

Words ending in -ic and -ical

Many adjectives end in -ic or -ical.

Adjectives ending in -ic

Academic, artistic, athletic, catholic, domestic, dramatic, emphatic, energetic, fantastic, linguistic, majestic, neurotic, pathetic, public, systematic, tragic

In older English, some of these words used to end in -ical. Examples are: tragical and majestical.

Adjectives ending in -ical

Biological, chemical, critical, cynical, grammatical, logical, mathematical, mechanical, medical, musical, physical, radical, tactical, topical

A few adjectives can have both forms with no difference in meaning.

Examples are: arithmetic and arithmetical

Egoistic and egoistical

Fanatic and fanatical

Geometric and geometrical

In some cases both forms exist, but there is a difference of meaning.

Classic and classical

Classic refers to a famous example of its type.

Classical refers to the culture of ancient Greece and Rome.

It is hard to learn classical music.

Comic and comical

Words ending in -ic and -ical

Comic is the normal adjective for artistic comedy.

I like to watch comic opera.

Comical means 'funny'.

There was a comical expression on his face.

Economic and economical

Economic refers to the science of economics. Economy means 'not wasting money'.

The country faces many economic problems at the moment.

We are looking for an economical little car.

Magic and magical

Magic and magical have similar meanings, but magic is the more common word.

A magic wand, a magic carpet etc

Magical can mean 'wonderful' or 'exciting'.

I had a magical experience the other day.