Spelling Rules: -ible, -able, -ibly and -ably

The suffixes -able and -ible are used to create adjectives.

The suffixes -ably and -ibly are used to create adverbs.

-able

-able is almost (but not always) attached to a root word. If you can hear a complete word before the suffix, it's likely that you need to use -able.

Examples: Reason = **reason**able understand = **understand**able

-able is also used with words that can also have the suffix -ation

Examples: Ador**ation** —- ador**able** consider**ation** —- consider**able**

When the -able suffix is added to words ending in **-ce** or **-ge**, the **e must be kept.**

Examples: Chan**ge** = chang**e**able not**ice** = not**ice**able

The rest of the time, you would usually take the e out.

Examples: Argu**e** = arguable debat**e** = debatable

When -able is added to words ending in **y**, the **y** must be changed to an **i.**

Examples: Rel**y** = rel**i**able var**y** = var**i**able

Sometimes we need to double a consonant before we add -able. This happens when the last syllable is stressed and where the last two letters are vowel followed by consonant.

Examples: For*get* = for*get* **t** able re*gret* = re *gret* **t** able

-ible

-ible is common if a complete root word cannot be heard.

Examples: **Poss**ible **horr**ible

Common Exceptions to the rules!

We can hear a complete root word at the start of these, but they end in -ible, not -able:

Sensible **access**ible **flex**ible

collapsible **reduc**ible **respons**ible

These words end in e (and not ce or ge) but **don't drop it** like they should:

Sal**e**able hir**e**able siz**e**able lik**e**able

nam**e**able