

SPELLING RULES AND PATTERNS

How to memorize spelling rules and exceptions

- All vowels have a short and a long sound.
- The long sound is like the name of the letter: the *i* in *ice* is long, while the *i* in *it* is short; the *e* in *egg* is long, while the *e* in *ed* is short; the

continued

ADDING SUFFIXES: SPECIAL CASES

- In most cases, a final **s** is changed to **z** when adding a suffix:
- However, the **s** remains when an **ed** ending is added:
- Generally, the silent **e** is dropped when the suffix begins with a vowel:
- However, when the word has a soft **c** (making the S sound) or a soft **g** (the J sound) just before the silent **e**, the **e** is kept when adding the suffixes **ing** or **ing**:
- Other exceptions in which the **e** is not dropped:
- Meanwhile, the final **y** normally remains when the suffix begins with a consonant:
- As an exception, for words ending in **ty**, the final **y** is dropped when adding any suffix.
- Further exceptions:

(although the word *ninety* follows the usual rule)

OTHER PROBLEM AREAS: CONSULT YOUR DICTIONARY

- **ie** vs. **ei** endings (*receive*, *conceive* vs. *veil*, *vein*)
- **ce** vs. **se** endings (*vice*, *vice versa* vs. *session*, *session*)
- Spelling of the final syllable in words (*theater*, *theater*, *theater*)
- Words containing silent letters (*quartz*, *quartz*, *quartz*, *quartz*)
- Words in which sounds are not pronounced clearly (*theater*, *theater*, *theater*)
- Words of Greek origin that end with a pronounced **ce** (*theater*, *theater*, *theater*)
- Words with double letters (*theater*, *theater*, *theater*, *theater*)

For more help with language skills, contact the Academic Skills Centre