

Useful spelling rules

Adding suffixes to words

Before you add a suffix, think about the spelling of the word and the suffix.

What letter does the word end with – a consonant or a vowel?

What letter does the suffix begin with – a consonant or a vowel?

For most words that end with a consonant, just add the suffix (*greatest, grateful, longer, jumping*).

For most words that end with a final **e**, drop the **e** before adding a suffix that starts with a vowel or a **y** (*making, likable, widest, hoped, flaky*).

For most words that end with **e** just add a suffix that starts with a consonant (*lately, likeness*).

For most words that end with **y** change the **y** to **i** before adding a suffix (*cry/cried, happy/happiness*) –

UNLESS the suffix begins with **i**, then it is just added to the word (*crying, carrying, babyish*),

OR the **y** is part of a vowel-plus-**y** pattern to write the last sound in the word (*buy, play, joy, obey*), then the suffix is just added to the word (*buyer, played, joyful, obeying*).

When other spelling changes are needed before a suffix is added

Short vowel spelling conventions

Words with the 111 pattern (1 stressed, short vowel spelled with 1 vowel before 1 consonant) in the last syllable, double the last consonant before a suffix beginning with a vowel is added (*clapping, dropped*).

Words that end with a long vowel sound written with a single or double vowel

Some words end with a long vowel sound that is written with a single vowel or a vowel digraph pattern (*go, me, ski, agree, hoe, argue, tie, dye*)

Verbs that end with a single vowel usually just add the suffix – even if the word ends in **i** and the suffix begins with an **i** (*going, skiing, skied, taxiing*).

For words that end with an **ee** and **oe**, DON'T drop the last **e** before any suffix is added (*agreement, agreeable, agreeing, hoeing*) UNLESS the suffix begins with **e** (*agreed, freer, freest, guaranteed, hoed*).