## The Best Spelling Vocabulary List

This list was devised to help pupils know which spelling words they should master - the list contains 692 words that account for 80 percent of the words children use in their writing - the ones they need to be able to spell correctly.

Mastering this relatively small corpus of words yields a high rate of return. Aim to do one every day and within the course of 2 years you can master them all!

|  | Spelling | Spelling Tips | Sentence |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 1 | absence | It makes "sence" that absence makes the heart grow fonder. | Absence makes the heart grow fonder. |
| 2 | accommodate | This word can accommodate a double "c" and a double "m." | I would like to accommodate his wishes. |
| 3 | achieve | Remember "l" before "e" except after "c." | He achieved all his dreams. |
| 4 | acquire | I "c" that you want to acquire it. | The team acquired three new players this year. |
| 5 | across | Let "Ross" row across. | Let's row the boat across the pond. |
| 6 | address | Deliver the double "d" to the right address. | Make sure you have the right address before you send the pa |
| 7 | advertise | The ADVERT was revISEd. | Madison Avenue knows it pays to advertise. |
| 8 | advice | " "c" that you gave me advice. | Good advice is as good as gold. |
| 9 | among | A monk was among the worshipers. | He was among the living. |
| 10 | apparent | The AP ate with his PARENT. | It's apparent that he made a mistake. |
| 11 | argument | Gumbo lost an e in an argument. | The two politicians got into a heated argument. |
| 12 | athlete | Don't delete the " l " in athlete. | Tom Brady is one of the country's top athletes. |
| 13 | awful | Something that is full of aw is always very bad. | That food smelled awful. It must have spoiled in the fridge. |
| 14 | balance | The BAd man used a LANCE. | Try to strike a balance between diet and exercise. |
| 15 | basically | It's BASIC that I have an ALLY. | He is basically dishonest. |
| 16 | becoming | BEes will be COMING to flowers near you. | The boy is quickly becoming a man. |
| 17 | before | BEe went to the FORE when called upon. | He'll be going away to college before you know it. |
| 18 | beginning | Add an " n " and "ing" to begin to get beginning. | In the beginning, there was the heaven and the Earth. |
| 19 | believe | Do not believe a lie. | I believe in magic. |
| 20 | benefit | BENE is very FIT. | The benefit raised quite a bit of money for charity. |
| 21 | breathe | Take an extra "e" when you breathe. | I can't breathe; I need some air. |
| 22 | brilliant | The BRILLo pad was gIANT. | Einstein's theory of relativity was brilliant. |
| 23 | business | The BUS IN the terminal was a mESS. | It's not personal; it's just business. |
| 24 | calendar | Dara checked the calendar every day. | Look at the calendar to see what date Thanksgiving is on this |
| 25 | careful | Careful not to add an extra "l" to careful. | Be careful when crossing the street. |
| 26 | category | The CAT's EGg is GORY. | When you play Jeopardy, pick the right category. |
| 27 | ceiling | I before "e" except after "c." | Do you know how to install a ceiling fan? |
| 28 | cemetery | Eileen found herself at e's in the cemetery. | Many horror stories take place in the cemetery. |
| 29 | certain | He's CERebral, so don't TAINt it. | I'm certain I left my keys by the door. |
| 30 | chief | Remember "l" before "e" except after "c." | The chief of police just took over the job last month. |
| 31 | citizen | Don't CITe It; practice ZEN. | The good citizen votes in every election. |
| 32 | coming | Coming is too short to have two "m's." | l'll be coming home soon. |
| 33 | competition | COMe PET IT, ION. | The competition at the track meet was fierce. |
| 34 | convenience | I before "e" except after "c." | The convenience store opened at 7 a.m. |
| 35 | criticize | There's no "s" in criticize. | I don't mean to criticize, but you did the problem wrong. |
| 36 | decide | Clide, remove the "l" and spell decide. | You need to decide which man to marry. |
| 37 | definite | DEb had a FINITE limit. | I'll need a definite answer today. |
| 38 | deposit | DEb POSITed that we deposit the money. | Don't forgot to deposit the check at the bank. |
| 39 | describe | DEb hired a SCRIBE. | Please describe the man who attacked you. |
| 40 | desperate | DES, PER your direction, rATEd it. | I am desperate to find a new place to live. |
| 41 | develop | Lop off the "e" in develop. | They used to develop film in a darkroom. |
| 42 | difference | We DIFFER about pENCE. | What's the difference between pink and mauve? |
| 43 | dilemma | Emma faced a dilemma. | I'm in a terrible dilemma; I don't know what to do. |
| 44 | disappear | It takes two "p's" but only one "s" to spell disappear. | The boy just disappeared. I hope he wasn't kidnapped. |
| 45 | disappoint | You have a point; add the second "p" in disappoint. | I hate to disappoint my mother. |
| 46 | discipline | The DISC is Perfectly in LINE. | He is a believer in strong discipline. |
| 47 | does | The DOE Sang. | Does she want to come with us? |
| 48 | during | DU bought a RING. | It happened during the night. |
| 49 | easily | The bEASt Is LovelY. | My mom is so easily fooled. |
| 50 | eight | There's an eight in hEIGHT. | "Eight is Enough" was the name for a TV show. |
| 51 | either | Ed Is THERe. | Either he goes, or I do. |


| 52 | embarrass | It's hard to embarrass really righteous and serious students. | I don't want to embarrass you, but your pants have a rip. |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 53 | environment | A new environment will iron me out. | Many people are concerned about the environment. |
| 54 | equipped | Emphatically, hE QUIPPED that he was equipped for the job. | The plane is equipped with many of the modern luxuries and $c$ |
| 55 | exaggerate | Goofy Greg loved to exaggerate. | Don't exaggerate; the fish you caught was only three inches lc |
| 56 | excellent | The EXact CELL is bENT. | The meal was excellent. |
| 57 | except | My EX is Certain I'm inEPT. | The student completed all the problems but the last one. |
| 58 | exercise | IEXERt and I'm preCISE when I exercise. | To lose weight, you need to eat nutritious foods and exercise. |
| 59 | existence | 1 EXIST with mike pENCE. | Many have debated the existence of an all-powerful being. |
| 60 | expect | 1 met my EX in PE, what do you expeCT? | What did you expect? |
| 61 | experience | My EX said that PER Irv we'll invite mike pENCE. | The trip was a great experience for the kids. |
| 62 | Experiment | PER my EX, I MENTored him. | Scientists perform many experiments to find the truth. |
| 63 | explanation | My EX had a PLAN AT the unION. | I think he deserves an honest explanation. |
| 64 | familiar | That liar looks familiar. | The surroundings look familiar, but l'm still lost. |
| 65 | fascinating | "S" before "C" in fascinating. | Mr. Spock found many things to be fascinating. |
| 66 | finally | In the end, there are two "l's" in finally. | He has finally arrived; now we can eat our Thanksgiving meal. |
| 67 | foreign | FOR EIGght, the Nation said they were foreign. | He grew up in a foreign country. |
| 68 | forty | There's no "u" in forty. | The punt return specialist ran to ball out the forty-yard line. |
| 69 | forward | FOR sam, he was a WARD of the court. | Be optimistic; always look forward. |
| 70 | friend | Don't be a fiend: insert the "r" in friend. | He was a dedicated and loyal friend. |
| 71 | fundamental | Fundamental is just FUN, DAMEN, and TAL. | We have fundamental differences of opinion. |
| 72 | generally | Generally, a general is your best ally. | The general was generally correct. |
| 73 | government | The GOVERNor was deMENTed. | The government may shut down if the parties don't reach a de |
| 74 | grammar | GRAM didn't want to MAR our grammar. | I try, but my grammar is atrocious. |
| 75 | guarantee | The GUARd ANd the TEEn guaranteed it. | The car has a 100,000-mile guarantee. |
| 76 | guidance | The GUIDe was in a trance because there's only one "e" in guidance. | The guidance counselor advised the student not to attend coll |
| 77 | happiness | Drop the "y" and replace it with an "l" to achieve happiness. | Jefferson wrote that all people are entitled to life, liberty, and ti |
| 78 | heroes | HE ROped an E for his heroes. | World War II produced many heroes. |
| 79 | humorous | He HUMs fOR the MOUSe. | The author was very humorous. His books displayed great wit |
| 80 | identity | There is an "ID" in identity. | It's easy to have your identity stolen. |
| 81 | imaginary | IMAGINe there's no heaven. It's easy if you give it A tRY. | The little girl had an imaginary friend. |
| 82 | imitation | Don't imitate. There's only one "m" in imitation. | Imitation is the greatest form of flattery. |
| 83 | immediately | Mom ate immediately. | Come here immediately. |
| 84 | incidentally | He INCIted by DENTing the car of his ALLY. | Incidentally, I borrowed your car last night. |
| 85 | independent | There is a dent in independent. | The young man was very independent. |
| 86 | intelligent | IN TELLIng the GENT, he showed he was intelligent. | She is extremely intelligent; she scored 1,600 on her SATs. |
| 87 | interesting | The INTERn was bEST at showING he was interesting. | This article is very interesting. |
| 88 | interfere | The INTERn watered the FERn I sEe, | Please do not interfere. |
| 89 | interpretation | The INTERn PRETended that A staTION was near. | The two had very different interpretations as to what happene |
| 90 | interruption | Don't interrupt: Interruption has two "r's." | The interruption couldn't be helped; his wife was having a bab |
| 91 | invitation | I INVITe you to offer a raTION. | He received an invitation to the birthday party. |
| 92 | irrelevant | Don't make the second "r" in irrelevant, irrelevant. And, remember, there's an "ant" at the end. | The information he provided was irrelevant. |
| 93 | irritable | It would irritate me if you forgot the second "r" in irritable, and don't forget the table at the end. | After the operation, she was very irritable. |
| 94 | island | An island is land surrounded by water. | Hawaii is made up of a group of islands. |
| 95 | jealous | JEAn's a LOUSe to be jealous. | He was jealous of her former lover. |
| 96 | judgment | Unlike judge, there is no "e" after the "g" in judgment. | He showed bad judgment by putting that story in the paper. |
| 97 | knowledge | I KNOW you can reach the LEDGE. | How do you measure the sum of all knowledge? |
| 98 | laboratory | I had to LABOR at orATORY. | The scientist labored away in her laboratory. |
| 99 | length | Make it longer by putting a " g " between the " n " and " t " in length. | He ran the kickoff return the length of the football field. |
| 100 | lesson | Listen to the lesson. and spend LESS time ON studying. | The teacher gave a great lesson. |
| 101 | library | They had brandy in the library. | You'll find many books in the library. |
| 102 | license | To say he had LICE is nonSENSE. | That's not a license to steal. |
| 103 | Ioneliness | The LONE LINE did have SS at the end. | Emily Dickenson suffered from great loneliness. |
| 104 | losing | 1 like to hear LO SING. | Coach Vince Lombardi hated losing. |
| 105 | lying | Truthfully, there's a "y" but no "ie" in lying. | I was lying on my back, while he was laying the book down. |
| 106 | marriage | $\mathrm{h}=\mathrm{He}$ MARRied her in carrIAGE. | Their marriage is on the rocks. |
| 107 | mathematics | MATH and E equals matheMATICS. | Einstein was an expert in mathematics. |
| 108 | medicine | Club MED Is at the CINEma. | All doctors practice medicine in one form or another. |
| 109 | miniature | A MINI A has no staTURE. | Legoland has many miniature scenes built from the interlockin |
| 110 | minute | Minute is MINU and TE. | It only takes a minute. |
| 111 | mysterious | MY STERIO is for US. | She was very mysterious. |
| 112 | naturally | NATURe has an ALLY. | She is naturally blond. |


| 113 | necessary | It's necessary to remember the cesspool in the middle. | Is that really necessary? |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 114 | neighbour | The horse NEIGHed at the BORing man. | My neighbor is very nice. |
| 115 | neither | NEII is THERe. | It's neither here nor there to me. |
| 116 | noticeable | The NOTICE is ABLE to help. | His gray hair was very noticeable. |
| 117 | occasion | It's an occasion to remember that occasion has two "c's" and one "s." | It's a special occasion. |
| 118 | occurred | It occurred to him that there are two "c's" and two "s's" in occurred. | It never occurred to her to change the light bulb. |
| 119 | official | Old Frank Finklestein Is Cute In A Loving way. | It's official: He's now the president. |
| 120 | often | OF mice and men there were TEN. | I don't come here very often. |
| 121 | omission | Omit the second "m" but not the second "s" in omission. | That was an omission on my part. |
| 122 | operate | IhOPE to RATE it. | The doctor decided to operate. |
| 123 | optimism | hOP with TIM into the schISM. | I have great optimism that better days are ahead. |
| 124 | original | ORIGami Is NAL's favorite. | His work wasn't very original. |
| 125 | ought | Ought is "bought" minus the "b." | He ought to have told you. |
| 126 | paid | PA Is Done with work. | When do you get paid? |
| 127 | parallel | Two "'s" form parallel lines in parallel. | Parallel parking can be difficult. |
| 128 | particularly | PART Is the CULt with ARLY. | His error was particularly egregious. |
| 129 | peculiar | It's peculiar the PECU is a LIAR. | That bird is very peculiar. |
| 130 | perceive | PERCE has a hIVE. | I perceive things differently than you. |
| 131 | perform | PER the directions they FORMed a line. | Will the band perform tonight. |
| 132 | permanent | The PERM of the mAN costs just a cENT. | That change was permanent. |
| 133 | persevere | PER the directions, he SEVEREd it. | The only way to succeed is to persevere. |
| 134 | personally | the PERSON was an ALLY. | Personally, I don't like it. |
| 135 | persuade | PER the SUn, he had it mADE. | Tried to persuade him that he is wrong. |
| 136 | picture | The PIC was taken with the right aperture. | That's a beautiful picture. |
| 137 | piece | Have a piece of the pie. | I won't let my daughter pierce her ears. |
| 138 | planning | Plan to put two "n's" in planning. | I was planning to come later. |
| 139 | pleasant | He tried to PLEASe the ANT. | The visit has been very pleasant. |
| 140 | political | The POL Is noT ethlCAL. | Everything is so political these days. |
| 141 | possess | Remember to possess two double "s's" in possess. | You don't possess an ounce of dignity. |
| 142 | possible | The POSSe Is BLEssed. | It's just not possible to get the assignment completed in time. |
| 143 | practical | PRACTICe to replace the "e" with "al" in practical. | It's not practical to rely on magic. |
| 144 | prefer | PREp the FERn. | I prefer orange juice to lemonade. |
| 145 | prejudice | Don't PREJUDge; think twICE. | The racist man was very prejudice. |
| 146 | presence | the PRESident chose pENCE. | He made is presence known. |
| 147 | privilege | Privilege is just PRIVI with a LEG and an E. | It's been a privilege to meet you. |
| 148 | probably | He handled the PROBlem ABLY. | I could probably meet for lunch next week. |
| 149 | professional | The PROFESSor said there are two "s's" in professIONAL. | He was very professional in his conduct at work. |
| 150 | promise | The PROM was a surpRISE. | I never promised you a rose garden. |
| 151 | proof | I have proof there are two "o's" in proof. | Einstein showed mathematical proof the E = mc^2. |
| 152 | psychology | Please Say You Can Hit Old Ladies, Or Get Yogurt. | He practiced psychology for many years. |
| 153 | quantity | The QUANT Is TinY. | That's a large quantity of grapes. |
| 154 | quarter | The QUARTEt is Ready. | Four quarters make a dollar. |
| 155 | quiet | Please keep quiet about my diet. | Just be quiet! |
| 156 | quit | Quiet lost its "e" and became quit. | No, I won't quit this job. |
| 157 | quite | Quit added an "e" and became quite. | That's quite a statement you made. |
| 158 | realize | The REAL man materiaLIZEd. | I didn't realize I was being so bold. |
| 159 | receive | Remember "l" before "e" except after "c." | It's better to give than to receive. |
| 160 | recognize | Ryan Epping was COGent that he had to orgaNIZE. | He was recognized for his bravery. |
| 161 | recommend | I recommend you put two "m's" in recommend. | I highly recommend the applicant. |
| 162 | reference | REFER it to mike pENCE. | I'll be happy to serve as a reference. |
| 163 | religious | RELIGate the task to the pIOUS man. | There's a great divide between the religious and nonreligious. |
| 164 | repetition | REPEat TI TI in repetition. | Repetition is the best way to learn. |
| 165 | restaurant |  | He ran a very clean restaurant. |
| 166 | rhythm | Rhythm helps your two hips move. | Dance to the rhythm of the night. |
| 167 | ridiculous | RID the Island of CUrious LOUSes. | What you propose is just ridiculous. |
| 168 | sacrifice | use the SACk to RId the oriFICE of mice. | It was a great sacrifice for me to come here. |
| 169 | safety | Safely add "ty" to safe to get safety. | He needs to beware of the safety rules. |
| 170 | scissors | Steve Cut Into the Seven Samurai on Orders from Rick Smith. | Never run with scissors. |
| 171 | secretary | Just add "ary" to secret to get secretary. | The secretary is very quick at dictation. |
| 172 | separate | There's a rat in separate. | There are two separate doors at the front and back of the hou |
| 173 | shining | Jack Nicholson hurt his SHIN in the shinING. | The sun was shining brightly. |


| 174 | similar | SIMI valley has a lot of LARd. | The two theories are very similar. |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 175 | sincerely | Pair SINCE and RELY to get sincerely. | Generally, end a letter by saying "sincerely." |
| 176 | soldier | Sam Ordered Larry to DIE Respectfully for his country. | The soldier died in battle. |
| 177 | speech | Draw it out: Put two "e's" in speech. | Martin Luther King Jr. gave a memorable speech in Washingtc |
| 178 | stopping | STOP and hear the PING. | We'll be stopping at the store on the way home (to go shoppin |
| 179 | strength | Schwarzenegger Trained REally Neatly at Gold's Gym on FifTH. | The athlete showed great strength and agility. |
| 180 | studying | Just add "ing" to STUDY to get studyING. | I've been up all night studying. |
| 181 | succeed | To succeed, put two "c's" in succeed. | If at first you don't succeed, try, try again. |
| 182 | successful | Be successful: Put two "c's" and two "s's" in successful. | The businesswoman is very successful. |
| 183 | surely | SURE, just add "LY" to sure to get surely. | Surely you don't believe that! |
| 184 | surprise | The SURPlus caused inventory to RISE. | It was a wonderful surprise to see you here. |
| 185 | temperature | The TEMP, Ed, Realized Afterward That Umpire Rick Equivocated. | He had a temperature of 100.4 F . |
| 186 | temporary | The TEMP OR Rick Ate Rare Yogurt. | Relax. This situation is only temporary. |
| 187 | through | Just add "hr" to tough to get through. | He counted every number from one through 10,000. |
| 188 | toward | ITOW and ARDvark. | Never run toward danger. |
| 189 | tries | Just switch the "r" and "e" in tires to get tries. | He tries so hard, but he rarely succeeds. |
| 190 | truly | Tom Really Understands Libby's Yeti. | I truly appreciate your help. |
| 191 | twelfth | The TWin ELF THought about it. | He sang until the twelfth of never. |
| 192 | until | To spell until. just think untile without the "e.." | He sang until the twelfth of never. |
| 193 | unusual | UNUSed, Uni Asked Larry for a loan. | It's unusual to duplicate sentences, but sometimes it's called f |
| 194 | using | Using is just like use, but replace the "e" with "ing." | I don't like using a computer. |
| 195 | usually | USU was his ALLY. | He usually arrives early. |
| 196 | village | It takes two "I's" to spell village. | It takes a village to solve problems. |
| 197 | weird | I before e except after c. | That man was weird. |
| 198 | welcome | WE Love COmmunists from MEndecino. | Welcome to the jungle. |
| 199 | Whether, weather | WE Love COmmunists from MEndecino. | Whether I want to accept it or not, the weather will soon turn to |
| 200 | writing | To write writing, just drop the "e" and replace with "ing." | As of this writing, the information is correct. |
| 201 | Aardwolf is a hyena-like animal of southern and eastern Africa. |  |  |
| 202 | Aberration is departing from the usual course. |  |  |
| 203 | Abridgment is a shortened form of a book. |  |  |
| 204 | Abscission is sudden termination. |  |  |
| 205 | Acerbate is to make sour or bitter. |  |  |
| 206 | Aficionado is a devotee of something. |  |  |
| 207 | Algorithm is a set of rules for solving a problem. |  |  |
| 208 | Alignment is arrangement in a straight line. |  |  |
| 209 | Allocution is a formal speech. |  |  |
| 210 | Ancillary is a subordinate or subsidiary. |  |  |
| 211 | Apocalypse is widespread destruction or disaster. |  |  |
| 212 | Applique is ornamentation applied to a material. |  |  |
| 213 | Archetype (arkitype) is the original model. |  |  |
| 214 | Avenge is to exact satisfaction for. |  |  |
| 215 | Babushka is a woman's scarf. |  |  |
| 216 | Baccalaureate is a religious service held before commencement day. |  |  |
| 217 | Balalaika is a Russian musical instrument. |  |  |
| 218 | Baroque pertains to architecture and art from 17th century Italy. |  |  |
| 219 | Barracuda is a long, predaceous fish. |  |  |
| 220 | Bayou is a marshy arm of a river, usually sluggish or stagnant. |  |  |
| 221 | Beleaguer is to surround with troubles. |  |  |
| 222 | Belligerence is a hostile attitude. |  |  |
| 223 | Beret is a soft, visorless cap. |  |  |
| 224 | Bivouac is a military encampment. |  |  |
| 225 | Blithe is joyous, glad or cheerful. |  |  |
| 226 | Boatswain is a warrant officer on a warship. |  |  |
| 227 | Bourgeois is to be a member of the middle class. |  |  |
| 228 | Boutique is a small shop within a larger store. |  |  |
| 229 | Boutonniere is a flower worn by a man in his lapel. |  |  |
| 230 | Boysenberry is a blackberry-like fruit. |  |  |
| 231 | Buoy is a float used to mark a water channel. |  |  |
| 232 | Cabaret is a restaurant providing food, drink and music. |  |  |
| 233 | Calisthenics are gymnastic exercises. |  |  |
| 234 | Callous is hard or indifferent. |  |  |









| 662 | Trivial means of little significance or importance. |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 663 | Trough is a receptacle, usually for drinking from. |  |
| 664 | Troupe is a group of actors or performers, esp. travelers. |  |
| 665 | Truancy is the act of being truant or late. |  |
| 666 | Tyrannize is to exercise absolute control or power. |  |
| 667 | Ulcer is a sore on the skin. |  |
| 668 | Uncollectible means it can't be collected. |  |
| 669 | Unkempt is disheveled or messy. |  |
| 670 | Vaccinal pertaining to vaccine or vaccination. |  |
| 671 | Vague is not clearly expressed or identified. |  |
| 672 | Vaudeville is a theatrical entertainment. |  |
| 673 | Vehemence meaning ardor or fervor. |  |
| 674 | Veneer is a thin layer of wood. |  |
| 675 | Vengeance means violent revenge or getting back. |  |
| 676 | Vermicelli is a form of pasta. |  |
| 677 | Victuals are food supplies. |  |
| 678 | Viscount is a nobleman just below an earl or count. |  |
| 679 | Vogue means something in fashion. |  |
| 680 | Vying is competing or contending. |  |
| 681 | Waive is to give up or to forgo. |  |
| 682 | Whack is to strike with a sharp blow or blows. |  |
| 683 | Wheelwright is a person whose trade is to make wheels. |  |
| 684 | Wherever is in, at or to whatever place. |  |
| 685 | Wince is to draw back or tense the body. |  |
| 686 | Wrack is wreck or wreckage. |  |
| 687 | Wreak to inflict or execute as punishment or vengeance. |  |
| 688 | Wren is a small, active songbird. |  |
| 689 | Yeoman is a petty officer in a navy. |  |
| 690 | Zeppelin is a rigid airship or dirigible. |  |
| 691 | Zoological is of or pertaining to zoology. |  |
| 692 | Zucchini is a variety of summer squash. |  |

