

# Phase 6 Phonics Spelling Rules and Words

Phase 6 introduces new spelling rules and conventions to the learning your child will already have completed in earlier phases. They should already be confident with most grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs) – the way that letters sound – and they should already be able to sight-read a large number of words. Phase 6 builds on this knowledge to help your child develop spelling strategies as well as look at tenses and plurals.

## Prefixes

Prefixes are a letter or group of letters that go at the beginning of a word. Adding a prefix usually changes the word's meaning. For example, adding the prefix un- to the word lucky creates its opposite; unlucky.

Prefix	Meaning	Example
un-	not, reversal of	unlucky, unhappy
bi-	two	bicycle, bivalve
dis-	not, reverse, opposite	disappointed, disagree
mis-	wrong	misunderstand, misspell
pre-	before	prefix, prepay
re-	again	review, remake
sub-	under, below	submarine, substandard
tri-	three	triangle, tricycle
pro-	for	proclaim, proactive

Words do not change their spelling when a prefix is added, but children need to make sure they spell the prefix itself correctly, and also do not change the spelling of the root word. For example:

mis + spell → misspell (not mispell)

dis + appoint → disappoint (not dissappoint)

## Suffixes

A suffix is a group of letters that goes at the end of a root word to alter the meaning. For example, the suffix -ous added to the end of a word turns a noun into an adjective: glamour becomes glamorous.

Suffix	Meaning	Example
-ed	in the past/past tense	walked, climbed
-s/-es	more than one	pencils, boxes
-ing	doing something	singing, running
-ly	how something is done	quietly, angrily
-less	without	fearless, hopeless
-ful	full of	colourful, beautiful
-ness	state or condition	happiness, sadness
-ment	in the action of	movement, enjoyment
-er	more	lower, luckier
-est	most	lowest, luckiest

Many words do not change when a suffix is added, but others do:

- Words that end with vowel + consonant — double the last letter before adding suffixes that begin with a vowel such as -ed, -ing and -est,  
e.g. fit – fitter – fittest  
bat – battled – battling  
Don't double the last letter if the suffix begins with a consonant,  
e.g. bat – bats  
fit – fitness
- Words that end with consonant + y — the y becomes i or ie before the suffix is added,  
e.g. puppy – puppies  
happy – happiness  
lucky – luckier – luckiest  
fry – fried
- Words that end with vowel + y do not change,  
e.g. monkey – monkeys  
enjoy – enjoying
- Words that end with x, zz, ch, tch, sh — add -es to make a plural,  
e.g. fox – foxes  
wish – wishes

## Contracted Forms

A contracted word, or contraction, is where a new word is made by combining two existing words. Some letters are omitted and replaced with an apostrophe. Using phrases like 'did not' and 'where is' can come across as quite formal. Contractions in English can help us to convey a friendly and casual tone, so we can omit some letters and use an apostrophe to create the words 'didn't' and 'where's'.

Children need to learn not only how to spell the contracted form of the word, but also how to correctly place the apostrophe to represent the missing letters. (This is not an exhaustive list.)

Original Words	Contracted Form
I am	I'm
you are	you're
he is	he's
she is	she's
we are	we're
they are	they're
cannot	can't
will not	won't
is not	isn't
are not	aren't
I have	I've
you have	you've
I would	I'd
you would	you'd
he would	he'd
she would	she'd
we would	we'd
let us	let's

## Homophones

Homophones are two or more words that share the same pronunciation, but which have different spellings or meanings. For example, the words 'hear' and 'here' are homophones because they mean completely different things, even though they sound similar.

This is not an exhaustive list, but these are the more common words children are likely to come across. Further homophones are taught as children progress through school.

### Homophones

be/bee  
bear/bare  
blew/blue  
hear/here  
knight/night  
one/won  
quite/quiet  
see/sea  
son/sun  
to/two/too  
there/their/they're

## High Frequency Words

High frequency words are words that come up often in texts and in spoken language. Often, high frequency words are also known as common exception words, as many of them do not follow the rules of phonics and instead need to be sight read.

Children need to be able to read and spell these words quickly and fluently. A full list can be found on the [Twinkl 200 High-Frequency Words Word Mat](#).

Not all schools teach phonics according to the government's Letters and Sounds scheme, choosing instead to use an alternative scheme. All the sounds and words are still taught but may be in a different order. It's always worth checking with your child's school and attending any information sessions they may hold about early reading and writing.