

Year 4

Spelling & Vocabulary List



The official Year 4 spelling and vocabulary words, with meanings, examples and how to say each one.

What this list is. This is the statutory Year 3/4 National Curriculum spelling list, taken directly from the National Curriculum spelling programme of study. Every word includes its word type, a kid-friendly meaning, an example sentence and a simple guide to how it sounds.

 **96 words**

 **75 tricky spellings**

 **How to say each one**

How to use this list. Read through a few words a day rather than the whole list in one sitting. For each word flagged **TRICKY**, say the word out loud, cover it, write it from memory, then check. The “why it's tricky” note explains exactly what usually goes wrong.

Want these words as interactive flashcards with a match game and a spelling test? Practise them free at pip11plus.com/11-plus-vocabulary-year-4, or read the full [Year 4 11+ preparation guide](#).



FULL LIST

Words 1 to 10 of 96

although CONJUNCTION

TRICKY

awl-DHOH

in spite of the fact that; even though.

"Although it was raining, we still played outside."

Why it's tricky 'ough' makes an 'oh' sound here.

believe VERB

TRICKY

buh-LEEV

to feel sure that something is true or real.

"I believe you can do this if you keep trying."

Why it's tricky 'i' before 'e', and no extra 'a'.

bicycle NOUN

TRICKY

BY-sik-ul

a two-wheeled vehicle that you pedal.

"She rode her bicycle all the way to school."

Why it's tricky The second 'c' sounds like 's', and watch the 'y'.

breath NOUN

breth

the air you take into your lungs (this is the noun).

"He took a deep breath before diving in."

breathe VERB

TRICKY

breethe

to take air in and out of your lungs (this is the verb).

"Remember to breathe slowly when you feel nervous."

Why it's tricky The 'e' on the end makes it long, and it's the verb.

build VERB

TRICKY

bild

to make something by putting parts together.

"They will build a den out of cardboard boxes."

Why it's tricky The 'u' is silent.

business NOUN

TRICKY

BIZ-niss

the work of buying and selling, or a company.

"Her mum runs a baking business from home."

Why it's tricky From 'busy', the 's' sounds like 'z' and the 'i' hides.

busy ADJECTIVE

TRICKY

BIZ-ee

having a lot to do.

"The shop was busy on Saturday morning."

Why it's tricky The 'u' sounds like 'i'.

calendar NOUN

TRICKY

KAL-un-der

a chart showing the days and months of the year.

"We marked the school trip on the calendar."

Why it's tricky It ends in '-ar', not '-er'.

caught VERB

TRICKY

kawt

the past tense of catch: it means you took hold of something moving.

"She caught the ball just before it hit the ground."

Why it's tricky 'augh' makes an 'or' sound.

centre NOUN

TRICKY

SEN-ter

the middle of something.

"Put the cake in the centre of the table."

Why it's tricky British spelling ends '-re', and 'c' sounds like 's'.

century NOUN

TRICKY

SEN-chuh-ree

a period of one hundred years.

"The old castle has stood for over a century."

Why it's tricky 'c' sounds like 's' and 't' sounds like 'ch'.

certain ADJECTIVE

TRICKY

SER-tun

completely sure.

"I'm certain I locked the front door."

Why it's tricky 'c' sounds like 's', and '-ain' here sounds like 'un'.

circle NOUN

TRICKY

SUR-kul

a perfectly round shape.

"The children sat in a circle on the carpet."

Why it's tricky First 'c' sounds like 's', second 'c' like 'k'.

complete VERB

kuhm-PLEET

to finish something, or having all of its parts.

"Pip will complete the puzzle in one go."

consider VERB

kun-SID-er

to think carefully about something.

"Please consider both teams before you choose."

continue VERB

kun-TIN-yoo

to keep going without stopping.

"We will continue the story after lunch."

decide VERB

dee-SYDE

to make up your mind about something.

"You can decide which book to read first."

different ADJECTIVE

TRICKY

DIF-rent

not the same.

"My twin and I like completely different food."

Why it's tricky We say three beats but spell '-ferent' with an 'e'.

difficult ADJECTIVE

DIF-i-kult

hard to do or understand.

"This puzzle is difficult but not impossible."

disappear VERB

TRICKY

dis-uh-PEER

to go out of sight.

"Watch the coin disappear behind my hand!"

Why it's tricky One 's', but double 'p'.

early ADVERB

TRICKY

UR-lee

before the usual or expected time.

"We woke up early to catch the train."

Why it's tricky 'ear' here sounds like 'ur'.

earth NOUN

TRICKY

urth

our planet, or the soil and ground.

"Earth is the third planet from the Sun."

Why it's tricky 'ear' sounds like 'ur'.

eight NUMBER

TRICKY

ayt

the number 8.

"A spider has eight legs."

Why it's tricky 'eigh' sounds like 'ay' and the 'gh' is silent.

eighth NUMBER

TRICKY

ayth

coming after seventh; the 8th.

"She finished eighth in the race."

Why it's tricky It's 'eight' plus an 'h': eigh-t-h.

enough ADJECTIVE

TRICKY

ee-NUF

as much as is needed.

"Have we got enough cups for everyone?"

Why it's tricky 'ough' makes an 'uff' sound.

exercise NOUN

TRICKY

EK-ser-syze

activity to keep you fit, or a set of practice questions.

"We do an exercise to warm up in PE."

Why it's tricky 'x' then a 'c' that sounds like 's', ending '-ise'.

experience NOUN

TRICKY

ik-SPEER-ee-unss

something that happens to you, or skill from doing it.

"The school trip was an exciting experience."

Why it's tricky Ends '-ience' with a 'c' that sounds like 's'.

experiment NOUN

ik-SPERR-i-ment

a test you do to find out what happens.

"In our experiment the balloon grew bigger."

famous ADJECTIVE

FAY-muss

known about by a lot of people.

"That painter is famous all over the world."

favourite ADJECTIVE

TRICKY

FAY-vrit

the one you like best.

"Blue is my favourite colour."

Why it's tricky British '-our-' spelling, with an 'ou' we barely say.

February NOUN

TRICKY

FEB-roo-ree

the second month of the year.

"We get a half-term break in February."

Why it's tricky Don't lose the first 'r': Feb-r-uary.

forward ADVERB

FOR-werd

towards the front; ahead.

"Take two steps forward and then turn around."

fruit NOUN

TRICKY

froot

the sweet part of a plant that holds the seeds.

"An apple is my favourite fruit."

Why it's tricky 'ui' together makes an 'oo' sound.

grammar NOUN

TRICKY

GRAM-er

the rules for how we put words together.

"We learned about full stops in our grammar lesson."

Why it's tricky It ends in '-ar', not '-er'.

group NOUN

TRICKY

groop

a number of people or things together.

"We worked in a group of four."

Why it's tricky 'ou' makes an 'oo' sound.

guard VERB

TRICKY

gard

to keep something safe, or a person who does.

"A big dog will guard the gate."

Why it's tricky There's a silent 'u' after the 'g'.

guide VERB

TRICKY

gyde

to show the way, or a person or book that helps.

"Pip will guide you through every word."

Why it's tricky There's a silent 'u' after the 'g'.

heard VERB

TRICKY

herd

the past tense of hear; took in a sound.

"I heard the school bell ring."

Why it's tricky 'ear' sounds like 'ur', and it isn't 'herd'.

heart NOUN

TRICKY

hart

the organ that pumps your blood; the very centre.

"After running, my heart was beating fast."

Why it's tricky 'ear' here sounds like 'ar'.

height NOUN

TRICKY

hyte

how tall, or how far up, something is.

"We measured the height of our sunflower."

Why it's tricky 'eigh' here sounds like 'eye'.

history NOUN

HIS-tree

the study of things that happened in the past.

"In history we learned about the Romans."

imagine VERB

im-AJ-in

to picture something in your mind.

"Imagine you could fly all the way to the Moon."

important ADJECTIVE

im-POR-tunt

matter a great deal.

"It's important to listen carefully."

increase VERB

in-KREESS

to become or make bigger in number or size.

"We need to increase our score to win."

interest NOUN

TRICKY

IN-trest

a wish to know more about something.

"She has a real interest in space."

Why it's tricky We say three beats but spell 'inter-est'.

island NOUN

TRICKY

EYE-luhnd

a piece of land with water all around it.

"A tiny island sat in the middle of the lake."

Why it's tricky The 's' is completely silent.

knowledge NOUN

TRICKY

NOL-ij

the things that you know.

"Her knowledge of dinosaurs is amazing."

Why it's tricky Silent 'k', and '-edge' sounds like 'ij'.

learn VERB

TRICKY

lurn

to get to know, or be able to do, something new.

"We learn a new word together every day."

Why it's tricky 'ear' sounds like 'ur'.

length NOUN

TRICKY

lengkth

how long something is.

"We measured the length of the worm."

Why it's tricky There's a hidden 'g': len-g-th.

library NOUN

TRICKY

LY-bruh-ree

a place full of books you can borrow.

"I borrowed three books from the library."

Why it's tricky Don't drop the first 'r': lib-r-ary.

material NOUN

muh-TEER-ee-ul

what something is made of; cloth.

"Wool is a warm material for jumpers."

medicine NOUN

TRICKY

MED-sin

something you take to help you feel better when ill.

"The nurse gave him medicine for his cough."

Why it's tricky The middle 'i' is almost silent.

mention VERB

TRICKY

MEN-shun

to say something briefly.

"Did I mention that it's my birthday soon?"

Why it's tricky 'ti' makes a 'sh' sound.

minute NOUN

TRICKY

MIN-it

sixty seconds of time.

"Wait one minute while I tie my lace."

Why it's tricky It ends '-ute' but sounds like 'it'.

natural ADJECTIVE

TRICKY

NACH-rul

made by nature, not by people.

"A river is a natural feature of the land."

Why it's tricky The 't' sounds like 'ch'.

naughty ADJECTIVE

TRICKY

NAW-tee

behaving badly.

"The naughty puppy chewed my shoe."

Why it's tricky 'augh' makes an 'or' sound and 'gh' is silent.

notice VERB

TRICKY

NOH-tiss

to see or become aware of; or a sign.

"Did you notice the new poster on the wall?"

Why it's tricky '-ce' sounds like 'ss'.

occasion NOUN

TRICKY

uh-KAY-zhun

a special event, or a particular time.

"Her birthday party was a happy occasion."

Why it's tricky Double 'c', then one 's' that sounds like 'zh'.

often ADVERB

TRICKY

OF-un

many times; frequently.

"We often walk to the park after school."

Why it's tricky The 't' is usually silent.

opposite ADJECTIVE

TRICKY

OP-uh-zit

as different as can be; or directly facing.

"Hot is the opposite of cold."

Why it's tricky Double 'p', and the 's' sounds like 'z'.

ordinary ADJECTIVE

TRICKY

OR-din-ree

normal; nothing special.

"It started as an ordinary Tuesday morning."

Why it's tricky Four parts, but we say three: or-din-ree.

particular ADJECTIVE

TRICKY

puh-TIK-yuh-ler

this one special one; exact.

"I want this particular sticker, not that one."

Why it's tricky It ends '-ar', not '-er'.

peculiar ADJECTIVE

TRICKY

pi-KYOO-lee-er

strange or unusual.

"The milk had a peculiar smell."

Why it's tricky Ends '-iar', and 'cu' makes a 'kyoo' sound.

perhaps ADVERB

per-HAPS

maybe; possibly.

"Perhaps it will snow tomorrow."

popular ADJECTIVE

TRICKY

POP-yuh-ler

liked by a lot of people.

"That song is really popular right now."

Why it's tricky It ends '-ar', not '-er'.

position NOUN

TRICKY

puh-ZISH-un

where something is; a place or a pose.

"Put the chess piece back in its position."

Why it's tricky The 's' sounds like 'z' and 'ti' like 'sh'.

possess VERB

TRICKY

puh-ZESS

to have or own something.

"A wizard might possess a magic wand."

Why it's tricky Two pairs of 'ss', and the first sounds like 'z'.

possible ADJECTIVE

TRICKY

POSS-uh-bul

able to happen or be done.

"Is it possible to finish by lunchtime?"

Why it's tricky Double 's', and it ends '-ible'.

potatoes NOUN

TRICKY

puh-TAY-toze

round vegetables that grow underground.

"We dug up six potatoes from the garden."

Why it's tricky Add '-es' (not just 's') to make it plural.

pressure NOUN

TRICKY

PRESH-er

a pushing force; or a stressed feeling.

"Press with gentle pressure, not too hard."

Why it's tricky Double 's', and '-ure' sounds like 'er'.

probably ADVERB

TRICKY

PROB-uh-blee

most likely.

"It will probably rain at the weekend."

Why it's tricky Don't drop the middle: prob-ab-ly.

promise VERB

PROM-iss

to say you will definitely do something.

"I promise to feed the cat every morning."

purpose NOUN

TRICKY

PUR-puss

the reason for doing something.

"The purpose of the lid is to keep it warm."

Why it's tricky It ends '-ose' but sounds like 'uss'.

quarter NOUN

TRICKY

KWOR-ter

one of four equal parts; a fourth.

"I ate a quarter of the pizza."

Why it's tricky 'qu' makes a 'kw' sound.

question NOUN

TRICKY

KWES-chun

something you ask.

"Put your hand up to ask a question."

Why it's tricky 'qu' sounds like 'kw' and 'ti' like 'ch'.

recent ADJECTIVE

REE-sunt

happening a short time ago.

"In recent weeks the days got longer."

regular ADJECTIVE

TRICKY

REG-yuh-ler

happening in an even, repeated way.

"We have a regular reading time each day."

Why it's tricky It ends '-ar', not '-er'.

reign NOUN

TRICKY

rayn

the time when a king or queen rules.

"The queen's reign lasted many years."

Why it's tricky Silent 'g', and 'ei', so it sounds like 'rain'.

remember VERB

ri-MEM-ber

to keep or bring something back to mind.

"Remember to bring your PE kit tomorrow."

sentence NOUN

TRICKY

SEN-tunss

a group of words that makes complete sense.

"Start every sentence with a capital letter."

Why it's tricky Ends '-ence' with a 'c' that sounds like 's'.

separate ADJECTIVE

TRICKY

SEP-uh-rut

set or kept apart; not joined together.

"Keep the wet socks separate from the dry ones."

Why it's tricky There's 'a rat' in sep-a-rate.

special ADJECTIVE

TRICKY

SPESH-ul

better or different in an important way.

"Today is a special day, it's sports day!"

Why it's tricky 'ci' makes a 'sh' sound.

straight ADJECTIVE

TRICKY

strayt

without any bends or curves.

"Draw a straight line with your ruler."

Why it's tricky 'aigh' sounds like 'ay' and 'gh' is silent.

strange ADJECTIVE

straynj

unusual or surprising.

"A strange noise came from the attic."

strength NOUN

TRICKY

strengkth

how strong something or someone is.

"It takes strength to climb the rope."

Why it's tricky There's a hidden 'g': stren-g-th.

suppose VERB

TRICKY

suh-POHZ

to think something is probably true.

"I suppose we could share the last one."

Why it's tricky Double 'p', and the 's' sounds like 'z'.

surprise NOUN

TRICKY

ser-PRYZE

something you didn't expect.

"The party was a complete surprise."

Why it's tricky Don't forget the first 'r': sur-prise.

therefore ADVERB

THAIR-for

for that reason; and so.

"It rained, therefore we stayed inside."

though CONJUNCTION

TRICKY

thoh

despite that; however.

"It was cold, though the sun was out."

Why it's tricky 'ough' makes an 'oh' sound.

thought NOUN

TRICKY

thawt

an idea in your mind; the past tense of think.

"I thought of a brilliant plan."

Why it's tricky 'ough' makes an 'or' sound.

through PREPOSITION

TRICKY

throo

in at one side and out of the other.

"The train went through the long tunnel."

Why it's tricky 'ough' makes an 'oo' sound.

various ADJECTIVE

VAIR-ee-uss

several different ones.

"The shop sold various kinds of sweets."

weight NOUN

TRICKY

wayt

how heavy something is.

"We checked the weight of the parcel."

Why it's tricky 'eigh' sounds like 'ay' and 'gh' is silent.

woman NOUN

TRICKY

WUM-un

one grown-up female.

"A kind woman helped us find the way."

Why it's tricky The 'o' sounds like 'u' (just one woman).

women NOUN

TRICKY

WIM-in

more than one grown-up female.

"Three women were singing on the stage."

Why it's tricky The 'o' sounds like 'i' (more than one).

Make these words stick

Reading a list once is a start. Pip turns it into a habit.



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