

# Spelling Rules

- Rule 1** C always softens to /s/ when followed by E, I, or Y.  
Otherwise, C says /k/.
- Rule 2** G may soften to /j/ only when followed by E, I, or Y.  
Otherwise, G says /g/.
- Rule 3** English words do not end in I, U, V, or J.
- Rule 4** A E O U usually say their names at the end of a syllable.
- Rule 5** I and Y may say /i/ or /ī/ at the end of a syllable.
- Rule 6** When a one-syllable word ends in a single vowel Y, it says /ī/.
- Rule 7** Y says /ē/ only at the end of a multisyllable base word.  
I says /ē/ at the end of a syllable that is followed by a vowel and at the end of foreign words.
- Rule 8** I and O may say /ī/ and /ō/ when followed by two consonants.
- Rule 9** AY usually spells the sound /ā/ at the end of a base word.
- Rule 10** When a word ends with the phonogram A, it says /ä/.  
A may also say /ä/ after a W or before an L.
- Rule 11** Q always needs a U; therefore, U is not a vowel here.
- Rule 12** Silent Final E Rules
- 12.1** The vowel says its name because of the E.
  - 12.2** English words do not end in V or U.
  - 12.3** The C says /s/ and the G says /j/ because of the E.
  - 12.4** Every syllable must have a written vowel.
  - 12.5** Add an E to keep singular words that end in the letter S from looking plural.
  - 12.6** Add an E to make the word look bigger.
  - 12.7** TH says its voiced sound /TH/ because of the E.

**12.8** Add an E to clarify meaning.

**12.9** Unseen reason.

**Rule 13** Drop the silent final E when adding a vowel suffix only if it is allowed by other spelling rules.

**Rule 14** Double the last consonant when adding a vowel suffix to words ending in one vowel followed by one consonant only if the syllable before the suffix is accented.\*  
\*This is always true for one-syllable words.

**Rule 15** Single vowel Y changes to I when adding any ending, unless the ending begins with I.

**Rule 16** Two I's cannot be next to one another in English words.

**Rule 17** TI, CI, and SI are used only at the beginning of any syllable after the first one.

**Rule 18** SH spells /sh/ at the beginning of a base word and at the end of the syllable. SH never spells /sh/ at the beginning of any syllable after the first one, except for the ending -ship.

**Rule 19** To make a verb past tense, add the ending -ED unless it is an irregular verb.

**Rule 20** -ED, past tense ending, forms another syllable when the base word ends in /d/ or /t/.  
Otherwise, -ED says /d/ or /t/.

**Rule 21** To make a noun plural, add the ending -S, unless the word hisses or changes; then add -ES.  
Occasional nouns have no change or an irregular spelling.

**Rule 22** To make a verb 3rd person singular, add the ending -S, unless the word hisses or changes; then add -ES. Only four verbs are irregular.

**Rule 23** Al- is a prefix written with one L when preceding another syllable.

**Rule 24** -ful is a suffix written with one L when added to another syllable.

**Rule 25** DGE is used only after a single vowel which says its short (first) sound.

**Rule 26** CK is used only after a single vowel which says its short (first) sound.

**Rule 27** TCH is used only after a single vowel which does not say its name.

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**Rule 28** AUGH, EIGH, IGH, OUGH. Phonograms ending in GH are used only at the end of a base word or before the letter T.  
The GH is either silent or pronounced /f/.

**Rule 29** Z, never S, spells /z/ at the beginning of a base word.

**Rule 30** We often double F, L, and S after a single vowel at the end of a base word.  
Occasionally other letters also are doubled.

**Rule 31** Any vowel may say one of the schwa sounds, /ǘ/ or /i/, in an unaccented syllable or unaccented word. O may also say /ǘ/ in an accented syllable next to a W, TH, M, N, or V.