

Orthographic Rules

in

English

A correct written form of words and sentences is also part of any language. So, some orthographic rules have been established for a good writing.

Simple Present

When writing the 3rd person singular in the simple present tense [-s] is added to verbs but there are some rules according to their endings:

a. A normal [-s] is generally added:

e.g. swim - swim(s)
arrive - arrive(s)

b. If the verb ends in (y) preceded by a consonant, (y) is changed for (i) and [-es] is added:

e.g. study - studi(es)

c. If (y) is preceded by a vowel, then it doesn't change, and [-s] is added:

e.g. play - play(s) stay - stay(s)

d. In verbs ending in (sh, ch, x, o), suffix [-es] is added:

e.g. wash - wash(es)
fix - fix(es)
watch - watch(es)

Regular Verbs

In writing the simple past and past participle of regular verbs we usually add [-ed] suffix, but there are some rules according to the ending of the verbs:

a. [-ed] is normally added to verbs ending in (sh, ch, n, x, ss, w, t, ll, r, m, k), etc.

e.g. watch - watch(ed) fish - fish(ed)
listen to - listen(ed) to f ix - fix(ed)
miss - miss(ed) show - show(ed)
melt - melt(ed) discover - discover(ed)
kill - kill(ed) seem - seem(ed)

b. In some verbs having only one syllable and ending in consonant preceded by a vowel, the last consonant is doubled and then [-ed] is added:

e.g. spot - spott(ed)

c. In verbs ending in (y) preceded by a consonant, the (y) is changed to (i) and then [-ed] is added:

e.g. copy - copi(ed) study - studi(ed)

d. In verbs ending in (y) preceded by a vowel, no change is made and suffix [-ed] is added:

e.g. enjoy - enjoy(ed) play - play(ed)

e. In verbs ending in (e), only a [-d] letter is added:

e.g. arrive - arrive(d) move - move(d)
like - like(d) agree - agree(d)

Irregular Verbs

- Vowel change:

e.g. win - won - won
run - ran - run

- Some verbs change part of them:

e.g. bring - brought - brought
feel - felt - felt

- Some others change completely:

e.g. be - was/were - been
go - went - gone

- Some of them do not change:

e.g. hit - hit - hit
read - read - read

Plural Nouns

When writing the plural form of nouns, some rules must be taken into consideration:

a. A normal [-s] is added in the following cases:

e.g. table - table(s) flower - flower(s)
pen - pen(s) event - event(s)
pupil - pupil(s) friend - friend(s)

b. [-es] is added to nouns ending in (sh, ch, x, o):

e.g. brush - brush(es)
watch - watch(es)
fox - fox(es)
tomato - tomato(es)

c. When the noun ends in (y) preceded by a consonant, (y) is changed for (i) and then [-es] is added:
e.g. study - studi(es) party - parti(es) lady - ladi(es)

d. When the ending (y) is preceded by a vowel, suffix [-s] is added:

e.g. monkey - monkey(s)
valley - valley(s)
boy - boy(s)

Adjectives and Adverbs

When using the comparative forms in English, some changes are produced in orthography. These changes include suffix [-er] in the comparative form and -est in the superlative form:

a. Adjectives and adverbs having one syllable and ending in a consonant that is preceded by a vowel, double the last consonant:

e.g. fat - fatt(er) - fatt(est)
big - bigg(er) - bigg(est)
thin - thinn(er) - thinn(est)

b. In adjectives and adverbs ending in y preceded by a consonant, y is changed for i and suffixes [-er, -est] are added:

e.g. easy - easi(er) - easi(est)
pretty - pretti(er) - pretti(est)
funny - funni(er) - funni(est)