



Spelling Progression Overview

Reception Progression Overview
Early Learning Goal
Starting Year 1, children are able to...
Say a sound for each letter in the alphabet and at least 10 digraphs.
Spell words by identifying sounds in them and representing the sounds with a letter or letters.

Year 1 Progression Overview		
Spelling Pattern	Spelling Rule	Examples
The sounds /f/, /l/, /s/, /z/ and /k/ spelt ff, ll, ss, zz and ck	The /f/, /l/, /s/, /z/ and /k/ sounds are usually spelt as ff , ll , ss , zz and ck if they come straight after a single vowel letter in short words. Exceptions: if, pal, us, bus, yes.	off, well, miss, buzz, back
The /ŋ/ sound spelt n before k		bank, think, honk, sunk
Division of words into syllables	Each syllable is like a 'beat' in the spoken word. Words of more than one syllable often have an unstressed syllable in which the vowel sound is unclear.	pocket, rabbit, carrot, thunder,
-tch	The /tʃ/ sound is usually spelt as tch if it comes straight after a single vowel letter. Exceptions: rich, which, much, such.	catch, fetch, kitchen, notch, hutch
The /v/ sound at the end of words	English words hardly ever end with the letter v , so if a word ends with a /v/ sound, the letter e usually needs to be added after the 'v'.	have, live, give
Adding s and es to words (plural of nouns and the third person singular of verbs)	If the ending sounds like /s/ or /z/, it is spelt as -s . If the ending sounds like /ɪz/ and forms an extra syllable or 'beat' in the word, it is spelt as -es .	cats, dogs, spends, rocks, thanks, catches
Adding the endings -ing, -ed and -er to verbs where no change is needed to the root word	-ing and -er always add an extra syllable to the word and -ed sometimes does. The past tense of some verbs may sound as if it ends in /ɪd/ (extra syllable), /d/ or /t/ (no extra syllable), but all these endings are spelt -ed .	hunting, hunted, hunter, buzzing, buzzed, buzzer, jumping, jumped, jumper

	If the verb ends in two consonant letters (the same or different), the ending is simply added on.	
Adding –er and –est to adjectives where no change is needed to the root word	As with verbs (see above), if the adjective ends in two consonant letters (the same or different), the ending is simply added on.	grander, grandest, fresher, freshest, quicker, quickest
Adding the prefix –un	The prefix un– is added to the beginning of a word without any change to the spelling of the root word.	unhappy, undo, unload, unfair, unlock
Year 2 Common exception words	the, a, do, to, today, of, said, says, are, were, was, is, his, has, I, you, your, they, be, he, me, she, we, no, go, so, by, my, here, there, where, love, come, some, one, once, ask, friend, school, put, push, pull, full, house, our – and/or others, according to the programme used	
All other statutory requirements for spelling not listed above but can be found in the English Programme of Study Appendix 1: Spelling, and is covered by our SSP scheme.		

Year 2 Progression Overview		
Spelling Pattern	Spelling Rule	Examples
The /dʒ/ sound spelt as ge and dge at the end of words, and sometimes spelt as g elsewhere in words before e, i and y	The letter j is never used for the /dʒ/ sound at the end of English words. At the end of a word, the /dʒ/ sound is spelt –dge straight after the /æ/, /ε/, /ɪ/, /ɒ/, /ʌ/ and /ʊ/ sounds (sometimes called ‘short’ vowels). After all other sounds, whether vowels or consonants, the /dʒ/ sound is spelt as –ge at the end of a word. In other positions in words, the /dʒ/ sound is often (but not always) spelt as g before e, i, and y. The /d / ʒ sound is always spelt as j before a, o and u.	The letter j is never used for the /dʒ/ sound at the end of English words. At the end of a word, the /dʒ/ sound is spelt –dge straight after the /æ/, /ε/, /ɪ/, /ɒ/, /ʌ/ and /ʊ/ sounds (sometimes called ‘short’ vowels). After all other sounds, whether vowels or consonants, the /dʒ/ sound is spelt as –ge at the end of a word. In other positions in words, the /dʒ/ sound is often (but not always) spelt as g before e, i, and y. The /d / ʒ sound is always spelt as j before a, o and u.
The /s/ sound spelt c before e, i and y		Race, ice, sell, city and fancy
The /n/ sound spelt kn and (less often) gn at the beginning of words	The ‘K’ and ‘G’ at the beginning of these words was sounded out hundreds of years ago.	Knock, know, knee, gnat and gnaw
The /r/ sound spelt wr at the beginning of words	The spelling probably also reflects an old pronunciation.	Write, written, wrote, wrong and wrap
Words ending -il	There are not many of these words.	pencil, fossil, nostril
The /aɪ/ sound spelt –y at the end of words	This is by far the most common spelling for this sound at the ends of words.	Cry, fly, dry, try, reply and July
The / :/ ɔ sound spelt a before l and ll	The / :/ ɔ sound (‘or’) is usually spelt as a before l and ll.	All, ball, call, walk, talk and always
The /ʌ/ sound spelt o		Other, mother, brother, nothing and Monday
The /i:/ sound spelt –ey	The plural of these words is formed by the addition of -S	Donkey, monkey, chimney and valley
The /ɒ/ sound spelt a after w and qu	a is the most common spelling for the /ɒ/ (‘hot’) sound after w and qu.	Want, watch, wander, quantity and squash
The /ɜ:/ sound spelt or after w	There are not many of these words.	Word, work, worm, world and worth
The /ɔ:/ sound spelt ar after w	There are not many of these words.	War, warm and towards
The /z/ sound spelt s		Television, treasure and usual
The possessive apostrophe (singular nouns)		Megan’s , Ravi’s, the girl’s, the child’s and the the man’s
Words ending in –tion		Station, fiction, motion, national and section

*The /l/ or /əl/ sound spelt –le at the end of words	The –le spelling is the most common spelling for this sound at the end of words.	table, apple, bottle, little, middle
*The /l/ or /əl/ sound spelt –el at the end of words	The –el spelling is much less common than –le. The –el spelling is used after m, n, r, s, v, w and more often than not after s.	camel, tunnel, squirrel, travel, towel, tinsel
*The /l/ or /əl/ sound spelt –al at the end of words	Not many nouns end in –al, but many adjectives do.	metal, pedal, capital, hospital, animal
*Adding –es to nouns and verbs ending in –y	The y is changed to i before –es is added.	flies, tries, replies, copies, babies, carries
*Adding –ed, –ing, –er and –est to a root word ending in –y with a consonant before it.	The y is changed to i before –ed, –er and –est are added, but not before –ing as this would result in ii.	The only ordinary words with ii are skiing and taxiing. copied, copier, happier, happiest, cried, replied ...but copying, crying, replying
*Adding the endings –ing, –ed, –er, – est and –y to words ending in –e with a consonant before it	The –e at the end of the root word is dropped before –ing, – ed, –er, –est, –y or any other suffix beginning with a vowel letter is added.	The exception is being. hiking, hiked, hiker, nicer, nicest, shiny
*Adding –ing, –ed, –er, –est and –y to words of one syllable ending in a single consonant letter after a single vowel letter	The last consonant letter of the root word is doubled to keep the vowel ‘short’. Exception: The letter ‘x’ is never doubled:	patting, patted, humming, hummed, dropping, dropped, sadder, saddest, fatter, fattest, runner, runny mixing, mixed, boxer, sixes.
*The suffixes –ment, –ness, –ful , – less and ‘-ly’	If a suffix starts with a consonant letter, it is added straight on to most root words without any change to the last letter of those words. Exceptions: (1) argument (2) root words ending in –y with a consonant before it but only if the root word has more than one syllable.	enjoyment, sadness, careful, playful, hopeless, plainness (plain + ness), badly merriment, happiness, plentiful, penniless, happily
*Contractions	In contractions, the apostrophe shows where a letter or letters would be if the words were written in full (e.g. can’t – cannot). It’s means it is (e.g. It’s raining) or sometimes it has (e.g. It’s been raining), but it’s is never used for the possessive. The possessive apostrophe (singular nouns) Megan’s, Ravi’s, the girl’s, the child’s, the man’s	can’t, didn’t, hasn’t, couldn’t, it’s, I’ll
*Homophones and near-homophones	It is important to know the difference in meaning between homophones.	there/their/they’re, here/hear, quite/quiet, see/sea, bare/bear, one/won, sun/son, to/too/two, be/bee, blue/blew, night/knight
Year 2 Common exception words	Door, floor, poor, because, find, kind, mind, behind, child, children, wild, climb, most, both, only, old, cold, gold, hold, told, everybody, even, great, break, steak, pretty, beautiful, after, fast, last, past, father, class, grass, pass, plant, path, bath, hour, move, prove, improve, sure, sugar, eye, could, should, would, who, whole, any, many, clothes, busy, people, water, again, half, money, Mr, Mrs, parents, Christmas	

Year 3 & 4 Progression Overview		
Spelling Pattern	Spelling Rule	Examples
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	Words to be learnt as needed.	myth, gym, Egypt, pyramid, mystery
The /ʌ/ sound spelt ou	Words to be learnt as needed.	young, touch, double, trouble, country
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. The prefix in– can mean both ‘not’ and ‘in’/‘into’. In the words given here it means ‘not’. Before a root word starting with l, in– becomes il Before a root word starting with m or p, in– becomes im–. Before a root word starting with r, in– becomes ir–. re– means ‘again’ or ‘back’. sub– means ‘under’. inter– means ‘between’ or ‘among’. super– means ‘above’. anti– means ‘against’. auto– means ‘self’ or ‘own’.	dis–, mis–: disappoint, disagree, disobey misbehave, mislead, misspell (mis + spell) in–: inactive, incorrect illegal, illegible immature, immortal, impossible, impatient, imperfect irregular, irrelevant, irresponsible re–: redo, refresh, return, reappear, redecorate sub–: subdivide, subheading, submarine, submerge inter–: interact, intercity, international, interrelated (inter + related) super–: supermarket, superman, superstar anti–: antiseptic, anti-clockwise, antisocial 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
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. 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. (2) If the root word ends with –le, the –le is changed to –ly. (3) If the root word ends with –ic, –ally is added rather	sadly, completely, usually (usual + ly), finally (final + ly), comically (comical + ly) happily, angrily gently, simply, humbly, nobly basically, frantically, dramatically

	than just –ly, except in the word publicly. (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’ 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
Endings which sound like /jən/, 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 and 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, weight, eight, neighbour, they and obey
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,	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)

	but is added if the plural does not end in –s (i.e. is an irregular plural – e.g. children’s)					
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
Statutory Word list for Years 3 & 4	accident(ally)	circle	famous	island	peculiar	sentence
	actual(ly)	complete	favourite	knowledge	perhaps	separate
	address	consider	February	learn	popular	special
	answer	continue	forward(s)	length	position	strange
	appear	decide	fruit	library	possess(ion)	strength
	arrive	describe	grammar	material	possible	suppose
	believe	different	group	medicine	potatoes	surprise
	bicycle	difficult	guard	mention	pressure	therefore
	breath	disappear	guide	minute	probably	though/although
	breathe	early	heard	natural	promise	thought
	build	earth	heart	naughty	purpose	through
	busy/business	eight/eighth	height	notice	quarter	variety
	calendar	enough	history	occasion(ally)	question	weight
	caught	exercise	imagine	often	recent	woman/women
	centre	experience	increase	opposite	regular	
	century	experiment	important	ordinary	reign	
	certain	extreme	interest	particular	remember	

Year 5 & 6 Progression Overview		
Spelling Pattern	Spelling Rule	Examples
Endings which sound like /jəs/ spelt –ci or –ti	Not many common words end like this. If the root word ends in –ce, the /ʔ/ sound is usually spelt as c e.g. vice – vici, grace – graci, space – spac <i>i</i> , malice – malici. Exception: anxi.	Vicious, precious, conscious, delicious, malicious, suspicious ambitious, cautious, fictitious, infectious, nutritious
Endings which sound like /jəl/ – cial is common after a vowel letter and –tial after a consonant letter, but there are some exceptions.	Exceptions: initial, financial, commercial, provincial (the spelling of the last three is clearly related to finance, commerce and province).	official, special, artificial, partial, confidential, essential
Words ending in –ant, –ance/–ancy, –ent, –ence/–ency	Use –ant and –ance/–ancy if there is a related word with a /æ/ or /eʔ/ sound in the right position; –ation endings are often a clue. Use –ent and –ence/–ency after soft c (/s/ sound), soft g (/dʒ/ sound) and qu, or if there is a related word with a clear /ʔ/ sound in the right position. There are many words, however, where the above guidelines don't help. These words just have to be learnt.	Observant, observance, (observation), expectant (expectation), hesitant, hesitancy (hesitation), tolerant, tolerance (toleration), substance (substantial) innocent, innocence, decent, decency, frequent, frequency, confident, confidence (confidential) assistant, assistance, obedient, obedience, independent, independence Words
Words ending in –able and –ible Words ending in –ably and –ibly	The –able/–ably endings are far more common than the –ible/–ibly endings. As with –ant and –ance/–ancy, the –able ending is used if there is a related word ending in –ation. If the –able ending is added to a word ending in –ce or –ge, the e after the c or g must be kept as those letters would otherwise have their 'hard' sounds (as in cap and gap) before the a of the –able ending. The –able ending is usually but not always used if a complete root word can be heard before it, even if there is no related word ending in –ation. The first five examples opposite are obvi; in reliable, the complete word rely is heard, but the y changes to i in accordance with the rule. The –ible ending is common if a complete root word can't be heard before it but it also sometimes occurs when a complete word can be heard (e.g. sensible).	adorable/adorably (adoration), applicable/applicably (application), considerable/considerably (consideration), tolerable/tolerably (toleration) changeable, noticeable, forcible, legible dependable, comfortable, understandable, reasonable, enjoyable, reliable possible/possibly, horrible/horribly, terrible/terribly, visible/visibly, incredible/incredibly, sensible/sensibly

Adding suffixes beginning with vowel letters to words ending in – fer	The r is doubled if the –fer is still stressed when the ending is added. The r is not doubled if the –fer is no longer stressed.	referring, referred, referral, preferring, preferred, transferring, transferred reference, referee, preference, transference
Use of the hyphen	Hyphens can be used to join a prefix to a root word, especially if the prefix ends in a vowel letter and the root word also begins with one.	co-ordinate, re-enter, co-operate, co-own
Words with the /i:/ sound spelt ei after c	The ‘i before e except after c’ rule applies to words where the sound spelt by ei is /i:/. Exception: protein, caffeine, seize (and either and neither if pronounced with an initial /i:/ sound).	deceive, conceive, receive, perceive, ceiling
Words containing the letter- string ough	ough is one of the trickiest spellings in English – it can be used to spell a number of different sounds.	string ough ough is one of the trickiest spellings in English – it can be used to spell a number of different sounds. ought, bought, thought, nought, brought, fought rough, tough, enough cough though, although, dough through thorough, borough plough
Words with ‘silent’ letters (i.e. letters whose presence cannot be predicted from the pronunciation of the word)	Words with ‘silent’ letters (i.e. letters whose presence cannot be predicted from the pronunciation of the word)	doubt,
Homophones and other words that are often confused	In these pairs of words, nouns end –ce and verbs end –se. Advice and advise provide a useful clue as the word advise (verb) is pronounced with a /z/ sound – which could not be spelt c. aisle: a gangway between seats (in a church, train, plane) isle: an island aloud: out loud allowed: permitted affect: usually a verb (e.g. The weather may affect our plans) effect: usually a noun (e.g. It may have an effect on our plans). If a verb, it means ‘bring about’ (e.g. He will effect changes in the running of the business.). altar: a table-like piece of furniture in a church alter: to change ascent: the act of ascending (going up) assent: to agree/agreement (verb and noun) bridal: to do with a bride at a wedding bridle: reins etc. for controlling a horse cereal: made from grain (e.g. breakfast cereal) serial: adjective from the noun series – a succession of things one after	Advise/advice device/devise licence/license practice/practise prophecy/prophesy farther: further father: a male parent guessed: past tense of the verb guess guest: visitor heard: past tense of the verb hear herd: a group of animals led: past tense of the verb lead lead: present tense of that verb, or else the metal which is very heavy (as heavy as lead) morning: before noon mourning: grieving for someone who has died past: noun or adjective referring to a previ time (e.g. In the past) or preposition or adverb showing place (e.g. he walked past me) passed: past tense of the verb ‘pass’ (e.g. I passed him in the road) precede: go in front of or before proceed: go on principal: adjective – most important (e.g. principal ballerina) noun – important person (e.g. principal of a college) principle: basic truth or belief profit: money that is made in selling things prophet: someone who foretells the future stationary:

	someone (e.g. to draft in extra help) draught: a current of air	not moving stationery: paper, envelopes etc. steal: take something that does not belong to you steel: metal wary: cautious weary: tired who's: contraction of who is or who has whose: belonging to someone (e.g. Whose jacket is that?)
Adding suffixes beginning with vowel letters to words of more than one syllable	Words to be learnt as needed.	myth, gym, Egypt, pyramid, mystery
The /ʌ/ sound spelt ou	Words to be learnt as needed.	young, touch, double, trouble, country
Prefixes	<p>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.</p> <p>The prefix in– can mean both ‘not’ and ‘in’/‘into’. In the words given here it means ‘not’. Before a root word starting with l, in– becomes il Before a root word starting with m or p, in– becomes im–. Before a root word starting with r, in– becomes ir–. re– means ‘again’ or ‘back’. sub– means ‘under’. inter– means ‘between’ or ‘among’. super– means ‘above’. anti– means ‘against’. auto– means ‘self’ or ‘own’.</p>	<p>dis–, mis–: disappoint, disagree, disobey misbehave, mislead, misspell (mis + spell) in–: inactive, incorrect illegal, illegible immature, immortal, impossible, impatient, imperfect irregular, irrelevant, irresponsible re–: redo, refresh, return, reappear, redecorate sub–: subdivide, subheading, submarine, submerge inter–: interact, intercity, international, interrelated (inter + related) super–: supermarket, superman, superstar anti–: antiseptic, anti-clockwise, antisocial auto–: autobiography, autograph</p>
The suffix –ation	The suffix –ation is added to verbs to form nouns. The rules already learnt still apply.	information, adoration, sensation, preparation, admiration
Suffix -ly	<p>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.</p> <p>Exception: (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. (2) If the root word ends with –le, the –le is changed to –ly. (3) If the root word ends with –ic, –ally is added rather than just –ly, except in the word publicly. (4) The words truly, duly, wholly.</p>	sadly, completely, usually (usual + ly), finally (final + ly), comically (comical + ly) happily, angrily gently, simply, humbly, nobly basically, frantically, dramatically

Statutory Word list for Years 3 & 4	accommodate	communicate	environment	individual	prejudice	stomach
	accompany	community	equipped	interfere	privilege	sufficient
	according	competition	equipment	interrupt	profession	suggest
	achieve	conscience	especially	language	programme	symbol system
	aggressive	conscious	exaggerate	leisure	pronunciation	temperature
	amateur	controversy	excellent	lightning	queue	thorough
	ancient	convenience	existence	marvellous	recognise	twelfth variety
	apparent	correspond	explanation	mischievous	recommend	vegetable
	appreciate	criticise	familiar	muscle	relevant	vehicle
	attached	curiosity	foreign	necessary	restaurant	yacht
	available	definite	forty	neighbour	rhyme	
	average	desperate	frequently	nuisance	rhythm	
	awkward	determined	government	occupy	sacrifice	
	bargain	develop	guarantee harass	occur	secretary	
	bruise	dictionary	hindrance	opportunity	shoulder	
	category	disastrous	identity	parliament	signature	
	cemetery	embarrass	immediate(ly)	persuade	sincere(ly)	
	committee			physical	soldier	