

Writing of correct spellings is the most difficult part of learning the English Language. A very great difficulty specially arises when a **Prefix** or a **Suffix** is to be added to a word. Another equally great difficulty arises in the correct use of **i.e.** or **ei**; **an** or **on** ; **ea** or **ia**. Many more problems of the same nature also arise. There are some **rules** governing their correct use, though there are many **exceptions** to them. We give below the Rules of using correct **Prefixes** and **Suffixes** with illustrations :

Rule 1—Words of one syllable ending in single vowel + single consonant

If a **Suffix** beginning with a **Vowel** is to be added to a word of **one syllable** ending in a **single Vowel + single consonant**, the **last consonant** of the base word is **doubled**. As—

Sit — sitting
 Beg — begging / begged
 Run — running
 Beg — beggar
 Rob — robbed / robbing
 Pat — patted / patting
 Plot — plotted / plotting
 Knit — knitted

Rule 2—If a Suffix is to be added to a word of more than one syllable ending in a single Vowel + single consonant, the last consonant of the base word is doubled, provided that the last consonant is stressed. As—

Submit — submitting / submitted
 Occur — occurring / occurred
 Permit — permitted
 Begin — beginning
 Debar — debarred

Rule 3—If a Suffix is to be added to words ending in single consonant l, the consonant l is doubled. As—

Control — controlled / controller
 Travel — travelled / traveller
 Signal — signalled
 Distil — distilled, distiller
 Quarrel — quarrelled

Rule 4—If a Suffix beginning with a Vowel is to be added to words ending in silent e, the e is dropped. As—

Hope — hoping
 Move — moving
 Live — living
 Drive — driving
 Like — liking

Rule 5—But if a Suffix beginning with a consonant is to be added to words ending in silent e, the e is not dropped. As—

Hope — hopeful
 Engage — engagement
 Procure — procurement
 Hate — hateful
 Retire — retirement

Rule 6—If a Suffix beginning with a, o, u is to be added to words ending in ce or ge, the silent e at the end of the base word is not dropped. This is done for the sake of retaining the original pronunciation of ce (as s, not k) and ge (as j, not g). As—

Notice — noticeable
 Replace — replaceable
 Courage — courageous
 Change — changeable

Rule 7—If a **Suffix** is to be added to words ending in **y** preceded by a consonant, **y** is changed into **i**. But if the suffix **ing** is to be added, **y** is not changed into **i**. **As**—

Happy — happily
Beauty — beautiful
Mercy — merciful
Duty — dutiful

But :

Marry — marrying
Carry — carrying
Try — trying
Ply — plying

Note—

- (1) If there is a **Vowel** before the last **y** in the base word, the **y** is not changed. **As**—
Pray — prayed
Play — played
- (2) The following are the **exceptions** to this rule :
Beauteous, piteous, bounteous, plenteous, shyly, shyness, dryness, slyly, slyness.

Rule 8—If the Suffix **full** is to be added to the words ending in **ll**, one **l** both from the base word and the suffix is dropped. **As**—

Skill + full = skilful
Will + full = wilful

Notice—Full + fill = fulfil is also correct.

Rule 9—In case of doubt whether **ei** or **ie** will be correct in the spellings of a word, remember that after **c** is used **ei**, and after other letters is used **ie**. **As**—

Conceive, receive, perceive, deceive.
Thief, belief, relief.

Note—But these are correct—Efficient, ancient, sufficient.

Neither, either, their, height.

Note—Remember that the Rule regarding the use of **ei** or **ie** is applicable only in the words pronounced as **bee** (with **e** stressed), and not other words as listed under the **Note** above.

Exercise

(a) **Add ei or ie to the following**—

Conc . . t ; hyg . . ne ; glac . . r ; ach . . ve ;
ch . . f ; rel . . f ; perc . . ve ; gr . . ve ;
rec . . pt ; retr . . ve ; pr . . st ; s . . ze ;
bel . . f ; dec . . ve ; conc . . t ; n . . gh ;
y . . ld ; br . . f ; n . . ce ; forf . . t ; l . .
ge ; surf . . t ; f . . gn.

(b) **Add full to the following**—

Duty, beauty, skill, change, bounty, plenty,
awe, care, grace.

(c) **Add ed or ing to the following**—

Commit, put, get, sit, pin, sin, hit, give,
live, move, prove, remove, run, spin, pit,
dig, split, can, ride, fly, try, cry, deny, spy.

Ans :

- (a) Conceit; hygiene; glacier; achieve; chief; relief; perceive; grieve; receipt; retrieve; priest; seize; belief; deceive; conceit; neigh; yield; brief; niece; forfeit; liege; surfeit; feign.
- (b) Dutiful; beautiful; skilful; changeful; bountiful; plentiful; awful; careful; graceful.
- (c) Committed; putting; getting; sitting; pinned; sinned; hitting; giving; living; moving; proving; removing; running; spinning; pitted; digging; splitting; canned; riding; flying; trying; crying; denying; spying.