

# THE SPELLING SOCIETY

as of June 18, 2009

**Interim House Style - IHS or HS. [www.spellingsociety.org](http://www.spellingsociety.org) [an international group]**

**INTRODUCTION TO THE SPELLING SOCIETY.** In 1908 in London, England, a group of academics and administrators who shared a sense of frustration with the idiosyncrasies of English spelling, founded The Simplified Spelling Society. Throughout its hundred-year history The Society, later rechristened simply The Spelling Society, has continued to meet and to publish works of research and opinion, focusing on the history of written English and the possibility of improvement in the way it is written. It now boasts members in all the English-language nations: UK [England, Scotland, Ireland & Wales], US, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, plus members residing from or having lived in Japan, Germany, Sweden, Brazil and Russia. Vocal members include ESL teachers, business leaders, college professors and dyslexia specialists among others. The website, [www.spellingsociety.org](http://www.spellingsociety.org), contains links to many individually operated sites, authors and organizations concerned with the problems of English spelling.

Here is a statement recently sent out by a member of the Central Committee, Stephen Linstead, describing the aims of the Society:

**PROPOSED HOUSE STYLE FOR THE SPELLING SOCIETY** [Formerly the Simplified Spelling Society], of London, England, founded in 1908.] A committee within the Society was formed in March 2004 to develop a house style proposal. The idea was to try out a few simple revisions in spelling for members to use in committee correspondence as an experiment. The first version was submitted to the meeting of the SS central committee in Jan. 2005. The most recent updated version, below, has been shown on the Spelling Society website, [www.spellingsociety.org](http://www.spellingsociety.org), beginning in 2007. It is identified officially as Interim House Style, informally as HS or IHS. [Spelling to this point has been TS, traditional English spelling. Spelling from now on in this document is HS.]

HS Committee members who remained active from Mar. 2004 thru 2006-7 are: Theo Halladay MA [Child Development], Montessori teacher & freelance writer [Canada & US]; Jean Hutchins BA, Dyslexia Specialist Teacher, former Chair of the British Dyslexia Association Computer Committee [UK]; Elizabeth Kuizenga MA [Linguistics], ESL & Literacy teacher [US]; Isobel Raven MA, teacher & author of The Future of Phonics [Canada]; Ze do Rock, multilingual world traveler & author [Brazil & Germany]. Others who were contributors for part of this time include Allan Campbell, journalist [New Zealand]; Kate Gladstone BA, writer & handwriting specialist [US]; Ron Footer, engineer [UK] and Steve Bett PhD, special education teacher & army major [US]. My thanks to Steve for his continuing exposure on the internet of the rules & explanations of HS.

**OFFICIAL HOUSE STYLE RULES** as of October, 2006, **Edited by Theo Halladay on Feb. 2, 2008 with updates from 2006-7 discussions. Changes & additions in blue font. Examples supplemented by Theo and Steve.**

**PRINCIPLES**

a) We will use the shortest, most phonemic variant spelling of a word found in any major dictionary. Includes aesthetic>esthetic, oesophagus>esophagus, -ise>-ize, labour>labor, phantasy>fantasy. Numbers are not spelled out. Common abbreviations remain.

b) Where a word is pronounced differently in Standard British and General American speech, we keep TS in the part of the word where the pronunciation differs e.g., 'schedule', 'missile'. This also applies for a partial discrepancy: 'arid', not 'arrid', 'was', not 'wos' or 'wus'. Don't change consonants except to double after a short stressed syllable.

c) We cannot change a word to a TS homograph with a different pronunciation, e.g., not 'off' of, not wander>wonder, not bowl>bowl, not putt>put.

d) Root words (spelled or not) don't change when suffixes are added or compounds are built, if it is not misleading for pronunciation or stress. die>di>dier, dye-dy-dyed-dyer, copy-coppyd-coppys-coppyer. Happiness not happyness, accommodate [stress on -omm], but accommodation not accommodation [stress shifts to the a in accommodation].

e) The spelling of proper names, abbreviations & acronyms is not altered. Languages as adjectives, & weekdays, may be written without capitalizing: England, english, monday.

## RULES

[1] Cut redundant letters & apostrophes. Cut silent vowels & consonants [friend>frend, except>exept, greater>grater, follow>follo], & doubled consonants in unstressed syllables if not misleading for pronunciation; occasion>ocasion, but not gall>gal.

Cut apostrophes optionally: cant, didnt, dont, dusnt, havnt, oclok. But I'd I'm, u'r to conserve pronunciation.

"The respelling must clearly represent the correct pronunciation of the word, according to TS patterns."

Notes on s & c uses: Like TS, HS uses s as unvoiced when initial [sit] or following c, f, k, p, t. The HS interpretation re s-ss is that double s within a word must be retained, even after a schwa syllable, in order to avoid its being mispronounced as z: assume, assert, amassd, depression.

The final e is dropped by HS on words with a /z/ voiced-s final sound: caus, becaus. The exceptions in TS: [bus, circus, this, thus, us], are not considered by HS to be a sufficient pattern to justify leaving off the double in careless, kindness, dress, express. The hope seems to be to change eventually to becuz or something similar & drop the s.

The HS assumption is that s between 2 vowels will be pronounced like z unless it is doubled. However HS does not add a double to the words which in TS are exceptions: disinterested, isolation, usurpation.

HS accepts the TS rule of c being soft before i or e, otherwise hard. It accepts both the soft -ce & soft -se spellings in TS [service, house] without change.

Shwas following a consonant and preceding L or R + vowel can be cut, but optionally also kept, eg traveling, evry, vowel (or traveling, evvery, vowel).

**“OUGHT” WITH /O:/ BECUMS “AUT”, EG BAUT.**

In case of doubt with letter to cut, use following models: **acnollege, ambigguus, concius, lak (not lac), marrage, mountan, adollescence [cut c then dubble s].**

Examples: **acuse, atemt, basicly, befor, bom, caracter, choos, colide, discussd, exept, finaly, hav, hed, hole [whole], mesure, rekless (not rekles), tho, thru, u, wen (optionaly when), wer, vicius.** Examples of cases with no cuts: **could, should, call, future, house, pull, pressure, service, teemmate, unnatural, who, quik not qik, guide not gide.**

After a final **single long o**, insert **E** befor a *consonant* suffix: **i no, he noes, sno-snoed, veeto-veetoes, groeth.** Dont insert **E** befor a *vowh*: **radio-radios, rodeo-rodeos, goes-going.** Dont ad or change vowels to reggularize pronunciation of long **i, o, u**; no change in **child, most, post, ghost [leave h to avoid mispronunciation], truth.** **E** may optionaly be inserted after final long **y**: **replies or replyes, but not wen a vowel preceeds final y: payd not payed.**

[2] ~~Primarily stressed short vowels:~~ **Short vowels carrying primary stress: use a, e, i, o, u, with traditional English spellings (TS) and use conventional dubbled consonants to avoid the magic E efect. Eg: cum-cumming, continnual, hed-hedded, litterary, mith, wimmen, yot. Levling, litrature, sibling, travling dont need dubbleing but trubbling dus, because u within a word is usualy long. Exeption: spel ugly not uggly.**

**Perifferal vowels eg wa-qua-al ar not alterd or regularized: no wach>woch, no quality-qualoty, no also>olso, no water>wauter, no broad>braud. Boy-boil, cloud-crowd, paus-laws unchanged. Dont change unstressd vowels; no return>riturn, simmetry but leav symetrical with [unstressd] y.**

Do not dubble **J, Q, or X** (project), before **-IC, -ITY, -OGY**, or wen **dubbling the consonant** wud change the sound of the word (vision, not vission, **dubble, not duble or dubling**).

[3] **Stressd long a, i, o in the last sillable: folloed by one consonant or consonant + le, reggularized to magic E formula. Eg sustane, thare, hite, botes. Use ‘ee’ for stressd long /e/, eg kee, leeflet, except in “be, he, me, she, the, we” or befor another vowel, eg theater. Leav U sounds unchanged: no fruit>frute, no change in /to-two-too/.**

Examples of **unchanged [unstressd] final open vowels [mostly from foren words]: bologna, bon mot, bureau, cabaret, comittee [not comitty], cow, faux pas, macaroni, resumé, tutu. Long vowels other than ee, elsewhere than in last sillable ar left as in TS. Ex. ancient, citation, idol, pleuresy, protoplasm, robot, sychic, triangle, typology,**

[4] **/f/ sound is speld “ff”. Eg fone, enuf, proffecy. Leev /of/ unchanged.**

#### **SAMPLES of HS SPELLINGS:**

<b>Short vowels</b>		<b>Long Vowels</b>	
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>fat</b>	<b>fatter</b>	<b>fate</b>	<b>fatal flagrant</b>

**blak blacker braker braking**  
**set setter seet beer, fetal>feetal**  
**bit bitter bite bridal, bridle, binding**  
**hot bottle bote focal foto**  
**but butter \*butiful \*duty nudity (ambiguous: /u:/ or /ju:/**  
**thug ugly thru truly**  
**cost across coast cold**  
**mok moss most molt**  
**pollish apollogize poll>pole polar**  
**collar colic cole [coal] colon**  
**shook soot shoot shoe>shoo?**

**Comment by Theo on aCe vs. aiC: Since there have been many objections to sum of the homophones such as mail>male, I suggest that were TS spels ai for long A sound, this spelling can optionally remane [remain].**

**die-di-dier was eliminated because we did not agree that words ending in long I speld as ie shud be shortend to -i. It was pointed out that inglish now contanes far mor words of foren origin ending in shwi i than the short list of [mispronounced] latin plurals & greek letters that remaned in the dictionaris with the long-i pronunciation, with the result that words ending in i ar ambigguus.**

**We discussd cutting could-should-would & ended up saying no cuts on thees. However sum members ar riting cud-shud-wud.**

**Background painting by Theo Halladay**