

# Phonics - Helpful Hints for Parents

## Vowel Rules

- **Single Vowels in a Syllable or Word**
    - A vowel followed by a consonant is *short*. Code it with a breve ( ˘ ). Example: fĕd, dŏg, and rŭg
    - An open, accented vowel (meaning it is not followed by a consonant in the same syllable) is *long*. Code it with a macron ( ¯ ) and an accent ( ´ ). This would be in words such as ē'qual, ĩ'vy and ū'nicorn.
    - Open, unaccented vowels usually have the following sounds:
      - a is *schwa* in words such as *banana*
      - e, o, and u are *long* in words such as *erase, hotel, and July*
      - i is *short* in words such as *divide* and *happiness*
    - Any vowel can have the /u/ sound as seen in words such as *victim* and *ribbon*. Code with an upside down e ( ̅ schwa).
    - The vowel a before the letter l or after the letters qu or w makes the short /ŏ/ sound and is coded with two dots on top ( ä̈ ). This is seen in words such as *all* and *watch*.
    - The scribal sound of o makes the sound in words such as *sponge*. It is coded with one dot on top ( ȯ ).
  - **Vowel-Consonant e**
    - A vowel followed by a consonant and a silent e is long. Code the vowel with a macron ( ¯ ), and cross out the silent e. Example: bākē and bōnē.
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## Spelling Rules

- **K and C Spelling Rules:**
  - k before e, i, or y
  - c before a, o, u, and any consonant
- **Final /k/ Spelling Rules:**
  - ck after a short vowel
  - k after a consonant or a vowel digraph
  - ke after a long vowel
  - c at the end of a word with two or more syllables
- **Floss Rule:**
  - When a one-syllable root word has a short vowel sound followed by the sound /f/, /l/, /s/, it is usually spelled ff, ll, ss, zz.
- **Final /v/ Spelling Rule:**
  - When a word has the final sound /v/, it is spelled ve.
- **Final /s/ Spelling Rules:**
  - ss after a short vowel
  - ce after a long vowel
  - se after anything else

- **Adding a Consonant Suffix:**
  - To spell a word with a *consonant suffix*, just *add* the suffix to the end of the *root word*.
- **Adding a Vowel Suffix-Dropping Rule:**
  - When a word *ends* with a *silent e*, drop the *e* before *adding* a *vowel suffix*.
- **Adding a Vowel Suffix-Doubling Rule:**
  - When the *final syllable* of a word is *accented* and *ends* with *one vowel and one consonant*, double the final consonant before adding a vowel suffix.
- **J & G Spelling Rule:**
  - *j* before a, o, or u
  - *g* before e, i, or y
- **Final /ch/ Spelling Rules:**
  - *tch* after a short vowel
  - *ch* after anything else
- **Final /j/ Spelling Rule:**
  - *dge* after a short vowel
  - *ge* after anything else

### Syllable Division

- **vccv**
  - vc'/cv            such as *napkin*
  - vc/cv'           such as *inject*
- **vcv**
  - v'/cv            such as *baby*
  - vc'/v            such as *river*
  - v/cv'            such as *erase*
- **vccvccv**
  - vc/cvc'/cv      such as *important*
- **vcccv**
  - vc'/ccv          such as *emblem*
  - vcc'/cv          such as *pumpkin*
  - vc/ccv'          such as *explain*

### Definitions for Coding and Understanding Saxon Phonics:

- **Breve** - a coding mark used to indicate a vowel's short sound ( ă ě ĭ ǒ ů )
- **Cedilla** - a coding mark on the letter c to indicate a soft sound ( ç )
- **Code** - to mark a word with symbols to provide information about how to pronounce it
- **Combination** - two letters that come together to make an unexpected sound (ar, er, ir, or, ur, qu, wh); coded with an arc under the combination ( er )
- **Digraph** - two letters that come together to make one new sound (consonant digraphs: ch, ck, ng, ph, sh, th; vowel digraphs: ai, au, aw, ay, ea, ee, ei, ew, ey, ie, oa, oo, ow, ue); underline to code ( ie )

- **Diphthong** - two vowel sounds that come together so quickly that they are considered one syllable (oi, ou, ow, oy); code with an arc under the diphthong ( ow )
- **Final, stable syllable** - a non-syllable that occurs in the final position frequently enough to be considered stable (ble, cle, dle, fle, gle, kle, ple, sle, tle, zle, tion); code with a bracket ( [ble ] )
- **Ghost letter digraphs** - two letters that make one sound; first sound is silent (gn, kn, wr); silent letters are coded with a diagonal slash ( kn )
- **High-frequency words** - those words that occur most often in written text
- **K-back** - a coding mark consisting of a vertical line on the back of a c that makes the /k/ sound ( ck )
- **Macron** - a coding mark used to indicate a vowel's long sound; line drawn above a vowel saying its long name ( a e i o u )
- **Prefix** - a letter or group of letters added to the beginning of a root word that changes the meaning or usage of the word (dis, pre, un)
- **Root word** - a word with no prefix or suffix added
- **Schwa** - a coding mark resembling an upside-down e placed over a vowel to indicate the short u sound ( ə )
- **Sight word** - a word of which all or part does not follow phonetic rules
- **Sneaky e** - the e in the vowel rule v-e; it makes the vowel have a long sound (a-e, e-e, i-e, o-e, u-e); coded by drawing a diagonal slash through the silent e and a macron drawn above the long vowel ( - a - e )
- **Suffix** - a letter or group of letters added to the end of a root word that changes the meaning or usage of the word (vowel suffix: ed, er, es, est, ing, y; consonant suffix: ful, less, ly, ness, s); suffixes are coded by boxing in the affix added to the root word ( ful )
- **Syllable** - a word or part of a word that contains only one vowel sound and is made by one impulse of the voice; syllables are split with a vertical line
- **Trigraph** - three letters that come together to make one sound (dge, igh tch); underline trigraphs to code ( tch )
- **Twin consonants** - two identical consonants making only one sound; coded with a diagonal slash for silent letters ( bb )
- **Voice line** - a coding mark consisting of a horizontal line through the middle of a letter or letters, representing a voiced sound ( s, th )
- **"Wild Colt" words** - words that only have one vowel and break the rule by sounding like a long vowel

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### Other Rules or Codes

- ai is often followed by n, l, or d
- oa is often found in one-syllable words
- v and x are never doubled
- x is never followed by an s
- no words in English end in v
- igh, ough, and augh are usually followed by a t
- add es to nouns ending in s, x, z, ch, tch, and sh to make them plural

## Pronunciations

a	/ă/ short /ā/ long	apple acorn
b	/b/ not /bŭh/	belt
c	/k/ not /kŭh/ /s/	carrot circle
d	/d/ not /dŭh/	dog
e	/ĕ/ short /ē/ long	egg eat
f	/f/ not /fŭh/	feet
g	/g/ not /gŭh/ /j/ not /jŭh/	goose gym
h	/h/ not /hŭh/	hot
i	/ĭ/ short /ī/ long	igloo ivy
j	/j/ not /jŭh/	jet
k	/k/ not /kŭh/	kite
l	/l/ not /lŭh/	lion
m	/m/ not /mŭh/	moon
n	/n/ not /nŭh/	nest
o	/ŏ/ short /ō/ long	octopus open
p	/p/ not /pŭh/	pig
qu	/kw/	queen

r	/r/ not /rŭh/ or /er/	rabbit
s	/s/ not /sŭh/ /z/ not /zŭh/	sock rose
t	/t/ not /tŭh/	tent
u	/ŭ/ short /ū/ long /oo/	umbrella unicorn rule
v	/v/ not /vŭh/	vest
w	/w/ not /wŭh/	wagon
x	/ks/	fox
y	/y/ not /yŭh/ /ī/ /ē/ /ī/	yarn cry candy symbol
Z	/z/ not /zŭh/	zipper