



Suffix spelling rules: double letters

When adding a suffix to a root word the spelling of both usually stays the same:

eg care + ful = careful

But there are several important groups of words in which the spelling of the root word **changes** when you add a suffix.

Sometimes the spelling changes because of the **Doubling rules**.

As always, there are exceptions to these four rules, but they are a good starting guide:

1. For most short (one syllable) words that end in a single consonant (anything but 'a', 'e', 'i', 'o', 'u'), double the last letter when adding a suffix:

eg run + ing = **running**
sun + y = **sunny**

If the word ends with more than one consonant, don't double the last letter:

eg pump + ed = **pumped**
sing + ing = **singing**

2. For most longer (more than one syllable) words that end in 'l', double the 'l' when adding the suffix:

eg travel + ing = **travelling**
cancel + ed = **cancelled**

3. If you have a word ending in a consonant and a suffix starting with a consonant, you don't need to double the last letter of the word:

eg enrol + ment = **enrolment**
commit + ment = **commitment**

4. For most longer (more than one syllable) words that have the stress on the last syllable when you say them **and** end with a single consonant (anything but 'a', 'e', 'i', 'o', 'u'), double the last letter:

eg begin + er = **beginner**
prefer + ing = **preferring**

If the word has more than one syllable and ends with a single consonant, but the stress isn't on the last syllable, you don't need to double the last letter before adding a suffix:

eg offer + ing = **offering**
benefit + ed = **benefited**