

Years 5 & 6 · Free resource

# Years 5/6 Statutory Spelling Word List – grouped by pattern

Year group: 5/6

Source: DfE, *English Appendix 1: Spelling*, National Curriculum for England (2013) — Years 5–6 Word List

Curriculum requirement: Statutory — all schools must teach these words by the end of Year 6

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## Group 1: Words containing the *com-/con-* family (Latin *cum* = with, together)

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Understanding the prefix unlocks the whole group.

Word	Meaning	Root breakdown
<b>accommodate</b>	to provide a place; to fit in	<i>ac-</i> + <i>com-</i> + <i>mod</i> (measure) + <i>-ate</i>
<b>accompany</b>	to go with	<i>ac-</i> + <i>com-</i> + <i>pan</i> (bread – share bread with)
<b>according</b>	in agreement with	<i>ac-</i> + <i>cord</i> (heart – from the same heart)
<b>committee</b>	a group with shared responsibility	<i>com-</i> + <i>mittere</i> (send) – three doubled letters
<b>communicate</b>	to share information	<i>com-</i> + <i>munis</i> (shared)
<b>community</b>	a group of people sharing a place or interest	<i>com-</i> + <i>munis</i>
<b>competition</b>	a contest	<i>com-</i> + <i>petere</i> (seek)

**Teach together:** *communicate*, *community*, and *committee* all share the *com-* prefix. Knowing Latin *com-* = "together" links the meanings.

## Group 2: Words with -tion and -sion (the /ʃən/ sound)

Word	Pattern
<b>explanation</b>	<i>explain + -ation (drop i → explana-)</i>
<b>competition</b>	<i>compete + -ition</i>
<b>profession</b>	<i>profess + -ion</i>
<b>pronunciation</b>	<i>pronounce → pronounci- + -ation (note: not pronunciation)</i>
<b>exaggeration</b>	<i>exaggerate + -ion</i>
<b>interruption</b>	<i>interrupt + -ion</i>
<b>occupation</b>	<i>occupy + -ation</i>
<b>opportunity</b>	<i>opportune + -ity</i>

**Most common mistake: pronunciation** — children write *pronunciation* by analogy with *pronounce*. The root shifts: *pronounce* → *pronunciate* → **pronunciation**.

### Group 3: Words with double letters from prefixes

Many double letters in this list come from a prefix ending in the same letter as the base word starts.

Word	Prefix + base	Double from
<b>accommodate</b>	<i>ac- + com- + mod-</i>	<b>two pairs: <i>cc</i> and <i>mm</i></b>
<b>accompany</b>	<i>ac- + company</i>	<b><i>cc</i> from <i>ac-</i></b>
<b>aggressive</b>	<i>ag- + gress (step)</i>	<b><i>gg</i> from <i>ag-</i></b>
<b>apparent</b>	<i>ap- + parent (visible)</i>	<b><i>pp</i> from <i>ap-</i></b>
<b>appreciate</b>	<i>ap- + preci (price)</i>	<b><i>pp</i> from <i>ap-</i></b>
<b>attached</b>	<i>at- + tach</i>	<b><i>tt</i> from <i>at-</i></b>
<b>committee</b>	<i>com- + mit</i>	<b><i>mm, tt, ee</i></b>
<b>correspond</b>	<i>cor- + respond</i>	<b><i>rr</i> from <i>cor-</i></b>
<b>embarrass</b>	<i>em- + barr</i>	<b><i>rr, ss</i></b>
<b>exaggerate</b>	<i>ex- + agger (heap)</i>	<b><i>gg</i></b>
<b>interrupt</b>	<i>inter- + rupt</i>	<b><i>rr</i> from <i>inter-</i></b>
<b>occur</b>	<i>oc- + cur</i>	<b><i>cc</i> from <i>oc-</i></b>
<b>sufficient</b>	<i>suf- + fici</i>	<b><i>ff</i> from <i>suf-</i></b>

**Teach the prefix rule:** when a prefix ends in the same letter that the base word starts with, double the letter. *ac-* + *com-* = *accom-*; *ag-* + *gress* = *aggress*.

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### Group 4: Words ending in -ence, -ance

Word	Pattern
<b>existence</b>	<i>exist + -ence</i>
<b>convenience</b>	<i>conveni- + -ence</i>
<b>conscience</b>	<i>con- + sci (know) + -ence</i>
<b>relevance</b>	<i>relev- + -ance (-ation link: relevation)</i>
<b>hindrance</b>	<i>hinder + -ance (drop e)</i>
<b>nuisance</b>	Old French <i>nuisance</i>
<b>substance</b>	<i>sub- + stance</i>

## Group 5: Words from Greek

Greek-origin words often have unusual letter combinations.

Word	Greek root	English meaning
<b>physical</b>	<i>physis</i> (nature)	relating to the body or matter
<b>rhythm</b>	<i>rhythmos</i> (measured motion)	a regular beat pattern
<b>rhyme</b>	Greek <i>rhythmos</i> via French	words with matching sounds
<b>symbol</b>	<i>symbolon</i> (token)	a sign or representation
<b>system</b>	<i>systema</i> (organised whole)	a set of connected parts
<b>stomach</b>	<i>stomakhos</i> (throat)	the digestive organ
<b>category</b>	<i>katēgoria</i> (statement)	a group or class

## Group 6: Words commonly misspelled – the hardest ones

Word	Why it's hard	Strategy
necessary	one <i>c</i> , two <i>s</i>	"one Collar, two Socks"
separate	<i>sep-a-rate</i>	"there's a rat in separate"
definite	<i>-ite</i> not <i>-ate</i>	related to <i>finite</i> ; <i>de-</i> + <i>finite</i>
desperate	<i>-ate</i> not <i>-ite</i>	from Latin <i>desperatus</i> ; "I hope it's not too <b>-ate</b> "
privilege	<i>-ege</i> not <i>-edge</i>	Latin <i>privilegium</i> ; no <i>d</i>
prejudice	<i>pre-</i> + <i>judice</i>	<i>judge</i> + <i>pre-</i> (before judging)
secretary	four syllables	sec-re-ta-ry; "keeps SEC-RETs"
parliament	<i>-ia-</i> in middle	<i>parli-</i> + <i>-ament</i> ; think <i>parley</i> (to discuss)
mischievous	three syllables, not four	mis-CHIE-vous (not mis-CHIEV-i-ous)
conscience	<i>-sc-</i> = /ʃ/	<i>con-</i> + <i>science</i> – the <i>sc</i> makes /ʃ/ here
pronunciation	not <i>pronounciation</i>	<i>pronounce</i> shifts to <i>pronunci-</i>
immediately	five syllables	im-me-di-ate-ly
lightning	not <i>lightening</i>	<i>lighten-ing</i> = making lighter; <i>lightning</i> = electrical storm

Word	Why it's hard	Strategy
language	<i>-guage</i>	from French <i>langage</i>
leisure	<i>ei = /ɛ/ here</i>	exception to the <i>ei/ie</i> rule; British /'lɛʒ.ə/

## Group 7: Words with -ous suffixes

Word	Root	Meaning
<b>mischievous</b>	<i>mischief</i> + <i>-ous</i> (drop <i>f</i> , add <i>v</i> )	causing minor harm
<b>marvellous</b>	<i>marvel</i> + <i>-ous</i> (British: double <i>l</i> )	causing wonder
<b>disastrous</b>	<i>disaster</i> + <i>-ous</i> (drop <i>e</i> )	causing disaster
<b>advantageous</b>	<i>advantage</i> + <i>-ous</i> (keep <i>e</i> )	providing an advantage
<b>gorgeous</b>	<i>gorge</i> + <i>-ous</i> (keep <i>e</i> – protects soft <i>g</i> )	beautiful
<b>courageous</b>	<i>courage</i> + <i>-ous</i> (keep <i>e</i> )	brave
<b>obvious</b>	<i>ob-</i> + <i>via</i> (way) + <i>-ous</i>	easy to see
<b>serious</b>	<i>serius</i> (Latin) + <i>-ous</i>	important; grave

## Group 8: Words from Latin word families (morpheme hooks)

Teaching word families unlocks multiple statutory words at once.

Latin root	Meaning	Statutory words
<i>cred</i> (believe)	trust, belief	<b>incredible</b>
<i>cert</i> (sure)	definite	– (from Y3/4: <i>certain</i> )
<i>fort</i> (strong)	strength	–
<i>port</i> (carry)	transport	–
<i>vis/vid</i> (see)	visual	<b>individual, evident</b>
<i>lingu</i> (tongue/language)	speech	<b>language</b>
<i>dict</i> (say)	speak	<b>dictionary</b>
<i>scrib/script</i> (write)	written	<b>conscience</b> ( <i>sci-</i> variant)
<i>temp</i> (time)	timing	<b>temperature</b>
<i>sol</i> (alone/sun)	single	<b>soldier</b> (from <i>solidus</i> )

## The full statutory list (alphabetical)

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accommodate, accompany, according, achieve, aggressive, amateur, ancient, apparent, appreciate, attached, available, average, awkward, bargain, bruise, category, cemetery, committee, communicate, community, competition, conscience, conscious, controversy, convenience, correspond, criticise, curiosity, definite, desperate, determined, develop, dictionary, disastrous, embarrass, environment, equip (equipped, equipment), especially, exaggerate, excellent, existence, explanation, familiar, foreign, forty, frequently, government, guarantee, harass, hindrance, identity, immediate (immediately), individual, interfere, interrupt, language, leisure, lightning, marvellous, mischievous, muscle, necessary, neighbour, nuisance, occupy, occur, official, parliament, persuade, physical, prejudice, privilege, profession, programme, pronunciation, queue, recognise, recommend, relevant, restaurant, rhyme, rhythm, sacrifice, secretary, shoulder, signature, sincere (sincerely), soldier, stomach, sufficient, suggest, symbol, system, temperature, thorough, twelfth, variety, vegetable, vehicle, yacht

*(100 words — verified against DfE English Appendix 1: Spelling, 2013)*

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*Source: DfE English Appendix 1: Spelling (2013). Word groupings and etymology are pedagogical aids, not statutory content. All words verified against the published statutory list.*