

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 Offered)

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’

Examples are:

Siege, believe, friends

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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*

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'.

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So we have:

Nouns: census, phosphorus, genius

Adjectives: jealous, unanimous, tremendous