



Kalbar Independent State School Spelling Rules

Suffixes: Drop Swap Double Nothing

Suffixes: Drop

- When a word ends in a silent 'e', drop the 'e' before adding a suffix.
e.g. hiding, hoped, driving
 - **Exception 1:** The final silent 'e' is usually retained for suffixes that begin with a consonant but usually dropped for suffixes that begin with a vowel.
e.g. use – useful BUT use – using, care-careful BUT care – caring, place – placement BUT place – placing.
 - **Exception Words:** sizeable, likeable, canoeing, ageing, dyeing
 - **Exception 2:** The final silent 'e' is usually retained following the consonant 'c' and 'g' to maintain the soft sound.
e.g. change – changeable, notice – noticeable, courage – courageous
 - **Exception Words:** racing, placing, traced
- To add 'all' as a prefix to a root word, drop one 'l'.
e.g. all+ways – always, all+most – almost, all+together – altogether
 - **Exception Words:** fullness, stillness
- To add 'full' as a suffix to a root word, drop one 'l'.
e.g. wonderful, helpful, colourful

Suffixes: Swap

- When the letter before a 'y' is a consonant, change the 'y' to an 'i' before adding a suffix.
e.g. identified, angrier, happiest
 - **Exception 1:** When adding 'ing' to a word ending in 'y', retain the 'y' as English words do not have two 'i's side by side (copy – copiing). 'Skiing' is the only exemption to this rule.
e.g. carry – carrying, dry – drying, spy – spying
 - **Exception 2:** When there is a vowel before a 'y', retain the 'y' and add the suffix. This applies to words ending in 'ay', 'ey', 'oy'.
e.g. monkeys, plays, valleys
- When words end in 'f' or 'fe' change the 'f' or 'fe' to a 'v' before adding a suffix.
e.g. halved, shelves, leaves
 - **Exception Words:** cliffs, chiefs, roofs, dwarfs, handkerchiefs, reefs, waifs
- Words ending in 'ie' change to 'y' when adding the suffix 'ing'.
e.g. tie – tying, lie – lying, die – dying, lie - lying

Suffixes: Double

- When a word ends with a short vowel followed by a consonant, double the last consonant before adding a suffix. One One Double Rule: one vowel and one consonant as the last letters.
e.g. hopping, beginning, forgotten
 - **Exception:** When a word has more than one syllable and the final syllable is not accented, just add the suffix.
e.g. whisper – whispered, encounter - encountering

Suffixes: Nothing

- When a word does not end with a short vowel followed by a consonant or end in a silent 'e', just add the suffix.
e.g. chew – chewed: 'ew' is a diphthong, not a short vowel followed by a consonant
e.g. show – showing: 'ow' is a diphthong, not a short vowel followed by a consonant
e.g. train – trainer: 'ai' is a long vowel, not a short vowel followed by a consonant
- When a word has more than one syllable and the final syllable is not accented, just add the suffix.
e.g. whisper – whispered, encounter - encountering
- To add a consonant ending to a word ending in 'e', just add the ending.
e.g. side + ways - sideways

Prefixes

- When adding a prefix, make no changes to the spelling of the word.
e.g. visible – invisible, notice – unnoticed, similar - dissimilar

Plurals

- For most words add 's'.
e.g. desks, cards, towns
- Add 'es' to words ending in:
 - 's' e.g. buses
 - 'ss' e.g. misses
 - 'x' e.g. foxes
 - 'sh' e.g. bushes
 - 'ch' e.g. churches
 - 'tch' e.g. matches
 - 'z' e.g. waltzes
- When the letter before a 'y' is a consonant, change the 'y' to an 'i' before adding 'es'.
e.g. families, replies, lollies
- When words end in 'f' or 'fe' change the 'f' or 'fe' to a 'v' before adding 'es'.
e.g. loaves, knives, shelves
 - **Exception Words:** cliffs, chiefs, roofs, dwarfs, handkerchiefs, reefs, waifs
- When a word ends in 'o', add 's' to words:
 - Of musical origins (Latin origins) e.g. cellos, soprano, banjos, altos
 - Other words (Spanish from Latin) e.g. silos, avocados
 - Add 'es' to all other common words e.g. potatoes, tomatoes, volcanoes, mangoes
 - **Exception Words:** pianos, solos, banjos, Eskimos, radios
- Sometimes a word may completely change its form when a plural is made
e.g. foot – feet, mouse – mice, goose – geese
- Sometimes a word may stay the same in both its singular and plural form.
e.g. sheep, deer, fish
- With words groups, the first word is made plural.
e.g. sons in law, passers by
- Many words, particularly from other languages have exceptions when making them plural.
e.g. appendix – appendices, curriculum – curricula, focus - foci

Silent 'e'

- Allows the long vowel to say its long sound.
- Provides an 'e' for words that end in 'u', 'v'. e.g. statue, value.
- Allows 'c' and 'g' to say their soft sounds. e.g. juice, large.
- Provides a vowel for the syllable. Every syllable needs a vowel. e.g. ta-ble, pud-dle
- No job 'e'. e.g. some, are, house, cheese.

Using 'c', 'k' and 'ck'

- 'ck' is used after a short vowel sound.
e.g. neck, bucket, crack
- 'ck' is used before 'le' if there is a short vowel
e.g. crackle, buckle, tackle
- 'k' is used when followed by 'e', 'i', 'y'.
e.g. kettle, king
- 'k' is used after a long vowel sound.
e.g. bike, cake, spoke
- 'k' is used after a long vowel team.
e.g. seek, creak, book
- 'c' is usually used at the beginning of words rather than 'k'.
- Verbs ending in 'c' add 'k' before adding a suffix beginning with a vowel.
e.g. traffic – trafficking, panic - panicking

'ch' and 'tch' Words

- 'ch' is used:
 - after two vowels e.g. speech, teach, each
 - after a consonant e.g. lunch, church, crunch
 - 'tch' is used after a single vowel e.g. watch, butcher, itch, stitch
- **Exception Words:** which, rich, attach, bachelor, such, much, sandwich

'a' says 'ar'

- 'a' usually says its R-controlled sound of 'ar' when followed by two consonants.
e.g. ask, father, basket, class, bath
- 'a' usually says its R-controlled sound of 'or' when followed by 'll' or 'lk'.
e.g. stall, taller, smaller, walk, talker, falling

'w' Controlled Vowels: Wicked 'w'

- When a vowel follows 'w', the vowel sound can change:
 - 'ar' says 'or' when preceded by 'w' (and 'qu') e.g. warm, warning, warmth, wart, quartz
 - 'or' says 'ur' when preceded by 'w' e.g. word, world, worm, work, worth

Use of 'j', 'ge' and 'dge'

- 'ge' is used at the end of a word after a single vowel saying its long sound.
e.g. cage, deluge
- 'ge' is used after a consonant.
e.g. strange, lunge
- 'dge' is used after a single vowel saying its short sound.
e.g. badge, bridge, ledge
- English words do not end in 'j'.

When 'i' and 'o' say the long sound by themselves

- 'i' may say its long sound before two consonants.
e.g. wild, Christ, child
- 'o' may say its long sound before two consonants.
e.g. most, host, only

'i' Before 'c' Except After 'c'

- When the sound is long 'e', use 'i' before "e" except after 'c'.
e.g. niece, piece, chief, receipt, ceiling.
- When the sound is not the long 'e' sound, use the spelling 'ei'.
e.g. reign freight, neigh, weight science, leisure, height, weight, foreign

Use 'ti', 'ci' and 'si' to say the 'sh' sound

- Only to begin a second or subsequent syllable in a word.
e.g. na-tion, pa-tient, re-la-tion, spe-cial, pre-cious, mis-sion
- 'si' also says its second sound at the beginning of a second subsequent syllable.
e.g. pre-ci-sion, vi-sion, ex-plo-sion

Double 's'

- Double 's' at the end of a multi-syllable word if the stress is on the last syllable.
e.g. dis-cuss, con-fess, pro-gress, ad-dress

'ic' Words

When a word ends in 'ic', add 'al' before adding 'y'.
e.g. magically, tragically

'our' to 'or' Words

When a word ends in 'our', change this to 'or' before adding 'ous' or 'ate'.
e.g. humour – humorist, humorous

Syllable Rules

1. Words of one syllable are never divided. e.g. good, boy, mow, am.
2. Compound words are divided between the words that make up the compound word. e.g. bath.room, foot.ball.
3. Divide the suffix from the base word. e.g. teach.er, help.ing.
4. Divide the prefix from the base word. e.g. re.turn, dis.like, mis.take.
5. When two or more consonants come between two vowels in a word, the word is usually divided between the first two consonants. e.g. an.gry, mat.ter, lec.ture
6. When a vowel is sounded alone in a word, it forms a syllable. e.g. o.bey, a.cross, doc.u.ment
7. When two vowels come together in a word and are sounded separately, divide the word between the two vowels. e.g. i.de.a, di.et, fu.el, ri.ot
8. When a word ends in "le" preceded by a consonant, divide the word before that consonant, unless it is preceded by "ck". e.g. tur.tle, ca.ble, pick.le, tack.le
9. Open Syllables: Vowels usually make the long sound when the last letter of a syllable is a vowel. When a single consonant comes between two vowels in a word, the word is usually divided before the consonant if the first vowel says its second sound.
e.g. pa-per, mu-sic, su-per, ba-con
10. Closed Syllables: Vowels usually make the short sound when the last letter of a syllable is a consonant. When a single consonant comes between two vowels in a word, the word is usually divided after the consonant if the vowel says its first sound.
e.g. lim-it, cab-in, sup-per, kit-ten