

## HOW IS THE SUFFIX <s> PRONOUNCED?

1. There are 26 letters in the English alphabet but 44 phonemes. There is often an agreement between the final sound of a word and the letter which represents that sound.

Look at the way in which these final letters are pronounced:

pup /pʌp/, pub /pʌb/ bet /bet/ bed /bed/  
back /bæk/ bag /bæg/ life /laɪf/ live /laɪv/ adj. or /lɪv/ vb

2. The final <b> is *never* voiceless /p/ - as it is in Czech eg *dub*, *sob*. It is always /b/. The same is true of the <d>, <g>, <v> These are /d/, /g/ and /v/ respectively.
3. Do not make *pub* sound like *pup*, or *bed* like *bet*. If you change the final sound, you change the meaning too.
4. The **final suffix <s>**, however, can be pronounced in **three** different ways.

/s/ or /z/ or /ɪz/

The pronunciation all depends on the sound *before <s>*.

Rules for the pronunciation of the suffix <s>	pronounced	For example
The suffix <s> is usually	/z/	After voiced consonants <i>pubs, beds, bags, loves, breathes, homes, pens, things</i>
		After all long vowels <i>cars, wars, firs, shoes, seas</i>
		After all diphthongs <i>days, flies, toys, bears, beers, cures, cows</i>
		After all triphthongs <i>layers, tyres, royals, lowers, flowers</i>
Except after:		
/s/ /z/, /ʃ/ /ʒ/ /tʃ/ /dʒ/	/ɪz/  /sɪz / /zɪz /, /ʃɪz /  /ʒɪz / /tʃɪz / /dʒɪz /	<i>misses, kisses, confuses, loses, wishes, rushes watches, switches ages, bridges</i>  <i>beiges – /ʒɪz/ is very rare</i>
/p/ /t/ /k/ /f/, /θ/  Exception after long vowel /ɑː/  <i>paths /pɑːθz/, baths /bɑːθz/</i>	/s/  /ps/ /ts/ /ks/ /fs/ θs/	<i>cups, shops, bats, hats, cooks, cakes, laughs, photographs, maths, births</i>