Suffix spelling rules: double letters

When adding a suffix to a root word the spelling of both usually stays the same:

**eg** care + ful = careful

But there are several important groups of words in which the spelling of the root word changes when you add a suffix.

Sometimes the spelling changes because of the **Doubling rules**.

As always, there are exceptions to these four rules, but they are a good starting guide:

1. For most short (one syllable) words that end in a single consonant (anything but 'a', 'e', 'i', 'o', 'u'), double the last letter when adding a suffix:

   **eg** run + ing = runni**n**g
   sun + y = sunni**y**

   If the word ends with more than one consonant, don't double the last letter:

   **eg** pump + ed = pumpe**d**
   sing + ing = singi**n**g

2. For most longer (more than one syllable) words that end in 'l', double the 'l' when adding the suffix:

   **eg** travel + ing = traveller**n**
   cancel + ed = cancell**e**d

3. If you have a word ending in a consonant and a suffix starting with a consonant, you don’t need to double the last letter of the word:

   **eg** enrol + ment = enrolme**n**t
   commit + ment = commitment

4. For most longer (more than one syllable) words that have the stress on the last syllable when you say them and end with a single consonant (anything but 'a', 'e', 'i', 'o', 'u'), double the last letter:

   **eg** begin + er = beginne**r**
   prefer + ing = preferr**i**ng

   If the word has more than one syllable and ends with a single consonant, but the stress isn’t on the last syllable, you don’t need to double the last letter before adding a suffix:

   **eg** offer + ing = offere**r**
   benefit + ed = benefite**d**