



1. There's at least one vowel sound in every **syllable** of every word. Knowing how many syllables are in a word and where the break occurs greatly helps spelling:

Vowels can be in the middle of consonants, for example:

cat, jet, fan-tas-tic

Vowels can also stand alone in a syllable, for example:

u-nit, an-i-mal, o-pen

2. **Vowels can make different sounds** depending on where they are placed in a word.

If a consonant is after the vowel, the vowel usually makes a short sound, for example:

cat, sh**o**p, sh**i**p

In the absence of a consonant the vowel usually makes a long vowel sound, for example:

t**o**, s**o**, w**e**, b**e**

If there is only one vowel in a syllable that is followed by at least one consonant, the vowel is likely to make a short sound. This is called a 'closed syllable' because the consonant closes in the short vowel sound, for example:

it**ch**, Sep-t**e**m-b**e**r, prin-**ce**ss

If there is only one vowel at the end of a syllable, it's likely to make a long sound and this pattern is called an 'open syllable':

h**e**, m**a**n, g**o**

3. **Silent 'e'** - when 'e' is the last letter in a word and there is only one other vowel in that syllable, the first vowel in that syllable is usually long and the 'e' is silent. Some teachers call this 'magic e' where the 'e' sends all its power to the vowel, for example:

k**i**te, c**u**te, m**a**te

4. **Consonant blends and digraphs**. In a digraph made of consonants, the two consonants work together to form a new sound, for example:

sh**ip**, ph**oto**, ch**op**

Consonant blends are different. These groups of two or more consonants work together but unlike digraphs their individual sounds can be heard, for example:  
**grasp, scrub, clap**

5. In a vowel digraph, two vowels are side by side. The first vowel is long and says its name. The second vowel is silent, for example:  
**boat, paint, beach**

Sometimes vowels work together to form a new sound, this is known as a diphthong, for example:  
**cloud, boil**

6. **R-controlled vowels** - when a syllable has a vowel which is followed by a 'r', the vowel is controlled by the 'r' and makes a new sound, for example:  
**car, bird, form**

**This is sometimes called the bossy 'r' as the 'r' bosses the vowel to make a new sound**

7. **Soft 'c' and hard 'c', soft 'g' and hard 'g'**. When the letter 'c' is followed by the vowel, e, i or y it makes a soft /s/ sound, for example:  
**circus, juice, cycle**

**However, with the vowel, a, o and u** the letter 'c' makes a hard sound, for example:  
**cat, can, cut**

**When the 'g' is followed by the vowels, e, i or y** it makes a soft /j/ sound, for example:  
**giant, gel, angel**

**with the other vowels, a, o, u** it makes a hard sound, for example:  
**go, jug, guest**

8. **The flossy rule.** The letters, **f, s, z** and **l** are usually doubled at the end of a one-syllable word immediately following a vowel, for example:  
**stuff, grass, shell**

Exceptions are **bus** and **pal**

- 9. Ending in 'k' or 'ck'.** When a one syllable word ends with the /k/ sound immediately following a short vowel, it's usually spelt with 'ck', for example:  
**duck, trick**

When the 'k' follows a consonant, long vowel or diphthong, it's usually spelled with a 'k', for example:  
**task, cake, soak**

- 10. The /j/ sound and the /ch/ sound.** In a one syllable word when a /j/ sound immediately follows a short vowel, it's spelled 'dge' as in:  
**badge, hedge, bridge** (the 'd' protects the vowel from the magic 'e' rule)

In a one syllable word, when a /ch/ sound immediately follows a short vowel sound, it's usually spelled 'tch' as in:  
**fetch, catch, clutch**

Exceptions are, **such, much, rich**

- 11. Drop the 'e' with 'ing'.** When words end with a silent 'e', drop the 'e' before adding 'ing', for example:  
**give - giving, make - making**

This rule also applies to other suffixes that start with vowels, like, 'ed', 'er', 'able' and 'ous', for example:  
**excite - excitable, hope - hoped**

- 12. The doubling rule:** In a one syllable word where one short vowel is followed by one consonant, double the consonant before adding a suffix that starts with a vowel for example:  
**sit - sitting, win - winner**

13. The 'W' Rules:

1. **'W' Rule 1:** 'a' after 'w' saying /o/
2. **'W' Rule 2:** 'ar' after 'w' saying /or/
3. **'W' Rule 3:** 'or' after 'w' saying /er/

14. If there is a silent letter before 'n' it will be 'k' and if there is a silent letter before 'r' it will be 'w', for example:

**know, wrong**

15. No English word ends in 'v' there is always an 'e' after it

16. **Plurals.** For most words add 's' to make them plural, as in **cat / cats**

But when a singular word ends with s, sh, ch, x or z add 'es' to make it plural, for example:

**class - classes, brush - brushes**

17. **Y rules.** To make a word plural that ends in a vowel immediately followed by 'y', just add 's', for example:

**toy - toys**

When 'y' immediately follows a consonant, change the 'y' to an 'i' and add 'es', for example:

**pony - ponies, family - families**

Suffixes follow a similar set of 'y' rules:

When there's a vowel right before 'y', keep the 'y' and simply add the suffix, for example:

**play - playing, annoy - annoying**

When a word ends with a consonant followed immediately by a 'y' - 'change the 'y' to an 'i' before adding suffixes, like, 'ed' and 'est', for example:

**carry - carried, happy - happiest**

But when the suffix begins with 'l' keep the 'y' and simply add the suffix, for example:

**fly - flying, baby - babyish**