

5. Spelling

(See also Chapter 7 “Compounding Examples” and Chapter 9 “Abbreviations and Letter Symbols”)

- 5.1. GPO uses Webster’s Third New International Dictionary as its guide for the spelling of words not appearing in the GPO STYLE MANUAL. Colloquial and dialect spellings are not used unless required by the subject matter or specially requested. The tendency of some producers of computer-assisted publications to rely on the limited capability of some spell-checking programs adds importance to this list.

Preferred and difficult spellings

- 5.2. In addition to indicating the preferred forms of words with variant spellings, the list also contains other words frequently misspelled or causing uncertainty. (See also “Word Division,” a supplement to the GPO STYLE MANUAL.)

A

| | | | |
|-------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
| abattoir | adjurer | all right | aqueduct |
| aberration | adjuster | altogether (completely) | archaeology |
| abetter | ad nauseam | all together (collectively) | arrester |
| abettor (law) | adviser | | artifact |
| abridgment | advisor (law) | aluminum | artisan |
| absorb (take in) | adz | ambidextrous | ascendance, -ant |
| adsorb (adhesion) | aegis | amoeba | ascent (rise) |
| abysmal | aesthetic | ampoule | assent (consent) |
| a cappella | affect (influence, v.) | analog | assassinate |
| accede (yield) | effect (result, finish, n., v.) | analogous | athenaeum |
| exceed (surpass) | afterward(s) | anemia | attester |
| accepter | afterword | anesthetic | autogiro |
| acceptor (law) | aging | aneurysm | awhile (for some time) |
| accessory | aid (n., v.) | anomalous | a while (a short time) |
| accommodate | aide | anonymous | |
| accordion | aide-de-camp | antediluvian | ax |
| accouter | albumen (egg) | antibiotics (n.) | aye |
| accursed | albumin | antibiotic (adj.) | |
| acetic (acid) | (chemistry) | anyway (adv.) | B |
| ascetic (austere) | align | anywise (adv.) | backward |
| acknowledgment | allottee | appall, -ed, -ing | baloney (nonsense) |
| acoustic | all ready (prepared) | appareled, -ing | bologna (sausage) |
| adapter | already (previous) | aquatic | bandanna |

| | | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| bargainer | butadiene | casual (informal) | compliment (praise) |
| bargainor (law) | C | causal (cause) | confectionery |
| baritone | caffeine | catalog, -ed, -ing | confidant (masc., fem.) |
| bark (boat) | calcareous | cataloger | confident (sure) |
| barreled, -ing | calcimine | catsup | confirmer |
| bastille | caldron | caviar | confirmor (law) |
| bathyscaph | calendar | caviled, -er, -ing | conjurer |
| battalion | calender (paper finish) | center | connector |
| bazaar (event) | caliber | centipede | connector (road) |
| bizarre (strange on absurd) | caliper | centrifugal | connoisseur |
| behoove | calk (spike) | cesarean | consecrator |
| beneficent | caulk (seal) | chairmaned | consensus |
| benefited, -ing | calligraphy | chaise longue | consignor |
| bettor (wagerer) | callus (n.) | chancellor | consulter |
| beveled, -ing | callous (adj.) | channeled, -ing | consummate |
| biased, -ing | calorie | chaperon | contradictor |
| blessed | canceled, -ing | chautauqua | control, -lable, -ling |
| bloc (group) | cancellation | chauvinism | converter |
| block (grants) | candor | chiffonier | conveyor |
| blond (masc., fem.) | canister | chile con carne | cookie |
| bluing | cannot | chili (pepper) | cornetist |
| born (birth) | canoeing | chiseled, -ing | corollary |
| borne (carried) | cantaloupe | chlorophyll | corvette |
| bouillon (soup) | canvas (cloth) | cigarette | councilor (of council) |
| bullion (metal) | canvass (solicit) | citable | counselor (adviser) |
| boulder | capital (city, money) | cite (quote) | counseled, -ing |
| bourgeoisie | capitol (building) | site (place) | cozy |
| breach (gap) | carabao (sing., pl.) | clamor | crawfish |
| brech (lower part) | carat (gem weight) | climactic (climax) | creneled, -ing |
| brier | caret (omission mark) | climatic (climate) | crystaled, -ing |
| briquet, -ted, -ting | karat (gold weight) | cocaine | crystalline |
| Britannia | carbureted, -ing | coconut | crystallize |
| broadax | carburetor | cocoon | cudged, -ing |
| bronco | Caribbean | coleslaw | cyclopedia |
| brunet (masc., fem.) | caroled, -ing | colloquy | czar |
| buccaneer | carotene | colossal | |
| buncombe | carrot | combated, -ing | |
| union | cartilage | commenter | |
| bur | caster (roller) | commentor (law) | D |
| burned | castor (oil) | commingle | darndest |
| bus, bused, buses, busing | | commiserate | debarkation |
| | | complement (complete) | decaffeinated |

| | | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| decatalogue | distill, -ed, -ing, -ment | enameled, -ing | exhibitor |
| defense | distributor | encage | exhilarate |
| deliverer | diverter | encase | exonerate |
| deliveror (law) | divorcee | encave | exorbitant |
| demagogue | doctoral | enclasp | expellant |
| demarcation | doctrinaire | enclose | exposé (n., exposure) |
| dependent | doggerel | enclosure | expose (v., to lay open) |
| descendant (n., adj.) | dossier | encumber | exsiccate |
| desecrater | doweled, -ing | encumbrance | extant (in existence) |
| desiccate | downward | encyclopedia | extent (range) |
| desuetude | dreadnought | endorse, -ment | extoll, -ed, -ing |
| (suspended) | dreamed | endwise | eying |
| destitute (bereft) | drought | enfeeble | eyrie |
| detractor | dueled, -ing | enforce, -ment | F |
| develop, -ment | duffelbag | engraft | fantasy |
| device (contrivance) | dullness | enroll, -ed, -ing, -ment | farther (distance) |
| devise (convey) | dumfound | enshade | further (degree) |
| dextrous (syllable division) | dwelt | ensheathe | favor |
| diaeresis | dyeing (coloring) | ensnare | fecal |
| diaeretic | dying (death) | ensure (guarantee) insure (protect) | feces |
| diuretic (water pill) | E | entrench | fetal |
| diagramed, -ing | eastward | entrust | fetish |
| diagrammatic | ecstasy | entwine | fetus |
| dialed, -ing | edema | envelop (v.) envelope (n.) | fiber |
| dialogue | edgewise | enwrap | fiche (microfiche) |
| dialysis | electronics (n.) electronic (adj.) | eon | filigree |
| diaphragm | eleemosynary | epaulet, -ed, -ing | finable |
| diarrhea | elicit (to draw) illicit (illegal) | epiglottis | finagle |
| dickey | embarrass | epilogue | financier |
| dietitian | embed | equaled, -ing | fjord |
| diffuser | embellish | erysipelas | flammable (<i>not</i> inflammable) |
| dike | emboveled, -ing | escallop | flection |
| dilettante | emboweler | escapable | fledgling |
| dinghy (boat) | emigrant (go from) | esophagus | flexitime |
| diphtheria | immigrant (go into) | etiology | flier |
| discreet (prudent) | emigree | evacuee | flotage |
| discrete (distinct) | eminent (famous) | evanescent | flotation |
| disheveled, -ing | imminent (soon) | eviscerate | fluorescent |
| disk | employee | evocative | focused, -ing |

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|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|
| folderal | graveled, -ing | impasse | jujitsu |
| forbade | gray | imperiled, -ing | juxtaposition |
| forbear (endurance) | grievous | impostor | K |
| forebear (ancestor) | groveled, -ing | impresario | karat |
| foresee | gruesome | imprimatur | kerneled, -ing |
| forgettable | guarantee (n., v.) | inculcate | kerosene |
| forgo (relinquish) | guaranty (n., law) | indict (to accuse) | kidnapped, -ing |
| forego (precede) | guerrilla (warfare) | indite (to compose) | kidnapper |
| format, formatted, | gorilla (ape) | inequity (unfairness) | kilogram |
| formatting | guesstimate | iniquity (sin) | knapsack |
| forswear | guttural | inferable | kopek |
| fortissimo | gypsy | infold | kumquat |
| forward (ahead) | H | ingenious (skillful) | L |
| foreword (preface) | hallelujah | ingenuous (simple) | labeled, -ing |
| fricassee | hara-kiri | innocuous | lacquer |
| fuchsia | harass | innuendo | landward |
| fueler | harebrained | inoculate | lath (wood) |
| fulfill, -ed, -ing, | healthful (for | inquire, inquiry | lathe (machine) |
| -ment | health) | install, -ed, -ing, | laureled |
| fulsome | healthy (with | -ment | leukemia |
| fungus (n., adj.) | health) | installation | leveled, -ing |
| funneled, -ing | heinous | instill, -ed, -ing | leveler |
| furor | hemoglobin | insure (protect) | liable (responsible) |
| fuse (all meanings) | hemorrhage | ensure (guarantee) | libel (legal) |
| fuselage | heterogeneous | intelligentsia | liaison |
| fusillade | hiccup | interceptor | libelant |
| G | highfalutin | interment (burial) | libeled, -ing |
| gaiety | hijack | internment (jail) | libelee |
| gaily | homeopath | intern | libeler |
| galosh | homogeneity | intervener | license |
| gamboled, -ing | homologue | intervenor (law) | licenser (issuer) |
| garrote | hors d'oeuvre | intransigent (n., adj.) | licensor (grantor) |
| gauge | hypocrisy | iridescent | licorice |
| gazetteer | hypotenuse | italic | likable |
| gelatin | I | J | lilliputian |
| genealogy | idiosyncrasy | jalopy | linage (lines) |
| generalissimo | idle (inactive) | jealousy | lineage (descent) |
| germane | idol (statue) | jerry-(built) | liquefy |
| glamorous | idyll | jury-(rigged) | liquor |
| glamour | imminent (soon) | jeweled, -ing, -er | liqueur |
| glycerin | imminent (famous) | jewelry | liter |
| gobbledygook | impaneled, -ing | judgeship | livable |
| goodbye | | judgment | |

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|---------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|
| loath (reluctant) | mil ($\frac{1}{1000}$ inch) | novocaine | perennial |
| loathe (detest) | mill ($\frac{1}{1000}$ dollar) | (anesthetic) | periled, -ing |
| lodestar | mileage | numskull | permittee |
| lodestone | miliary | O | perquisite (privilege) |
| lodgment | (tuberculosis) | obligato | prerequisite |
| logistics (n.) | milieu | obloquy | (requirement) |
| logistic (adj.) | milk cow | ocher | personal (individual) |
| louver | millenary (1,000) | octet | personnel (staff) |
| luster | millinery (hats) | offal | perspective (view) |
| lyonnaise | millennium | offense | prospective |
| M | minable | omelet | (expected) |
| madam | missilery | ophthalmology | petaled, -ing |
| Mafia | misspell | opossum | pharaoh |
| maim | miter | orangutan | pharmacopeia |
| maize (corn) | moccasin | orbited, -ing | phoenix |
| maze (labyrinth) | modeled, -ing | ordinance (law) | phlegm |
| maneuver | modeler | ordnance | phony |
| manifold | mold | (military) | phosphorus (n.) |
| manikin (dwarf) | mollusk | organdy | phosphorous (adj.) |
| mannequin (model) | molt | overseas or oversea | photostated |
| mantel (shelf) | moneys | P | pickax |
| mantle (cloak) | monogramed, -ing | pajamas | picnicking |
| marbleize | monologue | paleontology | pipet |
| marijuana | mortise | paneled, -ing | plaque |
| marshaled, -ing | movable | paraffin | plastics (n.) |
| marshaler | mucilage | paralleled, -ing | plastic (adj.) |
| marveled, -ing | mucus (n.) | parallelepiped | pledger |
| marvelous | mucous (adj.) | parceled, -ing | pledgor (law) |
| material (goods) | Muslim | partisan | plenitude |
| materiel (military) | mustache | pastime | pliers |
| meager | N | patrol, -led, -ling | plow |
| medaled, -ing | naphtha | peccadillo | poleax |
| medalist | Navajo | pedant (n.) | pollination |
| medieval | nazism | pedantic (adj.) | pommeled, -ing |
| metaled, -ing | neophyte | peddler | pontoon |
| metalize | niacin | penciled, -ing | porcelaneous |
| meteorology | nickel | pendant (n.) | practice (n., v.) |
| (weather) | niter | pendent (u.m.) | precedence |
| metrology | nonplused | percent | (priority) |
| (weights and | northward | peremptory | precedents (usage) |
| measures) | Novocain | (decisive) | prerogative |
| meter | (trademark) | preemptory | pretense |
| | | (preference) | preventive |

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|-----------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| principal (chief) | reinforce | sewage (waste) | stifling |
| principle | relater | sewerage (drain system) | stratagem |
| (proposition) | relator (law) | sextet | stubbornness |
| privilege | remodeler | Shakespearean | stultify |
| proffer | renaissance | shellacking | stupefy |
| programmatic | reparable | shoveled, -ing | subpoena, -ed |
| programmed, -mer, | repellant (n.) | shriveled, -ing | subtlety |
| -ming | repellent (adj.) | sideward | succor |
| prologue | requester | signaled, -ing | sulfur (also derivatives) |
| promissory | requestor (law) | siphon | sulfanilamide |
| pronunciation | rescission | site (place) | sulfureted, -ing |
| propel, -led, -ling | responder | cite (quote) | supererogation |
| propellant (n.) | (electronics) | sizable | surfeit |
| propellent (adj.) | responser | skeptic | surreptitious |
| prophecy (n.) | (electronics) | skillful | surveillance |
| prophecy (v.) | reveled, -er, -ing | skulduggery | swiveled, -ing |
| ptomaine | rhyme, rhythmic | sleight (deft) | sylvan |
| pubic (anatomy) | RIFing, RIFed, RIFs | slight (meager) | synonymous |
| pulmotor | rivaled, -ing | smolder | syrup |
| pusillanimous | roweled, -ing | sniveled, -ing | |
| | ruble | snorkel | T |
| | | soliloquy | taboo |
| Q | S | sometime | tactician |
| quarreled, -ing | saccharin (n.) | (formerly) | tasseled, -ing |
| quartet | saccharine (adj.) | some time (some time ago) | tattoo |
| quaternary | sacriligious | some times (at times) | taxied, -ing |
| questionnaire | salable | southward | technique |
| queue | sandaled, -ing | spacious (space) | teetotaler |
| | savable | specious | tercentenary |
| R | savanna | (deceptive) | theater |
| raccoon | savior | specter | therefor (for it) |
| racket (all meanings) | Saviour (Christ) | spirituous (liquor) | therefore (for that reason) |
| rapprochement | scalloped, -ing | spirochete | thiamine |
| rarefy | schizophrenia | spoliation | thralldom |
| rarity | scion (horticulture) | stationary (fixed) | thrash (beat) |
| ratable | scurrilous | stationery (paper) | thresh (grain) |
| rational (adj.) | seismology | statue (sculpture) | threshold |
| rationale (n.) | selvage (edging) | stature (height) | tie, tied, tying |
| rattan | salvage (save) | statute (law) | timber (wood) |
| raveled, -ing | sentineled, -ing | staunch | timbre (tone) |
| reconnaissance | separate (v., adj.) | stenciled, -ing | tinseled, -ing |
| reconnoiter | sepulcher | stenciler | titer |
| recyclable | seriatim | | tonsillitis |
| referable | settler | | |
| refuse | settlor (law) | | |
| registrar | | | |

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|------------------------------|------------------|------------------------|----------------------|
| tormenter | triotych | V | W |
| totaled, -ing | trolley | vacillate | wainscoting |
| toward | troop (soldiers) | valance (drape) | warranter |
| toweled, -ing | troupe (actors) | valence (chemistry) | warrantor (law) |
| toxemia | troweled, -ing | veld | warranty |
| trafficking | tryptophan | veranda | weeviled, -ing |
| trammeled, -ing | tularemia | vermillion | welder |
| tranquilize(r) | tunneled, -ing | vicissitude | westward |
| tranquillity | tunneler | victualled, -ing | whimsy |
| transcendent | turquoise | victualer | whiskey, -s |
| transferable | typify | vitrify | willful |
| transferor | tyrannical | villain | withe |
| transferred | tyro | visa, -ed, -ing | woeful |
| transonic | U | vitamin | woolen |
| transponder (electronics) | unctuous | volcanism | woolly |
| transshipment | unwieldy | voluntarism | worshiped, -er, -ing |
| traveled, -ing | upward | votable | |
| traveler | uremia | vying | |
| travelogue | usable | | |

Anglicized and foreign words

5.3. Diacritical marks are not used with anglicized words.

| | | | |
|---------------|----------------------|----------------|----------------------|
| A | cafeteria | crepe de chine | elite |
| abaca | caique | critique | entree |
| aide memoire | canape | critiquing | etude |
| a la carte | cause celebre | D | F |
| a la king | chateau | debacle | facade |
| a la mode | cliche | debris | faience |
| angstrom | cloisonne | debut | faux pas |
| aperitif | comedienne | debutante | fete |
| applique | comme ci comme ca | decollete | fiance (masc., fem.) |
| apropos | communique | dejeuner | frappe |
| auto(s)-da-fe | confrere | denouement | G |
| B | consomme | depot | garcon |
| blase | cortege | dos-a-dos | glace |
| boutonniere | coulee | E | grille |
| brassiere | coup de grace | eclair | gruyere |
| C | coup d'etat | ecrat | H |
| cabana | coupe | ecru | habitué |
| cafe | creme | elan | |
| | crepe | | |

| | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
| I ingenue | moire | portiere | seance |
| J jardiniere | N naive naivete nee | pousse cafe premiere protege (masc., fem.) puree | senor smorgasbord soiree souffle suede |
| L laissez faire litterateur | O opera bouffe opera comique | R rale recherche regime risque role rotisserie roue | T table d'hote tete-a-tete tragedienne |
| M materiel matinee melange melee menage mesalliance metier | P papier mache piece de resistance pleiade porte cochere porte lumiere | S saute | V vicuna vis-a-vis |

5.4. Foreign words carry the diacritical marks as an essential part of their spelling.

| | | | |
|----------------|-------------------|----------|---------------------|
| à l'américaine | chargé d'affaires | entrepôt | passé (masc., fem.) |
| attaché | congé | exposé | pâté |
| béton | crédit foncier | longéron | père |
| blessé | crédit mobilier | mañana | piña |
| calèche | curé | maté | précis |
| cañada | déjà vu | mère | raisonné |
| cañon | détente | nacré | résumé |
| chargé | doña | outré | touché |

Plural forms

5.5. Nouns ending in *o* immediately preceded by a vowel add *s* to form the plural; nouns ending in *o* preceded by a consonant add *es* to form the plural, except as indicated in the following list.

| | | | |
|------------|-----------|-------------|------------|
| albinos | falsettos | merinos | sexdecimos |
| armadillos | gauchos | mestizos | sextos |
| avocados | ghettos | octavos | siroccos |
| banjos | halos | octodecimos | solos |
| cantos | indigos | pianos | tangelos |
| cascos | infernos | piccolos | tobaccos |
| centos | juntos | pomelos | twos |
| didos | kimonos | provisos | tyros |
| duodecimos | lassos | quartos | virtuosos |
| dynamos | magnetos | salvos | zeros |
| escudos | mementos | | |

- 5.6.** When a noun is hyphenated with an adverb or preposition, the plural is formed on the noun.

| | | |
|------------|--------------|-------------|
| comings-in | hangers-on | markers-up |
| fillers-in | listeners-in | passers-by |
| goings-on | lookers-on | swearers-in |

- 5.7.** When neither word is a noun, the plural is formed on the last word.

| | | |
|-----------|-------------|---------|
| also-rans | go-betweens | run-ins |
| come-ons | higher-ups | tie-ins |

- 5.8.** In forming the plurals of compound terms, the significant word takes the plural form.

Significant word first:

adjutants general
 aides-de-camp
 ambassadors at large
 attorneys at law
 attorneys general
 billets-doux
 bills of fare
 brothers-in-law
 chargés d'affaires
 chiefs of staff
 commanders in chief
 comptrollers general
 consuls general
 courts-martial
 crepes suzette
 daughters-in-law
 governors general
 grants-in-aid
 heirs at law
 inspectors general
 men-of-war
 ministers-designate
 mothers-in-law
 notaries public
 pilots-in-command
 postmasters general
 presidents-elect
 prisoners of war
 reductions in force

rights-of-way
 secretaries general
 sergeants at arms
 sergeants major
 solicitors general
 surgeons general

Significant word in middle:

assistant attorneys general
 assistant chiefs of staff
 assistant comptrollers general
 assistant surgeons general

Significant word last:

assistant attorneys
 assistant commissioners
 assistant corporation counsels
 assistant directors
 assistant general counsels
 brigadier generals
 deputy judges
 deputy sheriffs
 general counsels
 judge advocates
 judge advocate generals
 lieutenant colonels
 major generals
 provost marshals
 provost marshal generals
 quartermaster generals

| | |
|-------------------|------------------------|
| trade unions | men employees |
| under secretaries | secretaries-treasurers |
| vice chairmen | women aviators |

Both words equally significant:

Bulletins Nos. 27 and 28 *not*
 Bulletin Nos. 27 and 28 *but*
 Bulletin No. 27 or 28
 coats of arms
 masters at arms
 men buyers

No word significant in itself:

forget-me-nots
 hand-me-downs
 jack-in-the-pulpits
 man-of-the-earths
 pick-me-ups
 will-o'-the-wisps

- 5.9.** Nouns ending with *ful* form the plural by adding *s* at the end; if it is necessary to express the idea that more than one container was filled, the two elements of the solid compound are printed as separate words and the plural is formed by adding *s* to the noun.

five bucketfuls of the mixture (one bucket filled five times)
 five buckets full of earth (separate buckets)
 three cupfuls of flour (one cup filled three times)
 three cups full of coffee (separate cups)

- 5.10.** The following list comprises other words the plurals of which may cause difficulty.

| | |
|--|--|
| addendum, addenda | cherub, cherubs |
| adieu, adieus | cicatrix, cicatrices |
| agendum, agenda | Co., Cos. |
| alga, algae | coccus, cocci |
| alumnus, alumni (masc.); alumna, alumnae (fem.) | consortium, consortia |
| antenna, antennas (antennae, zoology) | corrigendum, corrigenda |
| appendix, appendixes | crisis, crises |
| aquarium, aquariums | criterion, criteria |
| automaton, automatons | curriculum, curriculums |
| axis, axes | datum (singular), data (plural, but singular in collective sense) |
| bandeau, bandeaux | desideratum, desiderata |
| basis, bases | dilettante, dilettanti |
| bateau, bateaux | dogma, dogmas |
| beau, beaus | ellipsis, ellipses |
| cactus, cactuses | equilibrium, equilibriums (equilibria, scientific) |
| calix, calices | erratum, errata |
| cargo, cargoes | executrix, executrices |
| chassis (singular and plural) | flambeau, flambeaus |

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| focus, focuses | phenomenon, phenomena |
| folium, folia | phylum, phyla |
| formula, formulas | plateau, plateaus |
| forum, forums | podium, podiums |
| fungus, fungi | procès-verbal, procès-verbaux |
| genius, geniuses | radius, radii |
| genus, genera | radix, radices |
| gladiolus (singular and plural) | referendum, referendums |
| helix, helices | sanatorium, sanatoriums |
| hypothesis, hypotheses | sanitarium, sanitariums |
| index, indexes (indices, scientific) | septum, septa |
| insigne, insignia | sequela, sequelae |
| italic (singular and plural) | seraph, seraphs |
| Kansas Citys | seta, setae |
| lacuna, lacunae | ski, skis |
| larva, larvae | stadium, stadiums |
| larynx, larynxes | stimulus, stimuli |
| lens, lenses | stratum, strata |
| lira, lire | stylus, styluses |
| locus, loci | syllabus, syllabuses |
| madam, mesdames | symposium, symposia |
| Marys | synopsis, synopses |
| matrix, matrices | tableau, tableaux |
| maximum, maximums | taxi, taxis |
| medium, mediums <i>or</i> media | terminus, termini |
| memorandum, memorandums | testatrix, testatrices |
| minimum, minimums | thesaurus, thesauri |
| minutia, minutiae | thesis, theses |
| monsieur, messieurs | thorax, thoraxes |
| nucleus, nuclei | vertebra, vertebrae (vertebrae, zoology) |
| oasis, oases | virtuoso, virtuosos |
| octopus, octopuses | vortex, vortexes |
| opus, opera | |
| parenthesis, parentheses | |

Endings “ible” and “able”

5.11. The following words end in *ible*; other words in this class end in *able*.

| | | | |
|------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|
| abhorrible | appetible | coctible | combustible |
| accendible | apprehensible | coercible | comestible |
| accessible | audible | cognoscible | commonsensible |
| addible | avertible | cohesible | compactible |
| adducible | bipartible | collapsible | compatible |
| admissible | circumscribable | collectible(s) | competible |

| | | | |
|--------------------|-----------------|-------------------|------------------|
| compossible | distractable | impersuasive | inexpressible |
| comprehensible | divertible | implausible | infallible |
| compressible | divestible | impossible | infeasible |
| conducibile | divisible | imprescriptible | inflexible |
| conductive | docible | imputrescible | infractible |
| confluxible | edible | inaccessible | infrangible |
| congestible | educible | inadmissible | infusible |
| contemptible | effectible | inapprehensible | innascible |
| controvertible | effervescible | inaudible | inscriptible |
| conversable (oral) | eligible | incircumscribable | insensible |
| conversible | eludible | incoercible | instructible |
| (convertible) | erodible | incognoscible | insubmersible |
| convertible | evasive | incombustible | insuppressible |
| convincible | eversible | incommiscible | insusceptible |
| corrigible | evincible | incompatible | intactible |
| corrodible | exemptible | incomprehensible | intangible |
| corrosible | exhaustible | incompressible | intelligible |
| corruptible | exigible | inconcussible | interconvertible |
| credible | expansible | incontrovertible | interruptible |
| crucible | explosible | inconvertible | intervisible |
| cullible | expressible | inconvincible | inventible |
| decoctible | extensible | incorrigible | invertible |
| deducible | fallible | incorrodible | invincible |
| deductible | feasible | incorruptible | invisible |
| defeasible | fencible | incredible | irascible |
| defectible | flexible | indefeasible | irreducible |
| defensible | fluxible | indefectible | irrefrangible |
| delible | forcible | indefensible | irremissible |
| deprehensible | frangible | indelible | irreprehensible |
| depressible | fungible | indeprehensible | irrepressible |
| descendible | fusible | indestructible | irresistible |
| destructible | gullible | indigestible | irresponsible |
| diffrangible | horrible | indiscernible | irreversible |
| diffusible | ignitable | indivertible | legible |
| digestible | illegible | indivisible | mandible |
| dimensibile | immersible | indocible | marcescible |
| discernible | immiscible | inducible | miscible |
| discerpible | impartible | ineffervescible | negligible |
| discerptible | impatible | ineligible | nexible |
| discussible | impedible | ineludible | omissible |
| dispersible | imperceptible | inevasible | ostensible |
| dissectible | impermisible | inexhaustible | partible |
| distensible | imperscriptible | inexpansible | passable (open) |

| | | | |
|--------------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|
| passible (feeling) | reflectible | sensible | transmissible |
| perceptible | reflexible | sponsible | transvertible |
| perfectible | refrangible | suasible | tripartible |
| permissible | remissible | subdivisible | unadmissible |
| persuasible | renascible | submergible | uncorruptible |
| pervertible | rendible | submersible | unexhaustible |
| plausible | reprehensible | subvertible | unexpressible |
| possible | repressible | suggestible | unintelligible |
| prehensible | reproducible | supersensible | unresponsible |
| prescriptible | resistible | suppressible | unsusceptible |
| producible | responsible | susceptible | vendible |
| productible | reversible | suspensible | vincible |
| protrusible | revertible | tangible | visible |
| putrescible | risible | tensible | vitrescible |
| receptible | runcible | terrible | |
| redemptible | sconcible | thurible | |
| reducible | seducible | traducible | |

Endings “ise,” “ize,” and “yze”

5.12. A large number of words have the termination *ise*, *ize*, or *yz*e. The letter *l* is followed by *yz*e if the word expresses an idea of loosening or separating, as *analyze*; all other words of this class, except those ending with the suffix *wis*e and those in the following list, end in *ize*.

| | | | |
|-----------------------|----------------|-------------|------------------|
| advertise | compromise | excise | prise (to force) |
| advise | demise | exercise | prize (to value) |
| affranchise | despise | exorcise | reprise |
| apprise (to inform) | devise | franchise | revise |
| apprize (to appraise) | disenfranchise | improvise | rise |
| arise | disfranchise | incise | supervise |
| chastise | disguise | merchandise | surmise |
| circumcise | emprise | misadvise | surprise |
| comprise | enfranchise | mortise | televise |
| | enterprise | premise | |

Endings “cede,” “ceed,” and “sede”

5.13. Only one word ends in *sede* (supersede); only three end in *ceed* (exceed, proceed, succeed); all other words of this class end in *cede* (precede, secede, etc.).

Doubled consonants

- 5.14.** A single consonant following a single vowel and ending in a monosyllable or a final accented syllable is doubled before a suffix beginning with a vowel.

| | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| bag, bagging | red, reddish | <i>but</i> |
| format, formatting | rob, robbing | total, totaled, totaling |
| input, inputting | transfer, transferred | travel, traveled, traveling |

- 5.15.** If the accent in a derivative falls upon an earlier syllable than it does in the root word, the consonant is not doubled.

| | | |
|------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| refer, reference | prefer, preference | infer, inference |
|------------------|--------------------|------------------|

Indefinite articles

- 5.16.** The indefinite article *a* is used before a consonant and an aspirated *h*; *an* is used before a silent *h* and all vowels except *u* pronounced as in *visual* and *o* pronounced as in *one*.

| | | |
|---------------------|---------------|--------------------|
| a historic occasion | an herbseller | <i>but</i> |
| a hotel | an hour | an H-U-D directive |
| a human being | an honor | a HUD directive |
| a humble man | an onion | |
| a union | an oyster | |

- 5.17.** When a group of initials begins with *b, c, d, g, j, k, p, q, t, u, v, w, y,* or *z*, each having a consonant sound, the indefinite article *a* is used.

| | | |
|-------------------|------------------|--------------|
| a BLS compilation | a GAO limitation | a WWW search |
| a CIO finding | a UFO sighting | |

- 5.18.** When a group of initials begins with *a, e, f, h, i, l, m, n, o, r, s,* or *x*, each having a vowel sound, the indefinite article *an* is used.

| | |
|--------------------|--------------------------|
| an AEC report | an NSC (en) proclamation |
| an FCC (ef) ruling | an RFC (ahr) loan |

- 5.19.** Use of the indefinite article *a* or *an* before a numerical expression is determined by the consonant or vowel sound of the beginning syllable.

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| an 11-year-old | an VIII (eight) classification |
| a onetime winner | a IV-F (four ef) category (military draft) |
| a III (three) group | a 4-H Club |

Geographic names

- 5.20.** The spelling of geographic names must conform to the decisions of the U.S. Board on Geographic Names (BGN) (<http://geonames.usgs.gov>). In the absence of such a decision, the U.S. Directory of Post Offices is to be used.
- 5.21.** If the decisions or the rules of the BGN permit the use of either the local official form or the conventional English form, it is the prerogative of the originating office to select the form that is most suitable for the matter in hand; therefore, in marking copy or reading proof, it is required only to verify the spelling of the particular form used. GPO's preference is for the conventional English form. Copy will be followed as to accents, but these should be consistent throughout the entire job.

Nationalities, etc.

- 5.22.** The table on Demonyms in Chapter 17 "Useful Tables" shows forms to be used for nouns and adjectives denoting nationality.
- 5.23.** In designating the natives of the States, the following forms will be used.

| | | |
|---------------|------------------|------------------|
| Alabamian | Louisianian | Ohioan |
| Alaskan | Mainer | Oklahoman |
| Arizonan | Marylander | Oregonian |
| Arkansan | Massachusettsan | Pennsylvanian |
| Californian | Michigianian | Rhode Islander |
| Coloradan | Minnesotan | South Carolinian |
| Connecticuter | Mississippian | South Dakotan |
| Delawarean | Missourian | Tennessean |
| Floridian | Montanan | Texan |
| Georgian | Nebraskan | Utahn |
| Hawaiian | Nevadan | Vermonteer |
| Idahoan | New Hampshireite | Virginian |
| Illinoisan | New Jerseyan | Washingtonian |
| Indianian | New Mexican | West Virginian |
| Iowan | New Yorker | Wisconsinite |
| Kansan | North Carolinian | Wyomingite |
| Kentuckian | North Dakotan | |

5.24. Observe the following forms:

- African-American
- Alaska Native (Aleuts, Eskimos, Indians of Alaska)
- Amerindian
- Native American (American Indian)
- Puerto Rican
- Part-Hawaiian (legal status)
- but* part-Japanese, etc.

Native American words

- 5.25.** Words, including tribal and other proper names of Indian, Aleut, Hawaiian, and other groups, are to be followed literally as to spelling and the use of spaces, hyphens, etc.

Transliteration

- 5.26.** In the spelling of nongeographic words transliterated from Chinese, Japanese, or any other language that does not have a Latin alphabet, copy is to be followed literally.