

'A time saver for all teachers and parents'
Simon Blower, co-founder of @HeyPobble

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Spell

Like

a

amazing



NINJA

Top tips, rules and remedies to supercharge your spelling

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Spell Like



NINJA

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How to use this book

Spell Like a Ninja is the ultimate spelling toolkit to support every child, parent and teacher, in school and at home. **Spell Like a Ninja** covers every spelling objective from Year 1 through to Year 6 as outlined by the National Curriculum. The book provides an overview of every spelling objective followed by clear explanations, plentiful examples, spelling tips and a *Ninja Spelling Focus*, which clearly highlights each spelling rule in action.

Spell Like a Ninja can be used effectively to support all spelling activities in school as new rules are introduced but, importantly, to support parents at home to help children learn those new spelling rules each week.

When introducing a child to a new spelling rule, let's remember that we are trying to teach the children to learn a rule or pattern, so that they can effectively apply this themselves when writing, rather than just remembering how to spell a list of words. Using **Spell Like a Ninja**, we can effectively draw attention to each rule, where it occurs and how we apply it to spell it correctly.

Parents or carers

Spell Like a Ninja should be used in conjunction with the spelling lists that school sends home to support you and your child in learning the rule itself, not just a list of ten words.

One of the most effective things that can be done at home, which schools often don't have time to do with each pupil, is to *read the words aloud together*. This is called *word activation*. It sounds simple, but is often overlooked. It is crucial to go through each new word and read it aloud to the learner - to *teach* them. Ask them to listen to the pronunciation of each word and repeat it back to you, clearly and accurately. Come back to words that are tricky or sound like other words, and be clear on what is different about each spelling. Finally, ask your child to read through the words, aloud, back to you.

This can be progressed further by the adult saying the word aloud, the child repeating the word aloud and then copying the word down in written form, saying each letter aloud as they copy it down. Every time you come back to the spellings, begin by reading each of the words aloud and *activating* the word for the pupil. More advice can be found in the Parent Zone on page 127.

Essential spelling strategies



Daily practice

10 to 15 minutes each day

Spelling, just like brushing your teeth or exercising, has the biggest impact when you do it often. Aim to spend 10 to 15 minutes doing it each day.

Equipment

- 1 x pen
- 1 x pencil
- 1 x ruler
- 1 x set of coloured pens or pencils
- 1 x set of highlighters



Introduce the rule

Many spelling lists in this book focus on a specific rule. This rule is normally a clear pattern. Read the rule first and then the examples. More advice on good preparation can be found in the Parent Zone on page 127.

Mini-mastery

Sometimes, ten spellings or more can be overwhelming to try and learn all at once. Follow this weekly routine to build up to mastering the full list by focusing on a few words at a time. Spend 10 to 15 minutes each day practising.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Practise words 1, 2 and 3	Practise words 4, 5 and 6	Practise words 7, 8, 9 and 10	Practise words 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5	Practise words 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10	Practise all words mixed	Practise all words mixed

Flash cards

One of the best spelling tips is to write out each of the new spellings on flashcards at the beginning of the week when you are starting to learn them. If there is a rule, use a different colour to show the rule in action. This will be an extremely valuable and useful resource to help learn spellings during the week.



NINJA TIP:

Again, don't focus on all ten straight away if it's too much. Try focusing on two to three each day and using the flash cards to quiz yourself throughout the day, and build up over the week.

poisonous

dangerous

famous

various

enormous

jealous

glamorous

Mnemonics



Mnemonics are great ways to remember tricky spellings. The best thing is that you can make up your own for any word you find tricky. As long as it helps you remember the spelling, great!

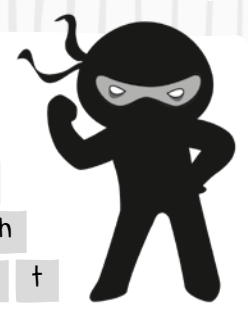
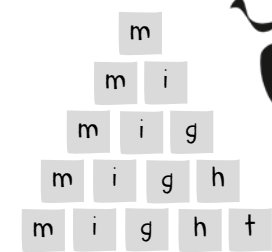
neCeSSary – one Collar, two Sleeves

because – big elephants can always understand small elephants

Highlight rules and patterns

Write out each word from your spellings. Either highlight the rule or pattern, or write it in a different colour using coloured pens or pencils.

bright light night right



Spelling pyramids

Spelling pyramids are a great way to progressively spell a word in the correct order. Just start with the first letter at the top, then add the next letter to the row below. Keep adding letters until you have spelled the word and built your pyramid.

Word webs for similar words

Try to create webs of words. This is where knowing how to spell one word can help you spell lots of other words.

sign design signature

Writing variations

Try writing words in different formats.

Why not try:

joined up

bubble

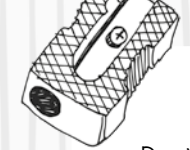
big

small

CAPITAL LETTERS

different colours

Mix it up

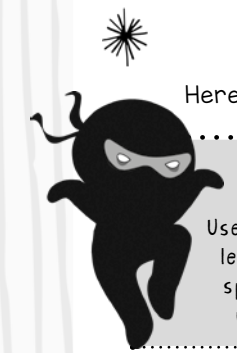


Don't just learn your spellings in the order of the list. Ask an adult to say random spellings aloud for you to try and spell. This will be good practice for when you spell the words in a spelling test.



Make it fun

Here are 12 fun strategies to make your spellings memorable.



1 Use Scrabble letters to spell out words.	2 Create a collection of rocks with the alphabet painted on them to spell with.	3 Use a tray of sand and mark spellings on it.
4 Write your spellings on a spurt of shaving cream.	5 Use magnetic or plastic letters as a practical spelling resource.	6 Act out your spellings or give each word a memorable action.
7 Write the spellings out in alphabetical order.	8 Write words on sticky notes and stick them around the house. Spell them when you see them!	9 Use a printed paper keyboard to type spellings and practise your keyboard skills.
10 Get creative: use paints to write the spellings on some old wallpaper.	11 Grab some chalk and get outside in the fresh air. Mark the ground and spell!	12 Use your spellings to create a funny and interesting story.



International Phonetic Alphabet

One of the tools we can use to make sure we're all talking about the same sound is the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA). The IPA uses one symbol for one sound. Symbols are combined to show complex sounds.

Consonant sounds

/b/	bad
/d/	dog
/ð/	this
/dʒ/	gem, jug
/f/	if, puff, photo
/g/	gum
/h/	how
/j/	yes
/k/	cat, check, key, school
/l/	leg, hill
/m/	man
/n/	man
/ŋ/	sing
/θ/	both
/p/	pet
/r/	red
/s/	sit, miss, cell
/ʃ/	she, chef
/t/	tea
/tʃ/	check
/v/	vet
/w/	wet, when
/z/	zip, hens, buzz
/ʒ/	pleasure

In this book, where a spelling rule depends on the sound a letter makes or where there is the potential for confusion, the relevant IPA symbol is given. Here are the IPA symbols that appear in this book, along with words that demonstrate the sound in context.

Vowel sounds

/ɑ:/	father, arm
/ɒ/	hot
/æ/	cat
/aɪ/	mind, fine, pie, high
/aʊ/	out, cow
/ɛ/	hen, head
/eɪ/	say, came, bait
/ɛə/	air
/əʊ/	boat, cone, blow
/ɪ/	hit
/iə/	deer
/i:/	she, bead, see, scheme, chief
/ɔ:/	launch, raw, born
/ɔɪ/	coin, boy
/ʊ/	book
/ʊə/	tour
/u:/	room, you, blue, brute
/ʌ/	cup
/ɜ:/	fern, turn, girl
/ə/	farmer

Year 1



Alphabet (lower and upper case)

Lower-case letters:

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z

Upper-case letters:

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

Dividing words into syllables

A syllable is like the 'beat' of a word as you speak it. Understanding syllables can help us to break words up and spell them more easily:

carrot → car-rot

rabbit → rab-bit

ninja → nin-ja

sunset → sun-set

pocket → pock-et

thunder → thun-der

Further examples:

apple, backpack, curtain, glasses, jumper, orange, table, tablet, toilet, trousers, wallet, water

The sounds /f/, /l/, /s/, /z/ and /k/ spelled **ff**, **ll**, **ss**, **zz** and **ck**

The /f/, /l/, /s/, /z/ and /k/ sounds are usually spelled as **ff**, **ll**, **ss**, **zz** and **ck** if they come straight after a single vowel in short words:

off, well, miss, buzz, back

Exceptions: if, pal, us, bus, yes

The /ŋ/ sound spelled **n** before **k**

The /ŋ/ sound often comes before **k** in many English words:

bank, blink, dank, drank, drink, honk, lank, link, pink,
rink, stink, sunk, tank, thank, think, trunk, wink

The /tʃ/ sound is usually spelled as **-tch**

The /tʃ/ sound is usually spelled as **-tch** if it comes straight after a single vowel:

catch, fetch, kitchen, notch, hutch, match,
latch, hatch, patch, notch, batch, wrench,
stretch, switch, itch, watch, pitch

Exceptions: much, rich, such, which

The /v/ sound at the end of words

English words hardly ever end with the letter **v**, so if a word ends with a /v/ sound, the letter **e** usually needs to be added after the **v**:

above, active, captive, give, glove, have,
live, love, massive, native, nerve, serve

Adding **-s** and **-es** to words (plural of nouns and the third person singular of verbs)

If the ending sounds like 'z' /s/ or /z/, it is spelled as **-s**:

bags, bowls, cats, cooks, dogs, doors,
rocks, rulers, spends, thanks, trees

If the ending sounds like 'iz' /iz/ and forms an extra syllable or 'beat' in the word, it is spelled as **-es**:

catches, dishes,
glasses, horses,
houses, misses, wishes

NINJOKE

What was the witch's
favourite subject
in school?
Spelling.

Adding the endings **-ing**, **-ed** and **-er** to verbs where no change is needed to the root word

The endings **-ing** and **-er** always add an extra syllable to the word, and **-ed** sometimes does:

buzzing
buzzed
buzzer
washing
washed
washer

The past tense of *some* verbs may sound as if they end in /d/ or /t/ (no extra syllable), or /ɪd/ (extra syllable), but all these endings are spelled **-ed**:

buzzed
cleaned
hunted
jumped
watered

If the verb ends in two consonants (the same or different), the ending is simply added on:

buzzer
hunter
jumper



Adding **-er** and **-est** to adjectives where no change is needed to the root word

As with the previous verbs, if the adjective ends in two consonants (the same or different), the ending is simply added on:

grand**er**, grand**est**
fres**her**, fres**hest**
quic**ker**, quic**k**est
fast**er**, fast**est**
calm**er**, calm**est**
kind**er**, kind**est**
light**er**, light**est**

Vowel digraphs **ai** and **oi**, **ay** and **oy**, **a-e** and **e-e**, **i-e** and **o-e**, **u-e**

ai and **oi**

The digraphs (two letters representing one sound) **ai** and **oi** are virtually *never* used at the end of English words:

afraid, paid, rain, train, wait
coin, join, oil, point, soil

ay and **oy**

The digraphs **ay** and **oy** are used for those sounds at the *end* of words and at the *end* of syllables:

day, play, say, stay, way
annoy, boy, enjoy, joy, toy

a-e and **e-e**

A split digraph is where a vowel digraph, such as **ae** or **ue** is split by a consonant. For example, in the word *take*, the **ae** digraph and the sound it makes has been split by the **k** making the split digraph **a-e**:

came, grade, made, safe,
same, take, trade
complete, delete, theme,
these, scene, severe

i-e and **o-e**

ie and **oe** are common digraphs, but are also very common split digraphs. Remember, this is where digraphs are split by a consonant:

five, hide, like, ride, side,
time, wide
globe, hole, home, hope,
robe, those, woke

u-e

The /u:/ and /ju:/ ('oo' and 'yoo') sounds can be spelled as **u-e**:

cube, huge, June, rude,
rule, tube, tune, use

Vowel digraphs ar, ee, ea and ea, er and er

ar

The **ar** vowel digraph is common and can often be found in the middle or at the end of a word. It is a long sound:

arm, car, far, garden,
jar, park, start

ea (/i:/) and ea (/ɛ/)

The digraph **ea** can be pronounced /i:/ as in the words:

dream, each, feast,
least, leave, meat, reach,
read (present tense),
sea, teach

or /ɛ/ as in:

bread, head,
instead, meant,
read (past tense)

ee

The vowel digraph **ee** is a long sound. It is often found in the middle or at the end of a word:

see, tree, green,
meet, week, three,
beep, peek, seek,
deer, peel, knee,
beef, reef, bleed,
greed, sweet, speed

er (/ɜ:/) and er (/ə/)

The digraph **er** can be pronounced /ɜ:/ as in the words:

her, person,
term, verb

or /ə/ as in:

better, deliver,
faster, sharper,
sister, summer,
under, winter

Vowel digraphs ir and ur, oo and oo, oa, oe and ou

ir and ur

Which should you use? If you hear **m**, **d**, **t** or **th** after the 'er' sound, you can usually use **ir** rather than **ur**:

bird, birthday, fir, first, girl,
shirt, stir, third, thirst
burn, burst, church, curve,
hunt, Thursday, turf, turn

oa

The digraph **oa** is rarely at the end of an English word, but more commonly in the middle:

boast, boat, coach, coat,
croak, foal, foam, goal,
goat, loan, moan, road,
roast, soak, soap, toast

oo (/u:/) and oo (/ʊ/)

The digraph **oo** can be pronounced /u:/ as in the words:

food, mood, moon,
pool, proof, roof,
soon, zoo

Alternatively, **oo** can be pronounced /ʊ/ as in:

book, foot, good,
took, wood

oe and ou

Examples of **oe** words:

foe, goes, hoe,
roe, toe, woe

The only common English word *ending* in **ou** is 'you'. The other examples of **ou** are pronounced differently:

about, around, couch,
house, mouse, mouth,
ounce, out, pouch,
sound, south