

400 Tricky Spelling Words

Every Year 5 Student Should Know

(with rules & patterns)

© Scholarly

400 Tricky Spelling Words Every Year 5 Student Should Know

Welcome to this comprehensive guide designed specifically for Year 5 Australian students. Mastering spelling is an essential skill that helps improve reading, writing, and overall communication abilities. This guide presents 400 challenging words organised by spelling patterns and rules to make learning more structured and effective.

For each section, you'll find:

- A clear explanation of the spelling rule or pattern
- Examples of words that follow the pattern
- Helpful tips and memory aids
- Practice exercises to reinforce learning

Let's begin our spelling journey!

Table of Contents

1. [Silent Letters](#)
2. [Double Consonants](#)
3. [ie/ei Words](#)
4. [Homophones](#)
5. [Words with 'ough'](#)
6. [Prefixes and Suffixes](#)

7. [Commonly Misspelled Words](#)
8. [Words with British/Australian Spelling](#)
9. [Compound Words](#)
10. [Advanced Vocabulary for Year 5](#)
11. [Practice Exercises](#)
12. [Self-Assessment Tools](#)

1. Silent Letters

The Rule:

Silent letters are letters that appear in a word but aren't pronounced when the word is spoken. They can be tricky because you can't rely on sound alone to spell these words correctly.

Common Silent Letter Patterns:

Silent 'k' (before 'n')

knot, knee, knight, knowledge,	knapsack, kneel, knew,
knuckle, knife, knead, knack,	knickers, knit, knock, knot

Silent 'g' (before 'n')

gnome, gnat, gnaw, gnarled,	assignment, foreign, campaign,
gnash, gnarl, sign, design,	champagne

Silent 'w'

write, wrong, wrist, wreck,	wrangle, wrath, wrench,
wrestle, wreath, wrinkle, wrap,	wriggle, wright

Silent 'b'

doubt, debt, subtle, lamb,	crumb, dumb, limb, numb,
climb, comb, thumb, bomb,	plumber, tomb

Silent 'h'

hour, honest, honour, heir,	rhythm, rhyme, vehicle,
exhaust, exhibition, ghost,	whether

Silent 't'

castle, whistle, listen, often,	hasten, glisten, moisten, thistle
soften, Christmas, fasten,	

Practice Tip:

Try creating a memory aid for each silent letter pattern. For example, "The knight knew to knock on the door with his knuckles."

2. Double Consonants

The Rule:

Many English words contain double consonants. One common pattern is when adding suffixes to words ending in a consonant: if the word has one syllable or is stressed on the last syllable, double the final consonant before adding a suffix beginning with a vowel.

Words with Double Consonants

swimming, running, hopping,	blossom, address, traffic,	accommodation, arrangement,
spotted, pattern, addition,	suggest, balloon, success,	business, occasion, committee,
ladder, mirror, luggage,	gallery, attitude, attraction,	disappear
beginning, rabbit, button,	attention, accidentally,	

Examples with Adding Suffixes

run + ing = running (one syllable word)

hop + ed = hopped (one syllable word)

begin + ing = beginning (stress on last syllable)

open + ing = opening (stress not on last syllable, so no doubling)

Practice Exercise:

Add the appropriate suffix (-ing, -ed, -er) to these words:

1. stop
2. travel
3. swim
4. prefer
5. visit

3. ie/ei Words

The Rule:

Remember the rhyme: "i before e, except after c, or when sounded like 'ay' as in 'neighbour' and 'weigh'"

'i' before 'e'

believe, chief, field, grief, niece, piece, shield, thief, achieve,	brief, hygiene, patient, science, experience, convenient
--	---

'e' before 'i' after 'c'

ceiling, conceive, deceive, perceive, receipt, receive,	conceit, deceit
--	-----------------

'ei' sounding like 'ay'

eight, freight, neighbour, reign, sleigh, weigh, weight, vein,	beige, feint
---	--------------

Exceptions to the Rule

either, neither, weird, seize, protein, caffeine, leisure,	height, foreign, sovereign
---	----------------------------

Memory Tip:

Create a sentence using several ie/ei words. For example: "My niece believes her neighbour received a weird receipt for eight pieces of freight."

4. Homophones

What are Homophones?

Homophones are words that sound the same but have different spellings and meanings. They are often confused in writing.

Common Homophone Pairs

there/their/they're

There refers to a place
Their shows possession
They're is a contraction of "they are"

to/too/two

To is a preposition
Too means "also" or "excessively"
Two is the number 2

your/you're

Your shows possession

You're is a contraction of "you are"

where/wear/were

Where refers to a place

Wear is what you do with clothes

Were is a past tense of "are"

More Homophone Pairs

hear/here, see/sea, mail/male,

sale/sail, plain/plane,

flour/flower, sun/son,

bare/bear, break/brake,

fair/fare, peace/piece,

principal/principle,

weather/whether,

boarder/border,

complement/compliment,

desert/dessert,

stationary/stationery,

affect/effect

Practice Exercise:

Fill in the blanks with the correct homophone:

1. We are going _____ (to/too/two) the zoo tomorrow.
2. _____ (There/Their/They're) bringing _____ (there/their/they're) books to school.
3. I _____ (heard/herd) the bell ring from over _____ (hear/here).
4. Do you know _____ (wear/where/were) we parked the car?
5. _____ (Your/You're) going to love _____ (your/you're) birthday present.

5. Words with 'ough'

The Challenge with 'ough':

The letter combination 'ough' can be pronounced in multiple ways, making it one of the trickiest spelling patterns in English.

Different Pronunciations of 'ough'

'ough' sounding like 'off'

cough, trough

'ough' sounding like 'ow'

bough, plough, drought

'ough' sounding like 'oo'

through, breakthrough

'ough' sounding like 'oh'

although, dough, though

'ough' sounding like 'uff'

enough, rough, tough

'ough' sounding like 'or'

thought, bought, fought

Memory Aid:

A strange thought: though the plough was tough to push through the drought, I bought enough dough at the borough market after a thorough search.

6. Prefixes and Suffixes

Understanding Word Parts:

Prefixes are added to the beginning of a word to change its meaning. Suffixes are added to the end of a word to form a new word or adapt the word to fit grammatically.

Common Prefixes

un- (not)

unhappy, uncertain, unfinished

re- (again)

rewrite, return, reappear

inter- (between)

international, interact, interchange

sub- (under)

submarine, subway, subheading

dis- (not, opposite)

disagree, disappear, dislike

pre- (before)

preview, prehistoric, prepaid

anti- (against)

antisocial, antifreeze, antibacterial

mis- (wrongly)

misunderstand, misplace, misspell

Common Suffixes

-ful (full of)

beautiful, careful, helpful

-ment (state of)

excitement, arrangement, enjoyment

-able/-ible (can be done)

comfortable, visible, edible

-ly (in the manner of)

quickly, suddenly, carefully

-less (without)

careless, hopeless, fearless

-ness (quality of)

happiness, kindness, darkness

-ion (action/process)

discussion, celebration, television

-tion/-sion (state or quality)

invitation, confusion, permission

Spelling Rules with Suffixes

Words ending in 'e': Usually drop the 'e' before adding a suffix beginning with a vowel.

hope + ing = hoping

love + able = lovable

Words ending in 'y': Change 'y' to 'i' before adding a suffix (unless the suffix begins with 'i').

happy + ness = happiness

cry + ed = cried

But: study + ing = studying (not studyiing)

Practice Exercise:

Add the appropriate prefix or suffix to create a new word:

1. ____honest (prefix meaning 'not')
2. help____ (suffix meaning 'without')
3. ____read (prefix meaning 'again')
4. care____ (suffix meaning 'in a manner of')
5. ____appear (prefix meaning 'not' or 'opposite')

7. Commonly Misspelled Words

Words to Watch Out For:

These words are frequently misspelled by Year 5 students (and many adults too!).

accommodate, achievement, address, advertisement, apparent, argument, beautiful, beginning, believe, business, calendar, category, cemetery, committee, conscience, conscious, curiosity, decide, definitely, disappointed, embarrass, environment, especially, exaggerate, excellent, exercise, experience, familiar, favourite, February, foreign, forty, forward,	government, grammar, guarantee, harass, height, imagination, immediately, independent, interrupt, knowledge, library, lightning, maintenance, mischievous, necessary, occasion, occurred, opportunity, parallel, parliament, particular, persuade, phenomenon, possession, potential, privilege, probably, pronunciation, psychology,	publicly, queue, receipt, receive, recommend, reference, relevant, restaurant, rhythm, schedule, separate, sincerely, successful, surprise, technique, temperature, thorough, tomorrow, twelfth, tyranny, unfortunately, unnecessary, until, vacuum, vegetable, weather, Wednesday, weight, weird
--	---	---

Memory Tips:

necessary - one c, two s's ("one collar, two sleeves")

separate - there's "a rat" in the middle

February - "Feb-ru-ary" - pronounce all syllables when spelling

embarrass - two r's, two s's

8. Words with British/Australian Spelling

Australian Spelling Conventions:

Australian English follows British English spelling conventions, which differ from American English in several consistent ways.

-our vs -or

Australian/British spelling uses -our:

colour, favour, flavour, harbour, honour, behaviour,
humour, neighbour, labour, endeavour

Instead of American -or: color, favor, etc.

-re vs -er

Australian/British spelling uses -re:

centre, theatre, fibre, metre, sombre, spectre
litre, calibre, mediocre, ochre,

Instead of American -er: center, theater, etc.

-ise vs -ize

Australian/British spelling uses -ise:

realise, organise, recognise, specialise, advertise, exercise,
apologise, memorise, surprise, compromise

Instead of American -ize: realize, organize, etc.

Other Common Differences

Australian/British Spelling

programme (for TV, concert)
enquire
licence (noun)
defence
jewellery
mould
pyjamas
grey

American Spelling

program
inquire
license
defense
jewelry
mold
pajamas
gray

Practice Exercise:

Convert these American spellings to Australian/British spellings:

- 1. favorable
- 2. theater
- 3. summarize
- 4. encyclopedia
- 5. traveled

9. Compound Words

What are Compound Words?

Compound words are formed when two or more words are joined together to create a new word with a new meaning.

Types of Compound Words

Closed Compounds (written as one word)

football,	sunshine,	everywhere,
classroom,	bathroom,	background,
notebook,	bedroom,	software,
homework,	playground,	skateboard,
rainbow,	keyboard,	starfish,
weekend,	girlfriend,	butterfly
birthday,	anybody,	

Hyphenated Compounds

mother-in-	shirt, merry-	ex-husband,
law, check-in,	go-round,	father-in-law,
twenty-one,	cross-	get-together,
well-known,	reference,	long-term,
self-respect,	full-time,	second-hand
ice-cream, T-	good-looking,	

Open Compounds (written as separate words)

dining room, fish tank, high	swimming pool, washing	engine, tennis court, light bulb,
school, ice cream, post office,	machine, science fiction, dining	shopping centre
real estate, coffee table,	room, golf club, bus stop, fire	

Practice Exercise:

Create compound words by combining words from column A with words from column B:

Column A

sun, book, foot, news, break, over, class, down, home, air

Column B

light, mark, ball, paper, fast, coat, room, stairs, work, plane

10. Advanced Vocabulary for Year 5

Expanding Your Vocabulary:

These words might be challenging for Year 5 students but mastering them will significantly improve your writing skills.

accomplish, achievement, ancient, anticipate, appreciate, appropriate, approximate, argument, atmosphere, audience, authentic, characteristic, collaborate, community, compare, competent, compliment, compromise, concentrate, conclude, confident, consequence, consider, continent, contribute, controversy, convenient, cooperate, courage, creative, cultivate, curious, decade, decision, decline, decrease, demonstrate, describe, determined, develop, dialogue, different, difficult, diligent, disappoint, disaster, discover, discuss, distinguish, distribute, dominant, dramatic, elaborate, eliminate, embarrass, emphasize, encounter, encourage, enthusiasm, environment, essential, establish, estimate, evaluate, evidence, exaggerate, excellent, exception, exclaim, expansion, experience, experiment, explanation, extraordinary, fascinating, fortunate, fragment, frequent, frustrate, generate, generous, geography, government,

gradually, grateful, hesitate, hilarious, horizon, identical, illustration, imagination, immediate, immigrant, impact, important, impressive, improvement, incident, independent, influence, information, ingredient, injury, innocent, innovation, inquire, inspiration, instance, institution, instruction, intelligent, interfere, interrupt, introduction, investigate, invisible, invitation, irritate, jealous, knowledge, laboratory, landscape, language, leadership, marvellous, massive, maximum, measure, memorable, miniature, minimum, mixture, moderate, multiply, mysterious, narrative, necessary, negotiate, nervous, numerous, nutrition, observation, obstacle, occasion, optimistic, orchestra, ordinary, organise, original, outrageous, overwhelming, parliament, participate, particular, peaceful, performance, permanent, permission, persevere, persuade, phenomenal, politician, pollution, popular, portable, position, possess, possibility, potential, practical,

precious, predict, preparation, preserve, prevent, primary, priority, problem, procedure, process, produce, profession, progress, project, prominent, pronounce, property, proposal, protection, provide, punctuation, purchase, quality, quantity, questionnaire, rapidly, reasonable, recommendation, rectangle, reference, regular, relationship, relevant, reliable, remarkable, remember, represent, reputation, request, research, resource, respectful, responsibility, restaurant, ridiculous, sacrifice, satisfy, schedule, scientific, secretary, sensible, sensitive, separate, sequence, significant, similar, sincerely, solution, specific, specimen, spectator, splendid, statement, statistics, strategy, strength, stubborn, successful, suggestion, summarise, support, surprise, surround, survival, suspicious, sympathetic, technique, technology, temperature, temporary, thorough, thoughtful, thousand, threatened, throughout, tolerance, tournament, tradition, tragedy, transfer,

translate, transport,	vacation, valuable, variety,	weather, weight, welcome,
triumphant, typical, ultimate,	various, vegetable, vehicle,	whisper, wilderness,
unconscious, understand,	vengeance, version, violence,	wonderful, worried
unexpected, unfortunate,	visible, volunteer, voyage,	
universe, university, unusual,	vulnerable, weakness, wealthy,	

Word Building Challenge:

Choose five words from the list above and:

1. Write the definition
2. Use it in a sentence
3. Find synonyms and antonyms
4. Make a note of tricky parts in its spelling

Practice Exercises

Exercise 1: Silent Letter Hunt

Find and circle all words with silent letters in the paragraph below:

"The knight knelt on one knee beside the castle. He knew the answer to the puzzle was written in his psychology textbook. With a subtle gesture, he signalled to his friends. They walked across the bridge, whistling a tune. The autumn leaves rustled as they wrapped their scarves tighter against the cold."

Exercise 2: Fix the Spelling Mistakes

Each sentence below contains one spelling mistake. Find and correct it:

1. I recieved a beautiful present for my birthday.
2. The students waited patiently in the library.
3. My favorite holiday destination is the beach.
4. She was definately the fastest runner in the race.
5. We couldn't beleive our eyes when we saw the rainbow.
6. The science expiriment was fascinating.
7. Our teacher gave us an intresting assignment.
8. February is the shortest month of the year.
9. It's neccessary to bring your swimming costume.
10. I accidently spilled water on my homework.

Exercise 3: Homophone Challenge

Choose the correct homophone to complete each sentence:

1. We're going to ____ (their/there/they're) house for dinner.

2. I can ____ (hear/here) the birds singing.

3. ____ (Your/You're) going to love this book.

4. The ____ (sun/son) is shining brightly today.

5. We need to ____ (buy/by) some groceries on the way home.

6. The ship set ____ (sail/sale) at dawn.

7. ____ (Who's/Whose) turn is it to wash the dishes?

8. I'm not sure ____ (weather/whether) to wear a coat or not.

9. The cat chased its ____ (tail/tale) around the garden.

10. She needed to ____ (break/brake) suddenly to avoid hitting the dog.

Exercise 4: Prefix and Suffix Word Building

Create new words by adding prefixes and suffixes to the base words below:

Base Word	Add a Prefix	Add a Suffix	Add Both
happy			
care			
legal			
read			
trust			

Exercise 5: Spelling Rule Application

Apply the correct spelling rules to complete these words:

1. run____ (add -ing)

2. nice____ (add -ly)

3. try____ (add -ed)

4. hope____ (add -ing)

5. happy____ (add -ness)

6. drop____ (add -ed)

7. love____ (add -able)

8. easy____ (add -ly)

9. carry____ (add -ing)

10. day_____ (add -ly)

Self-Assessment Tools

Spelling Checklist

Use this checklist to track your progress with tricky words:

Word	Can Spell Correctly	Need More Practice	Notes/Memory Aids
necessary			
believe			
receive			
definitely			
separate			

Add more words that you find challenging to this list.

Weekly Spelling Challenge

Challenge yourself to learn 10 new tricky words each week:

1. Choose 10 words from this guide that you find difficult
2. Create flashcards with the word on one side and memory aids on the other
3. Practice writing each word 3 times daily
4. Use each word in a sentence
5. Ask someone to test you at the end of the week
6. Track your progress in the table below

Week	Words Mastered	Score (out of 10)
1		
2		
3		
4		

Conclusion

Congratulations on working through "400 Tricky Spelling Words Every Year 5 Student Should Know"! Remember that becoming a good speller takes practice and persistence. Don't be discouraged by mistakes – they're part of the learning process.

The spelling patterns and rules you've learned in this guide will help you not just with these 400 words, but with thousands of other words you'll encounter throughout your education and life.

Keep this guide handy as a reference when you're writing. Regularly review the sections that cover your personal spelling challenges. With continued practice, these tricky words will become second nature to you!

Happy spelling!

© Scholarly