

Year 1 · Free resource

Suffixes **-ing, -ed, -er, -est**: when the base word doesn't change

Year group: 1

Source: DfE, *English Appendix 1: Spelling*, National Curriculum for England (2013) — Year 1

Curriculum requirement: Statutory

The rule

When a verb or adjective ends in **two or more consonants**, or when the vowel before the final consonant is **long** (or a vowel digraph), you add the suffix **directly with no change** to the base word.

*jump + -ing = **jumping** (two consonants -mp, no change)*

*wait + -ed = **waited** (vowel digraph ai, no change)*

*fast + -er = **faster** (two consonants -st, no change)*

*loud + -est = **loudest** (vowel digraph ou, no change)*

When does the base word NOT change?

The base word stays the same when:

It ends in **two consonants** (*jump, help, ask, turn, walk*)

It ends in a **vowel digraph + consonant** (*wait, rain, look, need, feel*)

It ends in a **long vowel sound** before the consonant (*keep, seem*)

This is the simplest case. The Y2 rules (doubling and drop-the-e) deal with the trickier cases.

Examples: add directly, no change

-ing (actions happening now):

Base verb	+ <i>-ing</i>
<i>jump</i>	jumping
<i>help</i>	helping
<i>walk</i>	walking
<i>talk</i>	talking
<i>wait</i>	waiting
<i>rain</i>	raining
<i>look</i>	looking
<i>play</i>	playing
<i>stay</i>	staying
<i>turn</i>	turning
<i>read</i>	reading
<i>keep</i>	keeping
<i>think</i>	thinking
<i>sleep</i>	sleeping
<i>clean</i>	cleaning

-ed (actions in the past):

Base verb	+ <i>-ed</i>
<i>jump</i>	jumped
<i>help</i>	helped
<i>walk</i>	walked
<i>talk</i>	talked
<i>wait</i>	waited
<i>rain</i>	rained
<i>look</i>	looked
<i>play</i>	played
<i>stay</i>	stayed
<i>turn</i>	turned
<i>clean</i>	cleaned
<i>wash</i>	washed
<i>kick</i>	kicked
<i>push</i>	pushed

Note on -ed pronunciation: *-ed* can make three sounds:

/t/ after unvoiced consonants: *walked* /wɔ:kt/, *kicked* /kɪkt/

/d/ after voiced consonants: *turned* /tɜ:nd/, *played* /pleɪd/

/ɪd/ after *t* or *d*: *waited* /weɪtɪd/, *landed* /ləndɪd/

The spelling is always *-ed* regardless of pronunciation.

-er (comparing: more) and -est (comparing: most):

Base adjective	+ <i>-er</i>	+ <i>-est</i>
<i>fast</i>	faster	fastest
<i>loud</i>	louder	loudest
<i>long</i>	longer	longest
<i>tall</i>	taller	tallest
<i>short</i>	shorter	shortest
<i>cold</i>	colder	coldest
<i>warm</i>	warmer	warmest
<i>small</i>	smaller	smallest
<i>dark</i>	darker	darkest
<i>clean</i>	cleaner	cleanest
<i>sweet</i>	sweeter	sweetest
<i>bright</i>	brighter	brightest
<i>deep</i>	deeper	deepest

The three pronunciations of *-ed*

This is worth teaching explicitly so children don't write *-t* or *-id* endings:

Sound	Happens after	Examples
/t/	unvoiced consonant: <i>k, p, s, f, ch, sh</i>	walked, kicked, pushed, washed
/d/	voiced consonant or vowel: <i>n, l, r, b, g, v, m, z</i>	turned, played, rained, cleaned
/ɪd/	<i>t</i> or <i>d</i>	waited, landed, started, needed

Regardless of sound, the spelling is always *-ed*.

Children who write *walkt* or *playd* or *waitid* are applying phonics logic. Praise the thinking, then teach the convention: *-ed* is always *-ed* for past tense.

Common mistakes

Wrong	Right	Reason
<i>walkt</i>	walked	<i>-ed</i> not <i>-t</i> – past tense always <i>-ed</i>
<i>playd</i>	played	<i>-ed</i> not <i>-d</i>
<i>waitid</i>	waited	<i>-ed</i> not <i>-id</i>
<i>jumppping</i>	jumping	two consonants → no doubling, just add
<i>helpest</i>	most helpful	<i>helpful</i> takes <i>most</i> , not <i>-est</i>

Word sort

Add the suffix. Write the new word. Sort by which pronunciation -ed makes.

Words + suffix: jump+ed · walk+ed · wait+ed · play+ed · kick+ed · turn+ed · land+ed · wash+ed
· rain+ed · start+ed

-ed = /t/	-ed = /d/	-ed = /ɪd/

Dictation sentences

She **jumped** over the puddle and kept **walking** quickly.

They **played** in the rain and **stayed** outside until dark.

He **waited** at the gate while she **cleaned** the **tallest** windows.

The **brightest** stars appeared as the sky grew **darker**.

She **looked** at the **fastest** runner and **cheered** the **loudest**.

Source: DfE English Appendix 1: Spelling (2013). All examples verified against Year 1 statutory content.