**Spelling Rules - Years 3 and 4**

Year 3 and 4 Children should know:

| Statutory requirements |  | Rules and guidance (non‑statutory) | Example words (non‑statutory) |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Adding suffixes beginning with vowel letters to words of more than one syllable |  | If the last syllable of a word is stressed and ends with one consonant letter which has just one vowel letter before it, the final consonant letter is doubled before any ending beginning with a vowel letter is added. The consonant letter is not doubled if the syllable is unstressed. | forgetting, forgotten, beginning, beginner, prefer, preferred    gardening, gardener, limiting, limited, limitation |
| The /ɪ/ sound spelt y elsewhere than at the end of words |  | These words should be learnt as needed. | myth, gym, Egypt, pyramid, mystery |
| The /ʌ/ sound spelt ou |  | These words should be learnt as needed. | young, touch, double, trouble, country |
| More prefixes |  | Most prefixes are added to the beginning of root words without any changes in spelling, but see **in–** below. |  |
|  |  | Like **un–**, the prefixes **dis–** and **mis–** have negative meanings. | **dis–**: disappoint, disagree, disobey  **mis–**: misbehave, mislead, misspell (mis + spell) |
|  |  | The prefix **in–** can mean both ‘not’ and ‘in’/‘into’. In the words given here it means ‘not’. | **in–**: inactive, incorrect |

| Statutory requirements |  | Rules and guidance (non‑statutory) | Example words (non‑statutory) |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | Before a root word starting with **l**, **in–** becomes **il**. | illegal, illegible |
|  |  | Before a root word starting with **m** or **p**, **in–** becomes **im–**. | immature, immortal, impossible, impatient, imperfect |
|  |  | Before a root word starting with **r**, **in–** becomes **ir–**. | irregular, irrelevant, irresponsible |
|  |  | **re–** means ‘again’ or ‘back’. | **re–**: redo, refresh, return, reappear, redecorate |
|  |  | **sub–** means ‘under’. | **sub–**: subdivide, subheading, submarine, submerge |
|  |  | **inter–** means ‘between’ or ‘among’. | **inter–**: interact, intercity, international, interrelated (inter + related) |
|  |  | **super–** means ‘above’. | **super–**: supermarket, superman, superstar |
|  |  | **anti–** means ‘against’. | **anti–**: antiseptic, anti-clockwise, antisocial |
|  |  | **auto–** means ‘self’ or ‘own’. | **auto–**: autobiography, autograph |
| The suffix –ation |  | The suffix **–ation** is added to verbs to form nouns. The rules already learnt still apply. | information, adoration, sensation, preparation, admiration |
| The suffix –ly |  | The suffix **–ly** is added to an adjective to form an adverb. The rules already learnt still apply.  The suffix **–ly** starts with a consonant letter, so it is added straight on to most root words. | sadly, completely, usually (usual + ly), finally (final + ly), comically (comical + ly) |

| Statutory requirements |  | Rules and guidance (non‑statutory) | Example words (non‑statutory) |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | **Exceptions**:  (1) If the root word ends in –y with a consonant letter before it, the **y** is changed to **i**, but only if the root word has more than one syllable. | happily, angrily |
|  |  | (2) If the root word ends with **–le**, the **–le** is changed to **–ly**. | gently, simply, humbly, nobly |
|  |  | (3) If the root word ends with **–ic**,  **–ally** is added rather than just **–ly**, except in the word *publicly*. | basically, frantically, dramatically |
|  |  | (4) The words *truly*, *duly*, *wholly.* |  |
| Words with endings sounding like /ʒə/ or /tʃə/ |  | The ending sounding like **/**ʒə**/** is always spelt –**sure**.  The ending sounding like **/**tʃə**/** is often spelt **–ture**, but check that the word is not a root word ending in **(t)ch** with an **er** ending – e.g. *teacher, catcher, richer, stretcher.* | measure, treasure, pleasure, enclosure  creature, furniture, picture, nature, adventure |
| Endings which sound like /ʒən/ |  | If the ending sounds like **/**ʒən**/**, it is spelt as **–sion**. | division, invasion, confusion, decision, collision, television |
| The suffix –ous |  | Sometimes the root word is obvious and the usual rules apply for adding suffixes beginning with vowel letters.  Sometimes there is no obvious root word.  **–our** is changed to **–or** before **–ous** is added.  A final ‘e’ of the root word must be kept if the /dʒ/ sound of ‘g’ is to be kept.  If there is an /i:/ sound before the  **–ous** ending, it is usually spelt as **i**, but a few words have **e**. | poisonous, dangerous, mountainous, famous, various  tremendous, enormous, jealous  humorous, glamorous, vigorous  courageous, outrageous  serious, obvious, curious hideous, spontaneous, courteous |

| Statutory requirements |  | Rules and guidance (non‑statutory) | Example words (non‑statutory) |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Endings which sound like /ʃən/, spelt –tion, –sion, –ssion, –cian |  | Strictly speaking, the suffixes are **–ion** and **–ian**. Clues about whether to put **t**, **s**, **ss** or **c** before these suffixes often come from the last letter or letters of the root word.  **–tion** is the most common spelling. It is used if the root word ends in **t** or **te**.  **–ssion** is used if the root word ends in **ss** or –**mit**.  **–sion** is used if the root word ends in **d** or **se**. **Exceptions**: *attend – attention*, *intend – intention.*  **–cian** is used if the root word ends in **c** or **cs**. | invention, injection, action, hesitation, completion  expression, discussion, confession, permission, admission  expansion, extension, comprehension, tension  musician, electrician, magician, politician, mathematician |
| Words with the /k/ sound spelt ch (Greek in origin) |  |  | scheme, chorus, chemist, echo, character |
| Words with the /ʃ/ sound spelt ch (mostly French in origin) |  |  | chef, chalet, machine, brochure |
| Words ending with the /g/ sound spelt –gue and the /k/ sound spelt –que (French in origin) |  |  | league, tongue, antique, unique |
| Words with the /s/ sound spelt sc (Latin in origin) |  | In the Latin words from which these words come, the Romans probably pronounced the **c** and the **k** as two sounds rather than one – /s/ /k/. | science, scene, discipline, fascinate, crescent |
| Words with the /eɪ/ sound spelt ei, eigh, or ey |  |  | vein, weigh, eight, neighbour, they, obey |

| Statutory requirements |  | Rules and guidance (non‑statutory) | Example words (non‑statutory) |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Possessive apostrophe with plural words |  | The apostrophe is placed after the plural form of the word; **–s** is not added if the plural already ends in  **–s**, but *is* added if the plural does not end in **–s** (i.e. is an irregular plural – e.g. *children’s*). | girls’, boys’, babies’, children’s, men’s, mice’s  (**Note:** singular proper nouns ending in an *s* use the ’s suffix e.g. Cyprus’s population) |
| Homophones and near-homophones |  |  | accept/except, affect/effect, ball/bawl, berry/bury, brake/break, fair/fare, grate/great, groan/grown, here/hear, heel/heal/he’ll, knot/not, mail/male, main/mane, meat/meet, medal/meddle, missed/mist, peace/piece, plain/plane, rain/rein/reign, scene/seen, weather/whether, whose/who’s |