



Spelling Strategies



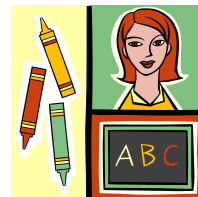
To spell well, you need to be able to link the sounds of words with a letter or letters.

- Learn a variety of spelling strategies and try to make up your own strategies to help you with difficult words.
- Become a word detective and do your best to analyse, scrutinise and memorise words. It will help you out in all aspects of life!
- Flashcard activities - make flash cards for spelling words. Use highlighters to colour the different sounds in the word. Collect stamps or stickers on card when word is recalled.
- Keep a little word book. In this list all the words you want to learn to spell. Review these often and get someone to test you.
- Make a list of “your personal demon words.” These are the words that you need to use in your field of study or that you constantly struggle with.
- Use a glossary for new and unusual words in various academic subjects.
- Learn spelling rules. Revise the common rules like “i” comes before “e” except after “c”. But also remember that there are always exceptions (to try and trick you!).
- Play rhyming games with words. See how many words you can think of that rhyme with each other. For example, cat, mat, hat, fat, bat, at, rat, nat, pat, sat, tat, vat!
- Develop phonemic awareness. This is the ability to hear certain sounds in words. Then sound out the word. Say the word out loud. Break words into syllables and carefully sound out each part of the word. For example, “gov-ern-ment” spells “government”!
- Look for patterns in words – they are everywhere!
- Say the word incorrectly to remember how to spell it correctly. For example, Wed-nes-day or “Feb-ru-ary!”
- When you are on a long trip in the car, read the signs and try to recall how to spell these new words. Often new towns and places are fun to try and spell!
- Make a list of homonyms. These are words that are alike in sound that mean different things. For example, week and weak.
- Say the word in small parts that are easier to recall. For example, “to-get-her!” spells “together!”
- Thinking of silly or strange associations to help remember words. For example, yacht - “**y**es **a**ll **c**hildren **h**ave **t**oys”
- Make up your own mnemonic or rap song to spell hard words. For example, I am Fantastic! “**F-A-N**....yes I am! **T-A-S**, don’t make a mess! **TIC**...tick tock!

- Remember that a lot of English words do not follow phonics rules. Try to give the sound an accurate letter. That way, others will at least know what you are trying to spell.
- Buy yourself a pocket sized dictionary (you can carry in your pencil case) and a desk sized one that you can keep in your room. But don't just look at them – use them as often as you can!
- Buy yourself a thesaurus to help expand your vocabulary.
- There is word help online with a dictionary and a thesaurus found here: <http://dictionary.reference.com/> and a kids one here: <http://dictionary.kids.net.au/>
- Sometimes thinking about the meaning of the word can help you remember how to spell it. Or think of a similar word to the one you can't spell and then use a thesaurus to look up the synonym to find the word you want to use.
- Use the spell check on the computer to routinely locate and correct spelling errors (it would be helpful to keep a list of the words you always spell incorrectly).
- Small electronic spelling checkers is a useful tool. They are available from most electronics stores such as Tandy or Dick Smiths.
- Play word games such as Boggle or Scrabble.
- Do cross words and word puzzles.
- Take your time to spell a word correctly. Sometimes our brains move too quickly and we make silly mistakes that could be easily avoided.
- Rote learn the words you use on a daily basis.
- Check you can remember how to spell certain words, by using the look-cover-write approach. Look at the word you need to recall and then cover it up and write it down.
- Ask someone to test you on words you need to know.
- Analyse where you make the most errors in words, is it in the middle or towards the end of words? Then make a special effort to learn that segment of the word.
- Look for patterns in words. Do certain patterns occur at the beginning, middle or ends of word?
- Learn the 100 most frequently used words off by heart (see below).

More information on the web:

- [http://www.amity.org.uk/Training/Spelling%20Rules/Spelling%20Rules.htm#We%20double%20"l,%20f,%20and%20s](http://www.amity.org.uk/Training/Spelling%20Rules/Spelling%20Rules.htm#We%20double%20)
- http://www.splashesfromtheriver.com/spelling/spelling_rules.htm
- <http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/spelling.htm>
- <http://wwwfp.education.tas.gov.au/English/spellstrat.htm>
- <http://www.kidsandlearning.com/Spelling-strategies.html>



List of 100 most frequently used words

These most commonly used words are ranked by frequency. The first 25 make up about one-third of all printed material in English. The first 100 make up about one-half of all written material in English.

a	did	her	over	this
about	do	him	people	three
after	dog	his	play	time
all	down	home	ran	to
an	for	just	said	too
and	from	like	saw	two
are	get	little	school	up
as	go	man	see	us
at	going	me	she	very
back	good	morning	so	was
be	got	mother	some	water
because	I	my	soon	we
big	if	night	started	went
but	in	not	that	were
by	into	of	the	what
call	is	off	their	when
came	it	on	them	will
can	had	one	then	with
could	have	our	there	would
day	he	out	they	you

Reference: *The Reading Teachers Book of Lists, Third Edition*; by Edward Bernard Fry, Ph.D, Jacqueline E. Kress, Ed.D & Dona Lee Fountoukidis, Ed.D.