

A Spelling Technique

Here are some tips for learning how to spell words.

1. Use several of your five senses to help you learn to spell a word.

A. Sight:

Look at the word. Absorb it. Let it sink into your subconscious. Take the word apart by syllables and learn to spell each individual syllable (part or section) of the word.

B. Hearing:

Pronounce each syllable carefully. Then put them together and pronounce the word as a whole. Spell out each syllable as you say it to yourself slowly, carefully, and clearly.

C. Touch:

Try to get the “feel” of the word:

- How many letters are in the word?
- Are there any double letter? If so, where are they?
- Are there any silent letters?
- Does the word (or parts of the word) rhyme with any other word?
- Does the word contain “little words” inside it?
- Does the word spell something backwards?

Note any prefixes and/or suffixes in the word:

pro-- or *por--* ?
per-- or *pre--* ?
--ance or *--ence* ?
--ible or *--able* ?
--ceed or *--cede* ?

- Finally (and perhaps most helpfully of all), write out the word five, ten, twenty times, or more until your hand has “memorized” the correct spelling of the word.

2. The Formal Rules of Spelling (some of them!)

- a. **I** before **E** (*thief, relief, chief*)
except after **c** (*receive, ceiling*)
or when sounded like a ... as in *neighbor* or *weigh*. (*sleigh, vein*)
- b. If any word ends in a consonant followed by a y, then change the y to an *i* before adding any kind of other ending. (This applies to both nouns and verbs.)
- one duty → several duties
 - I cry → A baby cries. (cried)
 - I try → Joes tries. (tried)
 - my family → their families
- c. No prefix added to the front of a root word will ever change the spelling of that root word.

mis + spell = misspell

un + noticed = unnoticed

- d. Double the final consonant of a root word before adding a suffix only if:

- The root word has only one syllable or is stressed on the last syllable.
- It has only one vowel in the final (or only) syllable.
- It ends in one consonant only.

mop + ing = mopping

stop + able = stopppable