

Spelling Power

Group Rules

Group 1

Usually /a/ is spelled a as in cat.

Group 2

Usually /e/ is spelled e as in nest.

Group 3

Usually /i/ is spelled i as in big.

Group 4

Usually /o/ is spelled o as in not.

Group 5

Usually /u/ is spelled u as in run.

Group 6

*/ ā / can be written ay, ai, ey,
ei, eigh, ea, or a followed by a
consonant and silent e as in day,
came, or sprain.*

Group 7

/ ē / can be spelled ea, ee, y, ie, ei, ey, io, or e followed by a consonant and silent e as in freeze, field, or mean.

Group 8

/ī / can be spelled ie, igh, y, or i followed by two consonants as in wild or as i followed by a consonant and silent e as in kite.

Group 9

/ō/ can be spelled oe, ow, oa, or o followed by two consonants as in told or as o followed by a consonant and silent e as in home.

Group 10

/ ū / can be spelled ew as in few, ue as in blue, ui as in suit, o as in to, or as u followed by a consonant and silent e as in mule.

Group 11

/àr/ is usually spelled ar as in jar.

Group 12

/ûr/ can be spelled ir as in bird, er as in her, ur as in survey, er as in eternity, ear as in pearl, our as in journal, or or after w as in work.

Group 13

*/or/ can be spelled or as in corn,
oar as in boar, oor as in door, our as
your, and ar as dwarf.*

Group 14

/âr/ can be spelled are as care, air as in hair, ere as in there, ear as in bear, and eir as in their.

Group 15

/îr/ can be spelled ear as in hear, eer as in deer, ere as in here, ier as in pier, er as in period, or eir as in weird.

Group 16

Usually /ou/ is spelled ou before most consonants as in cloud.

Sometimes /ou/ is spelled ow before final l or n as in howl or clown or at the end of a word or syllable as in how or tower.

Group 17

/ô/ can be spelled a, o, and au before most consonants as in already, cost, and sauce or as augh or ough before t as in sought and caught or as aw before final k, l, n as hawk, crawl, and lawn or at the end of a word or stressed syllable as in awful or law.

Group 18

/oi/ can be spelled oy as in toy or oi as boil.

Group 19

*/u/ can be spelled u as in put, ou
as in would or as oo as in took.*

Group 20

Sometimes the letter o represents unexpected sounds as in come, mother and one.

Group 21

Q is always followed by u in English words such as in quite.

Group 22

Some words have silent letters such as with the k in knew, the w in write, and the l in talk.

Group 23

*No English words end with the
letter v.*

Group 24

Consonant letters are often doubled after a short vowel in short vowel words such as egg, fluff, snuffle, and mess.

Group 25

*Sometimes /yûr/ can be spelled ure
as in pure.*

Group 26

When adding the suffixes ness and ly to words not ending in y the spelling of the base word stays the same, as in slowly.

Group 27

When added to another syllable or used as a suffix, till and full are spelled with only one l as in until and beautiful.

Group 28

/àn/ is sometimes spelled en as in golden.

Group 29

/àl/ can be spelled le as in little, el as in rebel, al as in total, il as in council, ol as in capitol, ul as in consul, and ile as futile.

Group 30

Words are regularly made plural by adding s, but if the word ends with sh, zh, z, s, j, ch, or x sounds, the plural is generally formed by adding es, which is pronounced as a separate syllable.

Group 31

Plurals of some nouns are formed irregularly. Some nouns ending in f or fe change those terminations to ve in the plural form as in leaf to leaves.

Use this description for Level D words.

Group 31

Plurals of some nouns are formed irregularly. A few nouns form their plural by changing a single vowel, such as in man to men.

Use this description for Level E words.

Group 31

Plurals of some nouns are formed irregularly. Some words derived from foreign languages retain the plural of those languages such as datum to data.

Use this description for Level H words.

Group 32

When adding a suffix to a word ending in y, change the y to i, as in try to tried and baby to babies. Exception: When the y is preceded by a vowel, just add the suffix.

Group 33

When adding a suffix that begins with a vowel, the final e is usually dropped, as in chase to chasing.

Group 34

In short vowel words, the final consonant is usually doubled before adding a suffix, such as when changing in stop to stopped.

Group 35

Proper nouns must begin with a capital letter because they refer to a specific name or title of a person, place, time, thing, or idea such as Monday.

Group 36

New words are often made by putting two short words together into one word as in cowboy.

Group 37

An apostrophe is used to take the place of a letter when two words are joined. These words are called contractions.

Group 38

Some words are joined by a hyphen, such as twenty-two.

Note: some compound English words are hyphenated if they are one part of speech and not hyphenated if they are another part of speech. As an example, first class is a noun while first-class is an adjective.

Group 39

Sometimes two words are used together but are spelled separately, such as home school.

Note: the term home school is relatively new and there are different opinions regarding its spelling. We have chosen the two word compound because it is consistent with other similar compound words, i.e. high school, grade school, private school, etc.

Group 40

An apostrophe is used to show ownership such as in the boy's ball except with the neuter pronoun it (its: possessive, it's: contraction of it is).

Group 41

Words are sometimes shortened into abbreviations. A period is used after most abbreviations such as in Sun. for Sunday. Initials are also abbreviations and should be followed with a period. (Two letter state and provincial postal abbreviations are exceptions to this rule.)

Group 42

/shun/ can be spelled tion as in vacation, sion as in division, or cian as in physician.

Group 43

/às/ can be spelled ous as in nervous or ace as in menace.

Group 44

*/àanse/ can be spelled ance as in
substance or ence as in experience.*

Group 45

*/ment/ is usually spelled ment as
in elements.*

Group 46

The addition of a prefix does not usually change the spelling of the root word. Some prefixes signify quantity as in uni for one in uniform or bi for two in bicycle.

Use this description for Level F words.

Group 46

The addition of a prefix does not usually change the spelling of the root word. The prefix de can mean down or from such as in the words describes and delivery.

Use this description for Level G words.

Group 46

The addition of a prefix does not usually change the spelling of the root word. The prefix re can mean back or again as in the words remake or reduced.

Use this description for Level H words.

Group 46

The addition of a prefix does not usually change the spelling of the root word. The prefixes con, com, cor, col, sym or syn all usually mean with or together.

Use this description for Level 1 words.

Group 46

The addition of a prefix does not usually change the spelling of the root word. The prefix ex usually means out of, away, or from as in the words explore and extent.

Use this description for Level J words.

Group 46

The addition of a prefix does not usually change the spelling of the root word. The prefixes dis, mis, des, irr, non, de, in, un, im and ill usually mean not or incorrect as in the words disappear and mistake.

Use this description for Level K words.

Group 47

These words are unusual words and are exceptions to the most common generalizations.