

8 Spelling

8.1 Self-Evaluation

Do any of these apply to you?

I have always had problems with spelling. Yes No

I won't use a word because I do not know how to
spell it. Yes No

I feel I am no good at English because I am a
'rotten' speller. Yes No

If you answered **yes** to any of the above, the following **principles** may be of some help to you.

Unfortunately our society expects perfection as far as spelling is concerned. A score of 90% in most subjects is considered high but in spelling is considered poor.

Also our society can sometimes label those of us who have spelling difficulties as ignorant or stupid. You may take heart if you have spelling difficulties, from the fact that Shakespeare used at least 6 different ways of spelling his own name.

Remember the aim of writing is not correct spelling but to **communicate messages, thoughts or ideas.**

8.2 Principles

One of the main problems with spelling is that we have at least **44 sounds** in our language but only **26 letters**. So we have to combine letters to make sounds.

Example 's' and 'h' together make a completely different sound 'sh'.

Vowels

Vowels have **long** and **short** sounds, Note: y can be considered a vowel.

◻ denotes a short sound, _ denotes a long sound.

Short sounds - ◻ ◻ ◻ ◻ ◻

a e i o u

Example hat red hid rod cut

— — — — —

Long sounds - a e i o u

Example hate read hide rode cute

Long vowel sounds can be made in the following ways.

Mnemonics

—

a

a-e **S**ay the **n**ame of the **t**rain

ai

ay

—

e

e-e **P**ete has a **c**heap **g**reen **f**ield

ea

ee

ie

(c) ei

—

i

i-e **My nine bright ties**

ie

igh

y

—

o

o-e **Joe hopes to attend the boat show**

oe

oa

ow

—

u

u-e A **new tube** of glue

ue

ew

Doubling

It is important to understand **long** and **short** vowels for doubling consonants.

If the short vowel has only **one consonant** then it is changed to a **long sound**.

—

Example: d i ner

If it has a **double consonant** then it can keep its **short sound**.

□

Example dinner

So **short** vowel sounds have a **double consonant**. **Long** vowel sounds have **one consonant**.

Root Word

Identifying the root word can be helpful especially when dealing with long words.

Examples happily ROOT WORD - **happy**

Change 'y' to 'i' add 'ly'

mismanagement ROOT WORD - **manage**

Add suffix 'ment' - management

Add prefix 'mis' - mismanagement

Generalisations

1 UL sound can be spelt 'LE' (table) 'AL' (animal) or 'EL' (model).

'LE' is easily the most common (5 times) so if in doubt, use it.

2 SH' sound 'SH' at beginning (show) and end of a word (dish).

'TI' (station) 'CI' (special) or 'SI' (extension) in the middle (very few exceptions with 'SH' in the middle).

'TI' is 9 times more common, so again if in doubt use it.

Note: These are general principles and there are exceptions.

8.3 Accurate Spelling

It is important to spell correctly:

* Proper nouns and technical terms.

* Small tricky common words eg does, goes, any, many, could, would, should.

8.4 Other Tips and Aids

Common Errors

Pick out your 3 most common mistakes and try and eliminate them. This method can get rid of 50% of your spelling errors!

Copying

Make a real effort to copy correctly.

Personal Dictionary

This can be a notebook but an address book with the letters of the alphabet would be better.

Dictionary

Many professionals (myself included) keep a dictionary in their desks to check spelling.

Spell Check

This facility on a word processor would certainly help you.

Franklin Wordmaster

This miniature spell checker is also highly recommended.

Bluffing

If all else fails, bluff! For example, if you are unsure if it is 'able' or 'ible' write it in such a way that it could be either.

My Own Spelling Principles

12 Using a Calculator

12.1 Self Evaluation

Do any of these apply to you?

I have never used a calculator. Yes No

I don't understand what all the keys can do. Yes No

I cannot use the memory. Yes No

If I could use a calculator, I would not make mistakes. Yes No

I cannot do percentages on a calculator. Yes No

12.2 Main Keys

Calculators come in a variety of designs. Here are some of the common keys to compare with your own machine.

The **digit** keys: These are the keys with the numbers .

The **operations** keys:

The **decimal point** key:

The **equals** key:

In some calculators one key may have 2 uses with a legend appearing above the key as well as on the actual key. For example the key may also be the key. This means that before you use it as a % key you have to press another key to convert it to its alternative use.

12.3 Clearance Keys

The **clearance** keys are used to correct one entry eg if you put 7 when you mean 8 **or** to clear your calculator completely. Your calculator may have one of the following arrangements of clearance keys:

Keys To Clear

C

C

Your calculator should have instructions. It is worthwhile studying these and experimenting with simple calculations so that you can verify the answers, eg try 3×4 before you tackle 3472×3914 .

12.3 For Basic Operations with Whole Numbers

Remember:

1 Always clear your calculator before you start.

2 Always press an operations key between the numbers you are entering.

Example Operation Read Out

12.4 Decimal Point

Sometimes my calculator tells me more than I want to know.

If you ask your calculator to divide 1551 by 66 you will see in the display 23.5. The figures on the left of the decimal point show how many whole numbers are in the answer. The figures to the right of the decimal point are a fraction written in the form of decimal places. Often you don't need all the decimal places so you adjust to the number of places you do need. To do this, look at the figure in the next place on the right of where you want to stop. If it is 5 or more, increase your final figure by 1. If it is less than 5 ignore it.

For example:

3.65 to **one** decimal place is 3.7

3.62 to **one** decimal place is 3.6

2.687 to **two** decimal places is 2.69

2.684 to **two** decimal places is 2.68

Example:

When you calculate $399 \div 52$ the display unit shows 7.6730969. Written to 2 decimal places your answer is 7.67.

When calculations involve decimal fractions from the start you press keys:

Example Operation Read Out

12.5 Money

We work in £'s so anything costing a number of pence must be entered as a decimal fraction of a £.

$$34\text{p} = \text{£}0.34$$

$$50\text{p} = \text{£}0.50$$

$$5\text{p} = \text{£}0.05$$

$$245\text{p} = \text{£}2.45.$$

Some calculators do not show a final 0 so remember to write it in your answer.

$$\text{Example: } \text{£}10.00 \div 4 = 2.5 = \text{£}2.50.$$

12.6 Order of Operations

Remember that when there is more than one operation to be done the **order** in which you do them is important.

Rules:

1 If there are brackets () calculate figures inside them first.

2 Next \times and \div .

3 Then $+$ and $-$.

Remember: '**Bodmas**' ie brackets and 'of' before division and multiplication before addition and subtraction.

Example Operation Read Out

12.7 Memory

Calculators with a Memory

Suppose you want to calculate the total cost of:

8 plants at £1.45.

12 plants at £2.76.

14 plants at £0.40.

With any calculator you can:

a Work out the answer for each item.

b Write down the answers yourself.

c Use the calculator to total these.

If your machine has a **memory** you do not have to write anything down. The calculator will store the item in the memory until you need it.

Keys which control the memory have **M** on them, but different machines have different keys so you may have to experiment.

M+ adds number from display into memory.

M- subtracts number in display from number in memory.

MR or RM recalls number from memory back into display.

MC or CM clears memory. Some machines clear memory by pressing RM twice.

So to calculate how much the plants cost **in our example**:

Press $1.45 \times 8 = M +$

$2.76 \times 12 = M +$

$0.4 \times 14 = M + MR$

The M + key at the end of each line adds the answer into memory.

The MR key at the end brings the total from the memory into the display.

12.8 Using the % Key

You can use your calculator to do percentages whether it has a % key or not.

Examples **with a % key**:

a If you want to express $\frac{1}{5}$ in percentage form press $\frac{1}{5}$. The answer is 20%.

b If you want to find out 20% of £600 press $600 \times 20\%$. The answer is £120.

c If you want to calculate VAT on £60 press $60 \times 17.5\%$. The answer is £10.50.

Examples **without a % key**:

a as a percentage press .

b 20% of £600 press .

c VAT on £60 press.

12.9 Common Fractions

Most calculators work in decimals so you cannot enter * directly.
To change * to a decimal press .

If you are dealing with **mixed number** calculate the fraction first
and then add the whole number.

12.10 Averages

A racing car made 5 laps of a circuit. The times for each lap were 72 seconds, 73.5 seconds, 71.8 seconds, 71.4 seconds, 71.3 seconds.

To find out the average speed per lap for these 5 laps:

Press

Average speed per lap is 72 seconds.

PS Have you switched off your calculator?

It is very important that you practise those operations which are new to you or those that you feel less confident about using. By practising many people find that using a calculator becomes second nature to them.

Warning!

A calculator can only do what you tell it. The calculator is never wrong. If your answer is wrong, **you** have given it` the wrong instructions.