

# Some useful spelling rules

## When the word ends in a consonant

If the accent falls on the last syllable, the consonant is doubled to form the past tense.

So we have

Occur -> occurred

Transfer -> transferred

When the word ends in a short vowel + consonant, the final consonant is not usually doubled to form the past tense.

Therefore

Offer -> offered (NOT Offerred)

Budget -> budgeted

Short monosyllabic words always double their final consonant.

Examples are:

Shop -> shopping

Let -> letting

Cut -> cutting

## 'ie' and 'ei'

The general rule is 'i' before 'e' except after 'c'

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Examples are:

Siege, believe, friends

But

Receive, deceive, ceiling (after 'c', we use 'e' before 'i')

There are however several exceptions to this rule. Examples are: *reign, heir, seize, weird*. As you can see, in all of these words, the letter 'e' goes before the letter 'i'.

## Dis and mis

Never double the 's' of these prefixes. In some words, you may notice a second 's', but remember that it is the first letter of the next syllable.

So we have

Dismiss (NOT Dissmiss)

Misplace

Misunderstand

Dispel

## Se and Ce

Se and sy are usually verb endings and ce and cy are usually noun endings. So the following words are verbs: *license, practise, advise, prophesy*

And the following words are nouns: *licence, practice, prophecy, advice*

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The word *promise* is an exception to this rule. Although it ends in -se, it is a noun.

Note that this rule does not hold good when verb and noun are not spelt alike.

## Us and ous

Nouns end in 'us'. Adjectives end in 'ous'.

So we have:

Nouns: census, phosphorus, genius

Adjectives: jealous, unanimous, tremendous