after the short vowel sound i when the word ends with –mission. Otherwise use –ition:</p> <p>short I ending –mission</p> <p>emission</p> <p>admission</p> <p>short I not ending –mission</p> <p>exhibition</p> <p>addition</p> <p>Remember! If you hear the sound –mission at the end, uses –ission. Otherwise use –ition.</p> <p>-cian and –sion endings</p> <p>-cian endings</p> <p>Use –cian when referring to someone’s job or occupation: magician, optician, mathematician.</p> <p>-sion endings</p> <p>You can usually hear words that end with –sion as they have a slightly different sound. For example:</p> <p>-zhun as in television instead of –shun as in admission.</p>
to two and too	<p>Go to school.</p> <p>There is too much butter on your toast.</p> <p>I have two arms, two arms and two legs.</p>
vowels and consonants	<p>Letters are divided into vowels (a,e,i,o,u and sometimes y) and consonants (other letters.)</p> <p>The five vowels are a e i o u</p> <p>The rest of the letters in the English alphabet are consonants, but y can be used as a vowel and a consonant.</p> <p>The letter y becomes a vowel when it sounds like: long i in cry, dry, short i in crypt, myth and e in berry, ferry.</p> <p>The letter y is a consonant when in sounds like: y in yellow or yawn.</p> <p>Vowels can be long or short.</p> <p>A long vowel makes the same sound as when you say the name of the vowel: mate here bite doze fuse.</p> <p>A short vowel doesn’t make the same sound as when you say the name of the vowel: mat hen bit dot fuss.</p>
w letter patterns	<p>The letter w often changes the sound of a vowel that follows it. For example:</p> <p>was war worm</p> <p>When w is followed by a it sounds like o (as in shot):</p> <p>was what want</p> <p>Watch out for water and words that end with silent e such as wave.</p> <p>When w is followed by or, it sounds like er (as in her):</p> <p>worm word worse</p>

	Watch out for worn, sword, worry and words that end with a silent e such as woke.
when to drop e	<p>When you add a suffix starting with a vowel, such as –able, -ed, -ing to a root ending in e, you usually drop the e before adding the suffix:</p> <p>amuse + ing = amusing  forgive + ing = forgiving  cure + able = curable  excite +ed = excited</p>
when to keep e	<p>When you add a suffix starting with a consonant, such as –ful, -ment, or –less to a root ending in e, you usually keep the e and then add the suffix.</p> <p>For example:  hope + ful = hopeful  price + less = priceless  amuse + ment = amusement  excite + ment = excitement</p> <p>Try to match these:  disgrace care disagree false blame hope like excite and  less, ness, ment, ful</p> <p>If a root ends in a soft ce or ge, the e is usually kept when the suffixes –able or –ous are added. For example:  noticeable courageous knowledgeable</p> <p>When a root ends in e and is added to a suffix that starts with a vowel (for example, -able, -ing, -age), a few words can be spelled with or without the e:  like + able = likeable or likable  love + able = loveable or lovable  age + ing + ageing or aging  notice knowledge courage change outrage peace manage  advantage  able ous</p>
y endings	<p>If a word ends in a vowel before the y, just add s, for example:  day – days toy – toys key – keys</p> <p>If a word ends in a consonant before the y: change the y to i then add –es, for example:  lady – ladies party- parties bully- bullies</p> <p>Try these: display fly trolley reply identity jockey baby  convoy story spy</p>
your and you're	<p>Your house is huge.  You're going to buy a bigger house?  You're in for a shock, I'm afraid.</p>

## Spelling Strategies

### 1. Look, Say, Cover, Write and Check

2. Always keep a dictionary on your desk.
3. Use a mnemonic - a rhyme or saying that helps you to remember a spelling: There's a rat in separate. Catch a 'bus in ess ex.
4. Sound out a word to listen for the vowel sounds and the consonant sounds.
5. Apply certain spelling rules to 'think' your way through a word.
6. Keep a personal log of words that have letter patterns that tend to trip you up