Spelling rules from Spelling Lessons

Spelling Lesson 1

Syllables and words ending in a consonant will have their short sound:
  at in on, en (as in en-ter); man met lip hop tug

Short (1-syllable) words ending in a K sound are usually spelled with a ck:
  lack peck sick rock truck

Short (1-syllable) words ending in a L, F, or S sound usually have doubled letters:
  fall well mill doll pull; gaff tiff doff muff; mass hiss less toss fuss

Words usually divide between two consonants (ck & doubled letters count as 1 consonant):
  (remember the rule that syllables ending in a vowel are short)
  nap-kin rab-bit ad-mit well-ness son-net bob-cat

Words ending in hissing sounds add –es in the plural, all others just add s.
  keeps farms fishes boxes

Words usually divide between consonant blends:
  hand-craft lip-stick dust-pan

The letter groups sh, th, wh, ng, and nk count as one letter for syllable division, and will stay together when dividing words.

Words ending in a CH sound are often spelled –tch:
  watch etch itch thatch

Unaccented syllables are often mushed to the schwa sound of uh (shown in the dictionary as an upside-down e.) This happens especially often with words the vowels o or a.

The letter c is pronounced as an s before e, i, and y, but with a k sound before all other letters. (Before the vowels a, o, and u and before all consonants.) The letter c is often followed by a silent e whose purpose is to keep the sound of the c “soft,” as its s sound is called.

  c as s before e, i, or y: cell, city, cyber, ace, dice, mice
  c as s with a silent e to keep the “soft” sound: prince, fleece

The letter g is pronounced as a j before e, i, and y, but with a g sound before all other letters. (Before the vowels a, o, and u and before all consonants.) English words will not end with a j. The letter g is often followed by a silent e whose purpose is to keep the sound of the g “soft,” as its j sound is called. A letter d is added before the ge to keep the vowel short (2 consonants, short vowel: 1 consonant, long vowel.) A few common words such as girl and get have a hard g where a soft g “j” sound would be expected.
g as j before e, i, or y: gem, ginger, gypsy
  g as g before e, i, or y as an exception—a few common words: get, girl

Longer words ending in a k sound are usually spelled with a single c:
  music, celiac, republic
Short words ending in a k sound are usually spelled with a ck:
  duck, pick, lack
With another consonant sound before the k sound, spelled with a k:
  dark, think, perk

Spelling Lesson 2

Words and syllables ending in a vowel will have their long sound:
  be hi go mu my; ma-ker me-ter si-ding mo-tor cu-pid
  (Words ending in an a are exceptions, they will say “ah,” ma, pa. Syllables ending in the letter a will have their long a sound, as in “ma-ker” and “pa-per.”)

Words with a vowel followed by a consonant followed by a letter e will have their long sound.
  (Silent e rule.)
  late Pete nine home cube

Words usually divide before 1 consonant (mi-ner, o-bey, to-ma-to)
  Exception: Latin words divide after consonant (lim-it, met-al)

Long a sound is spelled with an ai within the word and an ay at the end:
  mail, paid; say stay
The long a sound can also be spelled ei within a word and ey at the end:
  vein, weigh; they, grey
  (Native English words will not end in an i, so the i changes to a y at the end.)

u, eu, ui, ue, and ew can be pronounced either “yoo” or “oo” depending on the letter that comes before the vowel. Words that start with a ch, d, j, l, r, or s will say “oo,” t can say either sound except for a few words which can only be pronounced “oo.” Words starting with all other letters will say “yoo.”

  oo: due, chew, june, lute, rue, Sue, blue, brew  yoo: butane, cube, feud, mew

The long u sound (yoo or oo) is spelled with ui within the word and ue at the end:
  fruit, ruin; blue, true
  (Native English words will not end in an i, so the i changes to an e at the end.)

Divide between 2 words (sail-boat, lip-stick, bee-hive, way-laid)
Words in English will not end in v, so words with ve at the end may be either short or long:
  give, live, have; save, hive
  (Live can be pronounced either long or short depending on its usage.)

Long o is spelled oa within the word and oe or ow at the end:
  boat goat loaf; toe Joe; row slow

Some short words with o and i will have a long sound, they used to have a silent e at the end of the word. This often happens when these o and i words have the letters l, t, or d in them.
  wild child old told both post host kind find mind roll colt

**Spelling Lesson 3**

The sound of au is spelled with au within the word, aw at the end
  (aw can also be used within the word):
  faun, autumn; lawn, hawk; raw, claw

The sound of ou as in out or how is spelled with a ou within the word and ow within the word or at the end of the word. It will not end spelled with a ou.
  out south; howl; now plow

(Words of native English origin will not end in u, so the u changes to a w at the end.)

Words beginning with wa usually have an “ah” sound as in water instead of the expected short a sound:
  want water watch

The sound of oi is spelled with oi within the word and oy at the end:
  oil, coin; boy, troy

(Words of native English origin will not end in i, so the i changes to a y at the end.)

or will usually say “er” after a w and at the end of a word (or normally says “or” as in for):
  word world work; doctor actor janitor

The letter team gh usually says g, and the letter team gn usually says n:
  ghost, spaghetti; gnat sign

The letters wh normally are a letter team that makes the sound of w (or, in some regions, its unvoiced consonant pair sound of wh) However, before o, it often makes the sound of h:
  when where which; who whose whole

The letter h is often silent at the beginning of words:
  honor, herb
g as j with a silent e to keep the “soft” sound: **age huge**

g as j with a silent e to keep the “soft” sound and a d to keep the vowel short
(2 consonants, short vowel): **badge, ridge, edge, dodge, grudge**

The letter team kn is pronounced with the *k* silent: **knight, knee**
The letter team wr is pronounced with the *w* silent: **write, wrong**
The letter team mb is pronounced with the *b* silent: **lamb climb comb**

The letters b and t are sometimes silent: **debt, often**

**Spelling Lesson 4**

Divide after prefixes (**pre-fix, be-fore**)
Divide before suffixes (**hap-i-ness, faith-ful, sleep-ing**)

Common prefixes: re- dis- over- un- mis- out- be- co- de- pre- fore- inter- sub- trans-
Common suffixes: -tion -ize -ate -en -ity -er -ness -ism -ment -ant -ship -ive -ful -less

Most words ending in the cede sound are spelled –cede (**precede**.)
There is only 1 word that is spelled –sede (**supersede**.)
Only 3 words are spelled –ceed (**exceed, proceed, succeed**.)

**-el and –le**
Most words end in –le. You will divide 1 letter before –le (**ap-ple**)
-el often follows the letters *s, z, or v*. It will divide directly before –el (**lev-el**)

**-ive**

Words in English will not end in *v*. It normally has a short sound, the *e* is merely to keep the *v* from ending the word.

**Making plurals:**
1. After hissing sounds, add –es
2. After non-hissing sounds, just add –s
Words ending in an *o* can add either –s or –es.

**F/V consonant pairs**
Some words will change from *f* to *v* when becoming plural, some just add an *s* to their *f*.
**Leaf/leaves shelf/shelves; surf/surfs golf/golfs**

**Final e**
Is normally dropped when adding a suffix that begins with a vowel. (**move, movable**)
- unless needed to keep *c* or *g* soft (**change, changeable**)

Will be kept if it is part of a letter team that end in *e* (ee, ue, oe, etc; i.e. see, seeing)
- *exception*: dropped after *u* or *w* (**true, truly; awe, awful**)

Will be kept if the suffix begins with a consonant. (**careful, lateness**)

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**Final y**
Will change to an i when adding a suffix that starts with a vowel. *(cry, cries, cried)*
- except if the suffix starts with an i *(crying)*
or, a few other exceptions like adding –ness *(dryness, shyness)*
  
  *bury, buried, burying*
  
  *try, ties, tried, trying*

**Spelling Lesson 5**

Simple short vowel word, need to add consonant to word when ending a suffix to keep the vowel short. For a simple silent e word, you must not add a consonant to keep the word short:

  *hop, hopping; hope, hoping*

Native English words do not end in the letters i, a, or u, so they will change to another vowel at the end:

  *i changing to y*
  
  *ai/ay ei/ey oi/oy*
  
  *mail, say; vein, they; boil, toy*

  *a changing to e*
  
  *oa/oe*
  
  *boat toe*

  *i changing to u*
  
  *ui/ue*
  
  *fruit blue*

  *u changing to w*
  
  *eu/ew ou/ow au/aw*
  
  *Europe, flew; out, brown; pause, lawn*

Vowel teams that don’t make a sound divide between vowels

  *(ra-di-o, me-ow, cas-u-al)*

Exception: some Latin words divide between 2 vowels that normally make another sound

  *(di-et, con-gru-ent)*

2 syllable words with an accent on the last syllable will double the consonant when adding the syllable *(us. words of OE origin)*

  *omit, omitting; begin, beginning*

Words with an accent on the first syllable will not add a consonant when adding a syllable. *(us. words of Latin origin)*

  *benefit, benefited; marvel, marveled*