

Spelfabet movable alphabet

Level 1 sequences

Here are some beginners' sequences that you can make with your movable alphabet, to show a learner how to build and change words, and get the hang of the alphabet yourself.

Avoid saying letter *names* when using this alphabet. Instead say the *sounds* that each letter/spelling represents in the words.

This alphabet is a tool for teaching about the building blocks of one-syllable words. It doesn't include many common spellings used in longer words, like the "ti" in motion and patient, or the "ssi" in passion and mission (there are about 1,120 spellings in English, so these are just important ones in little words). Please don't try to use this alphabet to build lots of long words, or think of random words and try to make them.

Instead, ask your learner to use the alphabet to make and change lots of one-syllable words. Children are often very impressed at the hundreds of words we can make from a fairly small number of sounds and letters, and the way each new sound/spelling allows them to make lots of new words.

Example sentences

An example sentence or two is provided for each word in the sequences below, to make the activity more meaningful, and help build vocabulary. Feel free to make up your own example sentences that better suit your learner(s) e.g. instead of "at, as in 'I saw them at the footy'" you could say "at, as in 'We live at number 6 Whatever St'" or "at, as in 'we are at school'". Please also briefly discuss any vocabulary that's new to them.

The more interesting and relevant you can make your example sentences to your learners, the better. If you can make them funny, great, as this makes them more memorable. Just use my sentences if you can't think of better ones. You might find your learners can also think of sentences for many of the words.

If you are working with more than one learner, make sure that while one of them is building words, everyone else is writing them down, not sitting doing nothing. Once they have a good-sized list of words, you might like to challenge them to use all these words in a silly story or poem.

Start with the following letters: a, d (both) o, p (both) and t (both).

Make the word "ad" in front of the learner(s). Put out the other six letters with vowels (orange) directly above the word and the others above and to the left.

Tell the learner(s) the sound for each letter (this one is "a", this one is "d" etc), then say:

1. Here's "ad" as in "I saw an ad on TV". Can you please turn it into "at" as in "I saw them at the footy"? (assist as necessary, modelling exaggerated sounding-out, to get the right answer).
2. Now make "pat" as in "don't pat that dog, it's dangerous", or "my friend is called Pat".



3. Now make “pot” as in “I made a pot of coffee”.
4. Now make “tot” as in “she is just a little tot”.
5. Now make “top” as in “can you climb to the top?” or “I have a spinning top”.
6. Now make “tap” as in “turn on the tap” or “tap him on the shoulder”.
7. Now make “tad” as in “sorry, I’m a tad late”.
8. Now make “dad” as in “my dad did the dishes”.
9. Now make “pad” as in “I bought a writing pad”.
10. Now make “pod” as in “we have to pod the peas” or “they got into the space pod”.
11. Now make “pop” as in “pop the bubbles”.

Add the letters b (both), g (both) and u

Tell the learner(s) the sound for each letter (here’s “b”, this one is “g” etc).

1. Make/keep the word “pop” in front of the learner(s). Say here’s “pop” as in “I ate so much I thought I would pop”. Can you please change it into “pup” as in “a pup is a baby dog”?
2. Now make “pug” as in “a pug is a small dog with a flat nose”.
3. Now make “tug” as in “we had a tug of war” or “a tug boat helps other boats get in to the dock”.
4. Now make “bug” as in “we caught a bug in the garden” or “my computer has a bug”.
5. Now make “bag” as in “I brought a shopping bag”.
6. Now make “bad” as in “she did a bad thing and now she’s sorry”.
7. Now make “bap” as in “a bap is a kind of bread roll”.
8. Now make “bat” as in “I have a cricket bat” or “a bat lives in our ceiling”.
9. Now make “but” as in “I want to go but I can’t”.
10. Now make “bud” as in “the bud bloomed into a beautiful flower”.
11. Now make “dud” as in “this machine never worked, I think it’s a dud”.
12. Now make “dub” as in “the Queen said ‘I dub you Sir Lancelot’”.
13. Now make “dug” as in “the dog dug up all our seedlings”.
14. Now make “dog” as in “what a naughty dog”.
15. Now make “dag” as in “he is such a dag”.
16. Now make “dab” as in “dab some sunscreen on your nose”.
17. Now make “dob” as in “I’m going to dob on you”.
18. Now make “dot” as in “I am drawing a dot-to-dot picture”.
19. Now make “got” as in “I got up”.
20. Now make “god” as in “the religion lesson was called ‘who is God?’”
21. Now make “gob” as in “oh yuck, there’s a gob of spit on the ground”.
22. Now make “bog” as in “my car got stuck in a bog” (swap beginning and ending spellings).
23. Now make “tog” as in “we will tog up and go out dancing”.
24. Now make “tag” as in “we played tag at recess”.
25. Now make “tab” as in “a can of drink has a tab on top, and you pull it to open the can”.
26. Now make “tub” as in “I am going to have a long soak in a hot tub”.
27. Now make “pub” as in “pub is another word for hotel”.
28. Now make “pup” again, as in “the pup is asleep because it’s tired from chewing my slippers all day”.
29. Now make “up” as in “go up the ladder”

Add the letters e and i (just one of each)

Tell the learner(s) the sound for each new letter.

Make the word "it". Say, "Here's the word 'it' as in 'give it to me'".

1. Can you please change it into "pit" as in "the little stone in a cherry is called a cherry pit".
2. Now make "bit" as in "the dog bit me" or "have a bit of my cake".
3. Now make "git" as in "don't be a silly git".
4. Now make "get" as in "please get me that pen".
5. Now make "bet" as in "I bet I can race you".
6. Now make "pet" as in "I have a pet possum".
7. Now make "peg" as in "peg the washing on the line".
8. Now make "beg" as in "I beg you not to do that".
9. Now make "big" as in "an elephant is big".
10. Now make "pig" as in "a pig is a farm animal".
11. Now make "dig" as in "dig a hole for this tomato plant".
12. Now make "dip" as in "let's go for a dip in the pool".
13. Now make "tip" as in "tip that out, it's gone off".
14. Now make "pip" as in "I spat out the grape pip".
15. Now can you change the first and last letters to make "did" as in "I did my homework"?
16. Now make "bid" as in "we put a bid in at the auction".
17. Now make "bed" as in "go to bed".
18. Now make "ted" as in "teddy bears are often called 'Ted' for short".

Add the letter m (both of them)

Tell the learner(s) the sound for this new letter.

Make/keep the word "ted" in front of the learner(s). Say:

1. Here's the word "ted", can you change it into "med" as in "my sister is in Med School, she's studying medicine".
2. Now make "met" as in "Have I met you before?".
3. Now make "mat" as in "the cat sat on the mat".
4. Now make "mag" as in "sometimes people call a magazine a mag, for short".
5. Now make "mad" as in "I feel pretty mad with you".
6. Now make "mid" as in "her skirt was mid-length, not long, and not short".
7. Now make "mim" as in "the name Mim is usually short for Miriam".
8. Now make "mum" as in "your mum is nice".
9. Now make "mud" as in "the girl fell in the mud".
10. Now make "mug" as in "can I have my coffee in a mug?".
11. Now, using the same letters, make "gum" as in "don't chew gum in class".
12. Now make "bum" as in "he fell on his bum".
13. Now make "bam" as in "she bashed on the door: bam, bam, bam".
14. Now make "dam" as in "the water we drink comes from the Thompson Dam".
15. Now make "pam" as in "My cousin is called Pam".
16. Now make "pom" as in "an English person in Australia is sometimes called a Pom".

17. Now make "tom" as in "a male cat is called a tom cat".
18. Now make "Tim" as in "Tim is short for Timothy".
19. Now make "dim" as in "can you please dim the lights?"
20. Now make "Dom" as in "Dom is short for Dominic".
21. Now use the same letters to make "mod" as in "mod can be short for modern".
22. Now make "mob" as in "a mob of sheep crossed the road".
23. Now make "mop" as in "mop the floor".
24. Now make "map" as in "I'm lost, let's have a look at the map".

Add the letter n (both of them)

Tell the learner(s) the sound for this new letter.

Make/keep the word "map" in front of the learner(s). Say:

1. Here's the word "map", can you please change it into "nap" as in "I'm tired, I need a nap".
2. Now make "nan" as in "when Nan has a nap it's called a nanna-nap".
3. Now make "man" as in "that man is my Pa, he needs a nap too".
4. Now make "ban" as in "today is a day of total fire ban".
5. Now make "pan" as in "I put the pan in the oven".
6. Now make "tan" as in "I got a tan in summer, but I was careful not to get sunburnt".
7. Now make "Dan" as in "Dan is short for Daniel".
8. Now make "den" as in "the tiger was in its den".
9. Now make "ben" as in "Ben is short for Benjamin".
10. Now make "pen" as in "I wrote it with a blue pen".
11. Now make "men" as in "the men were shopping".
12. Now make "ten" as in "I got ten out of ten for spelling".
13. Now make "tin" as in "can you please get a tin of tomatoes?".
14. Now make "pin" as in "pin your badge on your jumper".
15. Now make "bin" as in "throw it in the bin".
16. Now make "din" as in "what a din! Please be quiet".
17. Now make "Don" as in "Don is short for Donald, as in Donald Duck".
18. Now make "dun" as in "dun is a brownish grey colour".
19. Now make "bun" as in "I ate a sticky bun at recess".
20. Now make "gun" as in "a gun is dangerous".
21. Now make "pun" as in "a pun is a kind of joke with two meanings".
22. Now make "nun" as in "he became a priest and she became a nun".
23. Now make "nub" as in "now we come to the nub of the problem".
24. Now make "nab" as in "there is a bank called NAB" or the policeman said, "I'm going to nab you".
25. Now make "nib" as in "the pointy bit of a pen is called the nib".
26. Now make "nip" as in "careful, that crab will nip you".
27. Now make "nit" as in "she had nits and a nit jumped onto me, Aaargh".
28. Now make "net" as in "I caught a fish in my fishing net".
29. Now make "nut" as in "I have a nut allergy".
30. Now make "not" as in "I'm not doing that".
31. Now make "nod" as in "nod your head if you agree".

Add the letter h

Tell the learner, “Here’s ‘h’, it’s a beginning spelling, it’s not usually for word endings”.

Make the word “hot” in front of the learner(s). Say:

1. Here’s the word “hot”, as in “it’s a hot day”, can you please change it into “hat” as in “put on your hat”?
2. Now make “had” as in “I had a sandwich for lunch”.
3. Now make “ham” as in “a ham and cheese sandwich”.
4. Now make “hem” as in “the hem on my skirt is coming down”.
5. Now make “hen” as in “the hen laid an egg”.
6. Now make “hep” as in “Hep B is a nasty disease, it’s short for Hepatitis B”.
7. Now make “hip” as in “I hurt my hip” or “that music is pretty hip”.
8. Now make “hid” as in “she hid behind the curtain”.
9. Now make “him” as in “she saw him, but he didn’t see her”.
10. Now make “hit” as in “hit the ball”.
11. Now make “hut” as in “we went bushwalking and stayed in a hut”.
12. Now make “hug” as in “give your brother a hug”.
13. Now make “hum” as in (hum a tune).
14. Now make “hub” as in “they are building a new community hub”.
15. Now make “hob” as in “the witch put her cauldron on the hob, and got ready to make spider soup”.
16. Now make “hog” a hog is a kind of big pig.
17. Now make “hop” as in “can you hop on one leg?”

Add the letter w

Tell the learner, “Here’s ‘w’, it’s another beginning spelling”.

Make the word “wag” in front of the learner(s). Say:

1. Here’s the word “wag”, as in “the dog will wag its tail”, can you please change it into “wig” as in “that’s not her real hair, that’s a wig”?
2. Now make “win” as in “she will win the prize”.
3. Now make “wit” as in “he is a great wit, and gets everyone laughing”.
4. Now make “wet” as in “My clothes are wet because I walked home in the rain”.
5. Now make “web” as in a spider web.
6. Now make “wed” as in “Cinderella wed the prince, and never had to sweep the fireplace again”.

Add the letter y

Tell the learner, “Here’s ‘y’, it’s another beginning spelling”.

Make the word “yum” in front of the learner(s). Say:

1. Here’s the word “yum”, as in “yum, yum, this food is delicious”, can you please change it into “yam” as in “a yam is a bit like a potato”.
2. Now make “yap” as in “the little dog said ‘yap, ‘yap’”.
3. Now make “yep”, sometimes people say “yep” to mean “yes”.

4. Now make “yet” as in “I’m not ready yet”.
5. Now make “yen” as in “I have a yen for a long voyage” means I would like to go on a long trip.
6. Now make “yon” as in “they ran thither and yon”, it’s an oldfashioned word a bit like “yonder”.
7. Now make “yin” as in “yin and yang are opposites in Chinese philosophy”.
8. Now make “yip” as in “the little dog got tired of yapping and started to yip”.
9. Now make “yup” sometimes instead of saying “yes” or “yep”, people say “yup”.

Add the letter c

Tell the learner, “Here’s ‘c’, it’s usually a beginning spelling in little words like these”.

Make the word “cup” in front of the learner(s). Say:

1. Here’s the word “cup”, as in “a cup of tea”. Can you please change it into “cap” as in “a baseball cap”?
2. Now make “cab” as in “we’ll take a cab to the airport”.
3. Now make “cam” as in “web cam”, or sometimes people called Cameron call themselves Cam for short.
4. Now make “can” as in “I can do this” or “a can of drink”.
5. Now make “cat”, as in “miaow, miaow said the cat”.
6. Now make “cot” as in “the baby sleeps in a cot”.
7. Now make “cut” as in “don’t cut your finger”.
8. Now make “cud” as in “the cow chewed her cud”.
9. Now make “cub” as in “a baby lion is called a cub”, or “my brother is a Cub Scout”.
10. Now make “cob” as in “I like corn on the cob”.
11. Now make “cod”, a cod is a type of fish.
12. Now make “cog”, a cog is a part of an engine.
13. Now make “cop” as in “when she grows up she wants to be a cop”.
14. Now make “con” as in “he is a bit of a con man”.

Add the letter k

Tell the learner(s), “Here’s a different ‘k’, at word beginnings this one usually goes before “e” and “i”.

Optional extra information: We use ‘k’ before ‘e’ and ‘i’ because when you put ‘c’ before these letters, its sound is like ‘s’, as in ‘cell’ and ‘city’ (and also ‘y’ used as a vowel, as in ‘cycle’. Build or write these if you like, to show them).

Make the word “kit” in front of the learner(s). Say:

1. Here’s the word “kit”, as in “a first aid kit”, can you please change it into “kid” as in “she’s a nice kid”, or “a baby goat is called a kid”?
2. Now make “kip” as in “I might have a little kip, I’m tired”.
3. Now make “Kim” as in “Kath and Kim”.
4. Now make “kin”, that’s an old word meaning a relative or a person from your clan, like in movies about the olden days they say “He is my kinsman” or “he is no kin of mine”.
5. Now make “Ken” as in “Barbie and Ken are famous dolls”, or “Ken Rosewall was a famous tennis player”.
6. Now make “keg”, a keg is like a big barrel of beer, cider or other drink.

Add the spelling ck

Tell the learner, “Here’s another ‘k’ spelling, this one is used for word endings”.

When not using it, keep it and other red spellings on the right side of your array of letters/spelling choices, nearest the end of the word you’re working on.

Make the word “back” in front of the learner(s). Say:

1. Here’s the word “back”, as in “come back here” or “I have a sore back”. Can you please change it to “buck” as in “that horse will buck you off”?
2. Now make “duck” as in “quack, quack said the duck”.
3. Now make “yuck” as in “yuck, this tastes disgusting”.
4. Now make “puck” as in a hockey puck.
5. Now make “muck” as in “please don’t muck around in class”.
6. Now make “tuck” as in “tuck your shirt in”.
7. Now make “tick” as in “I got a tick for every right answer” or “a tick is a kind of insect”.
8. Now make “kick” as in “kick the football, not your brother”.
9. Now make “wick” as in “I lit the wick of the candle”.
10. Now make “pick” as in “don’t pick your nose” or “we dug a hole with a pick and shovel”.
11. Now make “pack” as in “pack your bags”.
12. Now make “peck” as in “birds peck up their food” or “give her a peck on the cheek”.
13. Now make “neck” as in “he is a pain in the neck”.
14. Now make “nick” as in “Nick Riewoldt is the captain of the St Kilda Football Club” or “don’t nick my stuff”.
15. Now make “dick”, some people called Richard call themselves Dick for short.
16. Now make “deck”, a deck is the top part of a boat.
17. Now make “dock”, a dock is where boats get tied up to load and unload.
18. Now make “mock” as in “don’t mock your sister”.
19. Now make “mack”, which is a brand of trucks, have you seen Mack trucks?.
20. Now make “tack”, a tack is a kind of small nail like they put in shoes or to put covers on furniture.
21. Now make “hack” as in “hack it off with the scissors, it’s in the way”.
22. Now make “heck” as in “what the heck?”.

Add the letter f

Tell the learner, “Here’s ‘f’, it’s used for word beginnings in these sorts of little words”.

Make the word “fin” in front of the learner(s). Say:

1. Here’s the word “fan” as in “please turn on the ceiling fan” or “I am a fan of pop music”. Can you please change it into “fat” as in “if you eat lots of junk food, you’ll get fat”?
2. Now make “fab” as in “darling you look just fab”.
3. Now make “fad” as in “this is just a fad, it won’t last”.
4. Now make “fed” as in “I fed the dog”.
5. Now make “fen”, a fen is a very flat marshy piece of land.
6. Now make “fun” as in “are we having fun yet?”
7. Now make “fin” as in “we could see the shark’s dorsal fin”.

8. Now make “fib” as in “I told a fib”.
9. Now make “fit” as in “I need to get fit” or “these shoes don’t fit properly”.
10. Now make “fig” as in “we have a fig tree in our yard”.
11. Now make “fog” as in “there will be some morning fog, which should clear by 9am”.
12. Now make “fob” as in “don’t fob him off onto me”, or a watch on a chain is called a fob watch.

Add the spelling ff

Tell the learner, “Here’s ‘ff’, it’s used for word endings”

Make the word “off” in front of the learner(s). Say:

1. Here’s the word “off” as in “please turn that off”. Can you please make it into “toff” as in “when someone is a bit posh, people might call them a toff”
2. Now make “tiff”, a tiff is like a little argument or disagreement, as in “they had a little tiff”.
3. Now make “biff”, which is the short name for the Brisbane International Film Festival, BIFF.
4. Now make “buff” as in “he must go to the gym a lot, he’s looking pretty buff”.
5. Now make “cuff” as in “I got beetroot on the cuff of my shirt during lunch”.
6. Now make “huff” as in “she is in a huff, she’s not talking to us”.
7. Now make “puff” as in “she disappeared in a puff of smoke”.

Add the letter l

Tell the learner, “Here’s ‘l’, we’re going to use it for word beginnings”

Make the word “let” in front of the learner(s). Say:

1. Here’s the word “let”, as in “let me go!”, can you please change it to “lit” as in “she lit the fire”?
2. Now make “lot” as in “don’t go to a lot of trouble for us”.
3. Now make “lob” as in “the tennis player hit a lob, and her opponent smashed it”.
4. Now make “lab” as in laboratory, “we did experiments in the lab” or Labrador, as in “we’ve got a new puppy and she’s a Lab”.
5. Now make “lack” as in “I lack the ingredients to make this recipe, I’ll have to go to the shop”.
6. Now make “lock” as in “lock the door”.
7. Now make “lop” as in “they had to lop a few branches off the tree before they fell off”.
8. Now make “log” as in “they cut the branches up and gave us a log for our fireplace”.
9. Now make “lug” as in “the log was heavy and we had to lug it home ourselves”.
10. Now make “luck” as in “good luck, hope you win”.
11. Now make “lick” as in “don’t let that dog lick you, did you see what it ate?”
12. Now make “lip” as in “I burnt my lip on the hot soup”.
13. Now make “lid” as in “put the lid back on the toothpaste!”
14. Now make “led” as in “she led them up the garden path”.
15. Now make “leg” as in “I hurt my leg”.
16. Now make “lag” as in “he started to lag behind the others” .
17. Now make “lad” as in “he’s a nice lad”.
18. Now make “lap” as in “I have to do one more lap of the pool” or “the baby sat on its mother’s lap”.

Add the spelling ll

Tell the learner, “Here’s ‘ll’, it’s usually an ending spelling”.

Make the word “bell” in front of the learner(s). Say:

1. Here’s the word “bell”, as in “has the bell gone yet?”. Can you please change it into “yell” as in “don’t yell at me”?
2. Now make “well” as in “I don’t feel well”.
3. Now make “fell” as in “he fell off his bike”.
4. Now make “fill” as in “fill up your drink bottle”.
5. Now make “ill” as in “I feel quite ill”.
6. Now make “will” as in “I will have to lie down”.
7. Now make “pill” as in “take this pill, it will make you feel better”.
8. Now make “till” as in “just lie there till the doctor comes”, or a till is a cash register.
9. Now make “kill” as in “people kill animals to get meat”.
10. Now make “hill” as in “Jack and Jill went up the hill”.
11. Now make “mill” as in a windmill.
12. Now make “bill” as in “My phone bill was \$200!”
13. Now make “dill” as in “he’s a bit of a dill”.
14. Now make “doll” as in “the little girl played with her doll”.
15. Now make “toll” as in “to drive on some roads, you have to pay a toll”.
16. Now make “tell” as in “don’t tell your sister”.
17. Now make “dell” as in “the farmer’s in the dell” or Dell is a computer company.
18. Now make “dull” as in “this TV show is very dull”.
19. Now make “gull” as in a seagull.
20. Now make “hull”, the hull is the main part of a boat, the part that goes in the water.

Add the letter j

Tell the learner, “Here’s ‘j’, it’s used for word beginnings”.

Make the word “jam” in front of the learner(s). Say:

1. Here’s the word “jam” as in “I want some jam on my toast”. Can you please change it into “Jack” as in “Jack in the box”?
2. Now change it into “jab” as in “don’t jab me with your elbow”, or sometimes an injection is called a jab.
3. Now change it into “job” as in “do you have a job for me?”
4. Now change it into “jot” as in “can you jot this down?”
5. Now change it into “jog” as in “let’s go for a jog”.
6. Now change it into “jig”, which is a kind of dance, as in “they did an Irish jig”.
7. Now change it to “Jill” as in “Jack and Jill”.
8. Now change it to “Jim”, which is short for James.
9. Now change it to “Jem”, which could be short for Jeremy or Jemma.
10. Now change it to “jet” as in “the Prime Minister’s private jet took off”.
11. Now change it to “jut” as in “does the jetty jut out a long way into the lake”?
12. Now change it to “jug” as in “a jug of water”.

Add the spelling dge

Tell the learner, “Here’s a different way to spell ‘j’, it’s an ending spelling”.

Make the word “judge” in front of the learner(s). Say:

1. Here’s the word “judge” as in “the judge sentenced her to three years in jail”, can you change it into “fudge” as in “I like chocolate fudge”?
2. Now make “nudge” as in “nudge nudge, wink wink, say no more”.
3. Now make “budge” as in “I am not going to budge till I get what I want”.
4. Now make “badge” as in “she wore her Sergeant’s badge proudly”.
5. Now make “Madge”, which is a name that can be short for Madeline, Marjorie or Margaret.
6. Now make “midge” a midge is a small flying insect.
7. Now make “didge”, sometimes didgeridoo players say “I play the digde”.
8. Now make “dodge” as in dodge ball.
9. Now make “lodge” as in “when we went skiing, we stayed in a ski lodge”.
10. Now make “Hodge” as in “Luke Hodge is the captain of the Hawthorn Football Club”, or you can say “this is a complete hodge podge”.
11. Now make “hedge” as in “we have a hedge in front of our house, instead of a fence”.
12. Now make “ledge” as in a window ledge.
13. Now make “wedge” as in a Choc Wedge icecream, or you can cut food into wedges.
14. Now make “edge” as in “I sat on the edge of the pool, but it was too cold to get in”.

Add the letter s

Tell the learner, “Here’s ‘s’, we’re just going to use it for word beginnings at the moment”.

Make the word “sell” in front of the learner(s). Say:

1. Here’s the word “sell” as in “I am going to sell this car”. Can you make it into “set the table” or “ready set go”?
2. Now make “sit” as in “sit down”.
3. Now make “sick” as in “I feel sick”.
4. Now make “sat” as in “we all sat down”.
5. Now make “sack” as in “we had a sack race” or “he got the sack”.
6. Now make “sad” as in “I feel sad”.
7. Now make “sap” as in “if you cut a tree trunk, some sap will come out”.
8. Now make “sip” as in “have a sip of my drink”.
9. Now make “sill” as in a window sill.
10. Now make “sim” as in “I have to get a new sim card for my phone”.
11. Now make “sum” as in “this is a hard sum, I can’t work it out”.
12. Now make “sun” as in “the sun is very hot today”.
13. Now make “suck” as in “to drink through a straw you have to suck on it”.
14. Now make “sub” as in a submarine, or those very long bread rolls.
15. Now make “sob” as in “he burst into tears and started to sob”.
16. Now make “sock” as in “put a sock in it” or “I put on one sock, then the other one”.

Add the spelling ss

Tell the learner, “Here’s a different ‘ss’ spelling, this one is for endings”.

Make the word “kiss” in front of the learner(s). Say:

1. Here’s the word “kiss” as in “give your mother a kiss”. Can you please turn it into “hiss” as in “I heard the snake hiss”?
2. Now make “miss” as in “don’t miss the bus”.
3. Now make “mass” as in “many Catholics go to Mass on Sundays”.
4. Now make “moss” as in “moss grew on the rocks around the pond”.
5. Now make “mess” as in “don’t make a mess”.
6. Now make “less” as in “can I have a bit less than that?”
7. Now make “lass” as in “she’s a nice lass”, it’s like the opposite of lad, it means a young girl or woman.
8. Now make “bass” as in “Bass Strait is in between Victoria and Tasmania”, or “a bass is a kind of fish”.
9. Now make “boss” as in “you’re not the boss of me”.
10. Now make “loss” as in “that business made a loss and had to close down”.
11. Now make “toss” as in “toss a coin”.
12. Now make “Tess”, that’s a girl’s name, it’s short for Theresa, Teresa, Therese or Esther.
13. Now make “Jess”, that’s short for Jesse or Jessica.
14. Now make “Ness” as in “the Loch Ness Monster”.
15. Now make “Fess”, which sometimes people say to mean “confess”, as in “Come on, fess up, what have you done?” or there’s a thing you can get at the chemist’s called Fess Nasal Spray.
16. Now make “fuss” as in “what’s all the fuss about?”

Add the letter z

Tell the learner, “Here’s ‘z’, it’s usually for word beginnings, but it’s not in many little words, we can only make a few”

Make the word “zip” in front of the learner(s). Say:

1. Here’s the word “zip” as in “zip up your bag”. Can you please turn it into “zit” as in “My brother has a zit on his nose”?
2. Now make “zig” as in “zig-zag”.
3. Now make “zag”, as in “zig-zag”.
4. Now make “zap” as in “I’m going to zap you with my ray-gun”.
5. Now make “map” as in “look it up on the map”.
6. Now make “man” as in “he is a man”.
7. Now make “men”, as in “here’s another man, now there are two men”
8. Now make “Zen” as in “Zen Buddhism is a religion” or sometimes when people are feeling relaxed and calm they say “I’m feeling very Zen”.
9. Now make “Zeb”, which is a boy’s name, sometimes it’s short for Zebidee.

Add the spelling zz

Tell the learner, “Here’s ‘zz’, it’s usually for word endings, but again it’s not in many words, here are just a few”.

Make the word “buzz” in front of the learner(s). Say:

1. Here’s the word “buzz” as in “the bee went buzz, buzz, buzz”. Can you please turn it into “fuzz” as in “the little chick was covered in soft fuzz”.
2. Now make “fizz” as in “this lemonade has no fizz, it’s gone flat”.
3. Now make “tizz” as in “no need to get in a tizz”.
4. Now make “tin” as in “the biscuit tin”.
5. Now make “tan” as in “She has a fake tan”.
6. Now make “Jan” as in “her name is Jan”.
7. Now make “jazz” as in “jazz is a kind of music”.

Add the letter v

Tell the learner, “Here’s ‘v’, it’s usually for word beginnings, and again it’s not in many words, here are just a few”.

Make the word “van” in front of the learner(s). Say:

1. Here’s the word “van” as in “we stayed in a camper van”. Can you please turn it into “vat” as in “at the farm, all the milk went into a big vat”? A vat is like a big tank.
2. Now make “vet” as in “we took our cat to the vet”.

Add the spelling ve

Tell the learner, “Here’s ‘ve’, it’s usually for word endings, and again, we can only make a few now”.

Make the word “give” in front of the learner(s). Say:

1. Here’s the word “give” as in “give me all your money”. Can you please turn it into “live” as in “I live in Melbourne”?
2. Now make “lick” as in “lick your icecream, before it drips”.
3. Now make “lack” as in “We don’t need anything, we lack nothing”.
4. Now make “hack” as in “sometimes people can hack into other people’s computers”.
5. Now make “have” as in “I have new shoes”.

Add the letter r

Tell the learner, “Here’s ‘r’, it’s only a beginning spelling when you have an Australian (or UK, NZ etc) accent.

Make the word “red” in front of the learner(s). Say:

1. Here’s the word “red” as in “Red Riding Hood saw the wolf”. Can you please turn it into “rep” as in “my mum is a sales rep”?
2. Now make “rip” as in “don’t rip your clothes on that wire” or “don’t swim in that rip, it’s dangerous”.
3. Now make “rap” as in “I like rap music”.
4. Now make “ram” as in “a ram is a male sheep” or “don’t ram me with your shopping trolley”.

5. Now make “rack” as in “a clothes rack” or “a rack of lamb”.
6. Now make “rock” as in “I tripped over a big rock” or “I like rock music, not rap”.
7. Now make “ruck” as in “he played Ruck Rover for the Pies” (sorry, non-Australians, ruck is a position in Australian Rules Football, just leave this word out if it’s not relevant).
8. Now make “Rick” as in “Rick is a boy’s name, short for Richard”.
9. Now make “rid” as in “how do I get rid of you?”.
10. Now make “rib” as in “she broke her rib body-surfing”.
11. Now make “rob” as in “don’t rob the bank”.
12. Now make “rod” as in “a fishing rod”, or Rod can be a boy’s name, short for Rodney.
13. Now make “rot” as in “throw out that lettuce, it’s started to rot”.
14. Now make “rat” as in “she has a pet rat”.
15. Now make “rut” as in “we hit a rut in the road and our wheel fell off” or “I’m stuck in a rut, I need a change”.
16. Now make “rub” as in “just rub that mistake out and try again” or “Can you rub my sore back?”
17. Now make “rug” as in “we sat on the rug on the floor”.
18. Now make “run” as in “go for a run”.
19. Now make “ran” as in “we ran five kilometres”.
20. Now make “rag” as in “clean the car with an old rag”.
21. Now make “rig” as in “he works on an oil rig”.
22. Now make “riff” as in “he played a guitar riff”.
23. Now make “rim” as in “there is a chip in the rim of my favourite cup, who’s been using it?”
24. Now make “ridge” as in “they climbed up a steep ridge”.

Add the spelling sh

Tell the learner, “Here’s ‘sh’, it’s used for both word beginnings and endings.

Make the word “shut” in front of the learner(s). Say:

1. Here’s the word “shut” as in “shut the door”. Can you please turn it into “shun” as in “they started to shun him”, that means avoid him.
2. Now make “shin” as in “I bumped my shin on my cupboard in the dark”.
3. Now make “ship” as in “they arrived by sailing ship”.
4. Now make “shep” as in “our dog is called Shep, it’s short for shepherd”.
5. Now make “shed” as in “the lawnmower is in the shed”.
6. Now make “shell” as in “I found a nice shell on the beach”.
7. Now make “shall” as in “I hope you shall be back by dinner”.
8. Now make “shack” as in “we stayed in a beach shack, it wasn’t really a proper house”.
9. Now make “shock” as in “he got an electric shock”.
10. Now make “shop” as in “let’s go to the shop”.
11. Now make “posh” as in “he’s a bit posh, isn’t he?” (swap beginning and ending spellings).
12. Now make “gosh” as in “gosh, you did a good job of that”.
13. Now make “gash” as in “he has a big gash on his leg from the shark’s teeth”.
14. Now make “gush” as in “did blood gush everywhere?”.
15. Now make “hush” as in “hush, don’t ask disgusting questions”.
16. Now make “hash” as in “hash browns are delicious”.
17. Now make “mash” as in “Can you mash the potatoes, please?”.

18. Now make “mesh” as in “the net is made of fine mesh”.
19. Now make “mush” as in “he is a rotten cook, everything tastes like mush” or “we went in a dog sled and had to say ‘mush, mush’ to the dogs”.
20. Now make “rush” as in “no need to rush, take your time”.
21. Now make “lush” as in “this lush, delicious chocolate contains ten sorts of berries”.
22. Now make “lash” as in “she might get upset and lash out at you” or “I’ve got an eye lash stuck in my eye”.
23. Now make “rash” as in “If she eats peanuts, she gets a rash”.
24. Now make “sash” as in “the winner of the fancy dress parade got a lovely sash”.
25. Now make “cash” as in “will you pay by cash or card?”
26. Now make “bash” as in “don’t bash up your brother”.
27. Now make “ash” as in “sweep the ash out of the fireplace” said the ugly sister.
28. Now make “dash” as in “the firefighter made a dash to save the children”.
29. Now make “dish” as in “my dog needs a new water dish”.
30. Now make “fish” as in “we had fish and chips”.
31. Now make “wish” as in “I wish I had a new bike”.

Add the spelling ch

Tell the learner, “Here’s ‘ch’, we’re first going to use it just for word beginnings.

Make the word “chip” in front of the learner(s). Say:

1. Here’s the word “chip” as in “a potato chip”. Can you please turn it into “chin” as in “I have a zit on my chin”?
2. Now make “chill” as in “chill out” or “we put the drinks in the fridge to chill”.
3. Now make “chick” as in “a chick hatched out of the egg”.
4. Now make “check” as in “please check that you have everything you need”.
5. Now make “chess” as in “can you play chess?”
6. Now make “mess” as in “don’t mess around with me, or there will be trouble”.
7. Now make “muss” as in “don’t muss my hair up, I just did it”.
8. Now make “muff”, that’s a kind of tube thing people sometimes use to keep their hands warm.
9. Now make “puff” as in “a powder puff”.
10. Now make “chuff” as in “the train said “chuff chuff”.
11. Now make “chug” as in “my car went chug chug-a-lug and then conked out”.
12. Now make “chum” as in “she is my school chum”, that means school friend.
13. Now make “chuck” as in “chuck it out, it’s no good”.
14. Now make “chock” as in “we had to chock the car up to make sure it didn’t roll down the hill”.
15. Now make “chop” as in “chop up the vegetables” or “a lamb chop”.
16. Now make “chap” as in “he’s a nice chap”.
17. Now make “chat” as in “we had a little chat”.

Add the spelling tch

Tell the learner, “Here’s ‘tch’, this is an ending spelling.

Make the word “match” in front of the learner(s). Say:

1. Here’s the word “match” as in “my socks don’t match”. Can you please make it into “batch” as in “we made a batch of cup cakes”?
2. Now make “patch” as in “I had to put a patch on my trousers”.
3. Now make “latch” as in “we lifted the latch and opened the gate”.
4. Now make “catch” as in “you can’t catch me”.
5. Now make “hatch” as in “when will the chickens hatch?”
6. Now make “hutch” as in “the rabbit lived in a hutch”.
7. Now make “dutch” as in “she is from the Netherlands, she’s Dutch” or “let’s go dutch”, that means we each just pay for ourselves when we go out.
8. Now make “ditch” as in “I fell into the ditch”.
9. Now make “witch”, a wicked witch (make sure you do an evil laugh here).
10. Now make “pitch”, a cricket pitch.
11. Now make “hitch” as in “the fete went without a hitch”.
12. Now make “itch” as in “mosquito bites make you itch”.
13. Now make “etch”, as in “I am going to etch your name in stone”.
14. Now make “fetch” as in “she threw the stick for the dog to fetch”.
15. Now make “retch” as in “the cat had fur balls, and started to retch”.

Add the spelling ng

Tell the learner, “Here’s ‘ng’, this is an ending spelling.

Make the word “sing” in front of the learner(s). Say:

1. Here’s the word “sing” as in “can you sing?”. Can you please make it into “ring” as in “ring the bell”?
2. Now make “king” as in “the king said ‘off with his head’”.
3. Now make “ling”, a ling is a kind of fish, or Cameron Ling used to be the captain of the Geelong Football Club.
4. Now make “wing” as in “the bird hurt its wing”.
5. Now make “ding” as in “the tram went ‘ding-ding’ and took off”.
6. Now make “dung” as in “don’t step in the cow dung”, it means cow manure.
7. Now make “hung” as in “we hung out the washing”.
8. Now make “rung” as in “we’ve rung the bell four times”.
9. Now make “sung” as in “we’ve sung this song before”.
10. Now make “mung” as in “mung beans can be delicious”, they’re those little round green beans.
11. Now make “lung” as in “she has lung cancer from smoking”.
12. Now make “long” as in “his hair is long”.
13. Now make “song” as in “I don’t know this song”.
14. Now make “gong” as in “there was a big gong at the entrance to the temple”.
15. Now make “pong” as in “what’s that awful pong, is that your sneakers?” or “let’s play ping pong”.
16. Now make “pang” as in “I had a pang of guilt about not telling the truth”.
17. Now make “hang” as in “hang up your clothes, don’t just drop them on the floor”.

18. Now make “rang” as in “your friend rang, and wants you to ring back”.
19. Now make “sang” as in “the choir sang beautifully”.
20. Now make “bang” as in “don’t bang the door”.
21. Now make “fang” as in “the Sabre Toothed tiger had a large fang on each side of its mouth”.

Add the spelling th

Tell the learner, “Here’s ‘th’, it can be quiet like in ‘thin’ or louder like in ‘this’, and can be for beginnings or endings.

Make the word “moth” in front of the learner(s). Say:

1. Here’s the word “moth” as in “the moth fluttered around the light”. Can you please make it into “math” as in “Americans say ‘do you like math?’ but Australians usually say “do you like maths?””
2. Now make “hath”, which is an old word for have, as in “unto everyone that hath shall be given”.
3. Now make “hag” as in “the ancient hag was very wise”.
4. Now make “wag” as in “he’s a bit of a wag, he likes to tease you”.
5. Now make “wig” as in “put on your wig and let’s go to the fancy dress party”.
6. Now make “with” as in “can I go with you?”
7. Now make “pith” as in “don’t eat the pith of an orange, that white stuff tastes nasty”.
8. Now make “kith” as in “I have neither kith nor kin here”, that means I don’t have any friends or family here.
9. Now make “sith” as in “One of the Star Wars movies is called ‘Revenge of the Sith’.
10. Now make “this” as in “what is this?”
11. Now make “thin” as in “he is very thin because he’s been sick”.
12. Now make “thick” as in “can I please have a thick shake?”
13. Now make “thing” as in “what’s that thing called?”
14. Now make “thong” as in “I lost a thong at the beach” (For non-Australians: Australians call flip-flops thongs).
15. Now make “tong” as in “I’m going to tong my hair with curling tongs”.
16. Now make “tang” as in “this drink has a funny tang, is it past the use-by date?”
17. Now make “tat” as in “tit for tat” or “the Tat people mostly live in Iran” or “I tawt I taw a puddy tat”.
18. Now make “that” as in “what is that?”
19. Now make “thatch” as in “they thatch the roof with straw to keep the rain out”.
20. Now make “than” as in “I’m taller than you”.
21. Now make “then” as in “we went to school, and then we went home”.
22. Now make “them” as in “do you know them?”
23. Now make “hem” as in “Can you please pin my trouser hem up for me?”
24. Now make “hum” as in “I will hum you a tune”.
25. Now make “hug” as in “give me a hug”.
26. Now make “thug” as in “he’s a bit of a thug”.
27. Now make “thud” as in “he fell to the floor with a thud”.

The Last Word

Now try playing a game in which you create a word then take turns to change a single spelling in it to make a new word, using the spellings you’ve learnt (or add more as you learn them). Use only one orange spelling at a time. No repetition of words is allowed. The winner is the person who makes the last word.