

## summary of /s/ and /z/

The following patterns are listed in **descending order** which means the factors near the top override those near the bottom.

	<b>/s/</b>	<b>/z/</b>
<b>at the beginning of a word</b>	E.g. <u>s</u> ad, <u>s</u> cale, <u>s</u> end, <u>s</u> tar	
<b>'ss' (at any places)</b>	E.g. a <u>ss</u> ess, access, Except: po <u>ss</u> ess [first 'ss' is /z/]	
<b>prepositions</b>	E.g. thu <u>s</u>	E.g. a <u>s</u>
<b>pronouns</b>	E.g. u <u>s</u> , thi <u>s</u>	E.g. who <u>s</u> e, tho <u>s</u> e, the <u>s</u> e, hi <u>s</u>
<b>auxiliary verb</b>		E.g. i <u>s</u> , wa <u>s</u> , ha <u>s</u> , doe <u>s</u>
<b>plurals(noun/verb)</b>	Words ending with /t/, /p/, /k/, /f/, /θ/ E.g. treat <u>s</u> , peep <u>s</u> , kick <u>s</u> , belie <u>f</u> s, math <u>s</u>	Words ending with <b>any phonemes</b> except for /t/, /p/, /k/, /f/, /θ/ E.g. eye <u>s</u> , ray <u>s</u> , leave <u>s</u> , increas <u>e</u> s, brush <u>e</u> s, church <u>e</u> s, chang <u>e</u> s, sabotag <u>e</u> s
<b>before a consonant</b>	<b>before voiceless consonants</b> /k/, /t/, /p/, /f/, /θ/ E.g. bak <u>s</u> , interes <u>t</u> , gras <u>p</u> , atmos <u>ph</u> ere, anesth <u>esi</u> a	<b>before voiced consonants</b> /g/, /d/, /b/, /v/, /m/ E.g. trans <u>g</u> ress, wis <u>d</u> om, hus <u>b</u> and, trans <u>v</u> erse, charis <u>m</u> a
<b>after a consonant</b>	<b>after voiced consonants</b> /b/ E.g. abs <u>ent</u> , obs <u>ess</u> /l/ E.g. els <u>e</u> , als <u>o</u> /n/, 'tran' E.g. cons <u>erve</u> , trans <u>it</u>	
<b>after a vowel (in the middle of a word)</b>	<b>most of the vowels other than /i:/, /u:/</b> E.g. a <u>s</u> leep, pers <u>u</u> ade, ar <u>s</u> on, vers <u>us</u>	<b>After the vowels /i:/, /u:/</b> <b>/i:/</b> E.g. dies <u>el</u> , feas <u>i</u> ble, geys <u>er</u> , reas <u>on</u> <b>/u:/</b> E.g. enthus <u>iasm</u> , mus <u>eli</u> , mus <u>eum</u> , mus <u>ic</u>
<b>'-se' (at the end of a word)</b>	<b>/i:/</b> E.g. ceas <u>e</u> , creat <u>e</u> , greas <u>e</u> , gees <u>e</u> <b>/ɔ:/</b> spelling: 'ar', 'or'. E.g. coars <u>e</u> , cours <u>e</u>  <b>Mainly nouns/adjectives:</b> <b>/u:/</b> E.g. us <u>e</u> (n), abus <u>e</u> (n), excus <u>e</u> (n), goos <u>e</u> <b>/aɪ/</b> E.g. paradis <u>e</u> , precis <u>e</u> , concis <u>e</u> <b>/aʊ/</b> E.g. mous <u>e</u> , lous <u>e</u> , grou <u>se</u> , hous <u>e</u> <b>/əʊ/</b> E.g. clos <u>e</u> (adj), moros <u>e</u> , dos <u>e</u> , glucos <u>e</u> <b>/eɪ/</b> E.g. chas <u>e</u> , cas <u>e</u> , bas <u>e</u>	<b>/i:/</b> E.g. eas <u>e</u> , teas <u>e</u> , diseas <u>e</u> , chees <u>e</u> <b>/ɔ:/</b> spelling: 'au'. E.g. caus <u>e</u> , becaus <u>e</u> , paus <u>e</u> , claus <u>e</u> , applaus <u>e</u>  <b>/ɔɪ/</b> E.g. pois <u>e</u> , nois <u>e</u> , turquois <u>e</u>  <b>Mainly verbs:</b> <b>/u:/</b> E.g. us <u>e</u> (v), abus <u>e</u> (v), excus <u>e</u> (v) <b>/aɪ/</b> E.g. advertis <u>e</u> , customis <u>e</u> <b>/aʊ/</b> E.g. brows <u>e</u> , rous <u>e</u> , arouse <b>/əʊ/</b> E.g. clos <u>e</u> (v), chos <u>e</u> , hos <u>e</u> , ros <u>e</u> <b>/eɪ/</b> E.g. rais <u>e</u> , brais <u>e</u> , prais <u>e</u> , liais <u>e</u>
<b>suffixes</b>	E.g. '-ics', '-ous', '-sive', '-sis'	E.g. '-sm', '-ism', '-sy', '-ible', '-san'
<b>prefixes / non-prefixes</b>	<b>After prefixes:</b> <b>'de-'</b> /di:/ E.g. des <u>elect</u> , des <u>ens</u> itise <b>'re-'</b> /ri:/ E.g. res <u>ale</u> , res <u>et</u> , res <u>urface</u> <b>'pre-'</b> /pri:/ E.g. pres <u>eason</u> , pres <u>et</u> , pres <u>ale</u>  <b>'dis-'</b> /dɪs/ E.g. diss <u>atisfied</u> , diss <u>imilar</u>  <b>'con-', 'un-', 'anti-', 'be-', sub-', super-'</b>	<b>After non-prefixes:</b> <b>'de-'</b> /dɪ/, /de/ E.g. des <u>ign</u> , des <u>erve</u> <b>'re-'</b> /rɪ/, /re/ E.g. res <u>ign</u> , res <u>idue</u> , res <u>erve</u> <b>'pre-'</b> /prɪ/, /pre/ E.g. pres <u>ent</u> , pres <u>erve</u> , pres <u>ume</u> <b>'di-'</b> /dɪ/ E.g. dis <u>aster</u> , dis <u>ease</u>
<b>Between two consonants / vowels</b>		<b>Between two consonants</b> E.g. dog <u>s</u> body <b>Between two vowels</b> E.g. cuis <u>i</u> ne
<b>Compound nouns (do not follow the above patterns)</b>	E.g. bas <u>e</u> ball, hand <u>s</u> ome	E.g. chees <u>e</u> cake, hos <u>e</u> pipe

## /s/ and /z/

**'s' at the beginning of a word is pronounced as /s/:**

sad    survive    system    subordinate    slave

**'ss' is pronounced as /s/:**

access assess    dress    recess    process

[*exception*: possess (first 'ss' is /z/)]

These words are pronounced as /z/:

prepositions: as

auxiliary verbs: is, was, has, does

pronouns: whose, those, these, his [*exception*: this /ðɪs/, us /ʌs/]

## Plurals (noun/verb)

<p>Words ending with /t/, /p/, /k/, /f/, /θ/ → /s/</p> <p>ask<u>s</u> /k/ cat<u>s</u> /t/ peep<u>s</u> /p/ belief<u>s</u> /f/ math<u>s</u> /θ/</p>	<p>Words ending with <b>any phonemes</b> except for /t/, /p/, /k/, /f/, /θ/ → /z/</p> <p>eye<u>s</u> /aɪz/ ray<u>s</u> /reɪz/ leave<u>s</u> /li:vz/ increase<u>s</u> /ɪn'kri:sɪz/ brush<u>es</u> /'brʌʃɪz/ church<u>es</u> /tʃɜ:tʃɪz/ change<u>s</u> /tʃeɪndʒɪz/ sabotage<u>s</u> /'sæbətɑ:ʒɪz/</p>
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## Vowels

Front	Mid	Back	Diphthongs	
ɪ	ɜ:	ʊ	eə	ɪə
i:	ə	u:	əʊ	aɪ
e	ʌ	ɒ	aʊ	eɪ
æ		d:	ʊə	ɔɪ
		ɔ:		
			<b>plural: /z/</b>	

## Consonants

voiceless

t	p	k	f	θ
<b>plural: /s/</b>				

ʃ    tʃ    s    h

Voiced

d	b	g	v	ð
	l	r	j	w
<b>plural: /z/</b>				

ʒ    dʒ    z

**plural: /ɪz/**

m	n	ŋ
<b>plural: /z/</b>		

/s/**before voiceless consonants****/k/, /t/, /p/, /f/, /θ/****before /k/****letter 'k'**askbriskmosque**letters 'sc'**describeprescribeinscribeescalatebiscuitrescue**letters 'sc' (silent 'c')**descendrescindscpticdisciplineprescience**before /t/**costinterstrestrictrestinstallapostle (silent 't')bristle (silent 't')epistle (silent 't')jostle (silent 't')whistle (silent 't')**before /p/**correspondcrispdespitedespairrespectinspiretransparent**before /f/**atmosfereblasfemetransfer    satisfy/z/**before voiced consonants****/g/, /d/, /b/, /v/, /m/****before /g/**Glasgowtransgress**before /d/**wisdomTuesday/Wednesday/Thursday**exception, /s/:**jurisdiction (after /ə/)**before /b/**dogsbodyBrisbaneFrisbeehusbandlesbianraspberry (silent 'p', consonant cluster)**before /v/**transversetransvestite

**/s/****before /θ/**

aesthetic  
 anaesthesia  
 prosthesis  
 asthma /'æsmə/(UK) [consonant cluster] ↔ asthma /'æzmə/(US)

**/z/****before /m/**

abysmal                      plasma  
 charisma                      Jasmine  
 dismal                      Tasmania

**after voiced consonants****after /b/**

absent  
 absurd  
 absolute  
 obsess  
 obsolete

**exception, /z/:**

absorb  
 absolve  
 observe → observant

**after voiced consonants****after /l/****in the middle of a word**

Alsatian  
 also  
 balsam  
 bolster  
 Celsius  
 compulsory  
 emulsify  
 solstice

**at the end of a word**

else  
 convulse  
 false  
 pulse  
 impulse  
 repulse

/s/**after /n/****in the middle of a word**

answer          intrinsic  
 censor          insane  
 counsel          insight  
 ensue          **insist**  
 ensemble        insult  
 enslave          onslaught  
 extrinsic        ransom      forensic

**at the end of a word**

condense                      immense  
 expense                        license  
 suspense                        tense  
 defense → defensible  
 disense → disensable  
 response → responsible  
 sensse → senssible, nonsenssical

**exception, /z/:**

cleanse

/z/**after prefix 'tran-'**

transceiver (followed by a silent 'c')  
 transcend (followed by a silent 'c')  
 transcribe (followed by /k/)  
**transit**  
 transept  
 transfer (followed by /f/)  
 transfigure (followed by /f/)  
 transfix (followed by /f/)  
 transfusion (followed by /f/)  
 transpire (followed by /p/)  
 transplant (followed by /p/)  
 transport (followed by /p/)  
 transparent (followed by /p/)

**after prefix 'tran-'**

transact  
 transgenic (followed by /dʒ/)  
 transgender (followed by /dʒ/)  
**transistor**  
 transient  
 transgress (followed by /g/)

**'s' between two voiced consonants**

tran <u>sl</u> ate (US,UK)	tran <u>sl</u> ate (US, UK)
tran <u>sl</u> iterate (US)	tran <u>sl</u> iterate (UK)
tran <u>sl</u> ucent (US)	tran <u>sl</u> ucent (UK)
tran <u>sm</u> migrate (US)	tran <u>sm</u> migrate (UK)
tran <u>sm</u> it (US)	tran <u>sm</u> it (UK)
tran <u>sm</u> ute (US)	tran <u>sm</u> ute (UK)
tran <u>sv</u> erse (US)	tran <u>sv</u> erse (UK)

**/s/****after vowels****after /ə/****in the middle of a word**

asleep  
 jurisdiction  
 legislate  
 persist  
 persuade  
 persnickety  
 pursue  
 pursuant  
 pursit  
 philosophical

**at the end of a word**

alias	circus	
apparatus	crisis /'kraɪsɪs/	
atlas	focus	
bias	fungus	
cactus	genius	
Celsius	radius	
census	purpose	Christmas

**exception, /z/:**

berserk /bə'zɜ:k/

**after /ʌ/**

us	thus
bus	muscle
pus	hustle
plus	

**exception, /z/:** muslin /'mʌzlɪn/

**/z/****after vowels****after /i:/****in the middle of a word**

amnesia  
 diesel  
 geyser  
 Indonesia /,ɪndə'ni:ziə/(or /,ɪndə'ni:zə/)  
 Jesus /,dʒi:.zəs/  
 measly, measles  
 reason  
 season  
 weasel  
 anaesthesia  
 synaesthesia  
 magnesium  
 magnesia

**Others:**

feasible      visa /'vi:zə/

**at the end of a word**

Piscesz /'paɪsi:z/  
 crisesz /'kraɪsi:z/

**/s/****after /p/**

chaos /'keɪɒs/

cosmos /'kɒzməs/ (1<sup>st</sup> 's' followed by /m/)

curiosity /,kjʊəri'ɒsəti/

kudos /'kju:dəs/

pathos /'peɪθɒs/

philosophy /fə'lɒsəfi/

**/z/****after /ɑ:/**

arson

parson

parsley

sparse

**exception, /z/:**

vase (UK)

**after /ɜ:/****in the middle of a word**

versus

diversify

persevere

**after /u:/****in the middle of a word**

enthusiasm

muesli

museum

music

**at the end of a word**

verse      curse

adverse      disburse

averse      reimburse

converse      disperse

diverse      hearse

inverse      immerse

perverse      nurse

transverse      purse

traverse      terse

universe      worse

reverse → reversible

**exception, /z/:**

masseuse /mæ'sɜ:z/



/s/**'se' at the end of a word**after /i:/ceasecreasedecease /dɪ'si:s/decreaseincreaseleasereleasegreasegeeseafter /ɔ:/, spelling 'or', 'oar', 'our'coarsecoursehoarsehorseendorseremorsegorse*Others:*corsair (n)corset (n)dorsal (adj)torso (n)after /u:/use (n)abstruse (adj)abuse (n)excuse (n)refuse (n)loose (adj)goose (n)moose (n)noose (n)profuse (adj)obtuse (adj)recluse (n)/z/after /i:/theseChinesedisease /dɪ'zi:z/easeappeasepleaseteaseexpertisecheese

others:

faeces /'fi:si:z/

after /ɔ:/, spelling 'au'causepausebecauseapplauseclause*Others:*nausea (n) → ad nauseamplausibleSanta Clausafter /ɔɪ/noise → noisypoiseturquoiseafter /u:/use (v) → usableruse (\*\*n)abuse (v)excuse (v)refuse (v)lose (v)choose (v)accuse (v)amuse (v)confuse (v)defuse (v)diffuse (v)infuse (v)bruise (v)(n) cruise (v)(n)

**/s/****after /aɪ/***(note the subtle change of /aɪ/)*

concise (adj)  
 precise (adj)  
 paradise (n)

*Others:*

isolate (v) /'aɪsələt/  
 Pisces (n) /'paɪsɪz/  
 crisis (n) /'kraɪsɪs/

**after /aʊ/**

dowse, douse (v)  
 grouse (n) (v)  
 mouse (n)  
 house (n)  
 spouse (n)  
 louse (n)(v)

**/z/****after /aɪ/***mainly verbs*

advert <u>ise</u>	enterpr <u>ise</u> (n)
adv <u>ise</u>	exerc <u>ise</u> (v)(n)
agon <u>ise</u>	familiar <u>ise</u>
bapt <u>ise</u>	franch <u>ise</u>
comprom <u>ise</u>	harmon <u>ise</u>
custom <u>ise</u>	improv <u>ise</u>
crystal <u>ise</u>	inc <u>ise</u>
dev <u>ise</u>	rev <u>ise</u>
desp <u>ise</u>	ri <u>se</u>
gu <u>ise</u> (n)	pr <u>ise</u>
disgu <u>ise</u>	surpr <u>ise</u> (v)(n)
empath <u>ise</u>	wi <u>se</u> (adj)
emphas <u>ise</u>	

-wise: (suffix)

crabwise, crosswise, clockwise*Others:*

miser (n) /'maɪzə(r)/  
 visor (n) /'vaɪzə(r)/

**after /aʊ/**

dowse, douse (v)  
 drowse (v)  
 browse (v)  
 house (v)  
 spouse (\*\*n)  
 blouse (\*\*n)  
 rouse (v)  
 arouse (v)

*Others:*

trousers      thousand

/s/after /əʊ/

close (adj)

dose (n)

verbose (adj)

dextrose (n)

glucose (n)

lactose (n)

moroze (adj)

after /eɪ/

case (n)

chase (\*\*v)

erase (US) (\*\*v)

vase (US) (n)

base (n)(v) → basic

*Others:*

basin (n)

/z/after /əʊ/

close (v) → closet

choze (v)

hoze (n)(v)

roze (n)(v)

noze (\*\*n)

aroz (v)

proz (\*\*n)

diagnoze (v)

expose (v) → exposition /,ekspə'zɪʃn/

pose (v) → positive /'pɒzətɪv/, position /pə'zɪʃ(ə)n/

depose (v) → deposit /dɪ'pɒzɪt/, deposition /,depə'zɪʃn/

compose (v) → composition /,kɒmpə'zɪʃn/

dispose (v) → disposable, disposition /,dɪspə'zɪʃn/

impose (v) → imposition /,ɪmpə'zɪʃn/

juxtapose (v) → juxtaposition /,dʒʌkstəpə'zɪʃn/

propose (v) → proposition /,prɒpə'zɪʃn/

oppose (v) → opposition /,ɒpə'zɪʃn/

suppose (v) → supposition /,sʌpə'zɪʃn/

*Others:*

agnosia (n)

after /eɪ/

phase(v)(n)

phrase (\*\*n)

erase (UK) (v)

vase (US) (\*\*n)

raise (v)

braise (v)

praise (v)

appraise (v)

liaise (v)

tase (v)

*Others:*

laser (n), nasal (adj)

/s/**suffixes**'ics' /ɪks/

aerobics  
 politics  
 basics  
 logistics  
 dynamics

'ous' /əs/

ambitious  
 ambiguous  
 anxious  
 atrocious  
 callous  
 conscious  
 courteous  
 dubious  
 fallacious  
 generous  
 gorgeous  
 tedious

'sive' /sɪv/

adhesive  
 cohesive  
 corrosive  
 decisive  
 incisive  
 invasive  
 persuasive  
 repulsive

/z/**suffixes**'ism' /ɪz(ə)m/

absenteeism  
 altruism  
 antagonism  
 aphorism  
 autism  
 capitalism  
 communism  
 criticism  
 cubism  
 egoism  
 materialism  
 mechanism

'sium' /zi(ə)m/

gymnasium  
 magnesium  
 symposium

'sy' /zi/

busy  
 clumsy  
 drowsy  
 flimsy  
 jersey (silent 'e')  
 mosey (silent 'e')  
 nosy  
 palsy  
 rosy  
 woodsy  
 whimsy → whimsical

**exception, /s/:**

antsy /'æntsi/ (after /t/)

'ible' /əb(ə)l/

feasible (after /i:/)  
 plausible (after /ɔ:/ with the spelling 'au')  
 divisible /dɪ'vɪzəb(ə)l/ ← division /dɪ'vɪz(ə)n/

/s/

**suffixes**

'sis' /sɪs/

analysis

apotheisis

diagnosis

emphasis

hypothesis

hypnosisis

nemesisis

stasisis

/z/

**suffixes**

'san' /zæn/

artisan

partisan

courtesan

*exception, /s/:*

diocessan /daɪ'ɒsɪsn/

Kitty Lam

/s/**after prefixes****'de'**/di:/

desalinate  
deselect  
desegregate  
desensitise

**'re'**/ri:/

resale  
resell  
reset  
resit  
resurface

**'pre'**/pri:/

preseason (adj)  
presuppose (v)  
preset (v)  
presell (v)  
presale (n)

**'dis'**/dis/

dissimilar  
dissatisfied

/z/**after non-prefixes**/dɪ/

desert (v)  
deserve  
design  
deseire  
deseist

/rɪ/

resemble  
resent  
reserve  
reside  
resign  
resilience  
resist  
reseolve  
resund  
reseource  
result  
resume

/dɪ/

disaster  
disease

/de/

desert (n)  
designate

*exception, /s/:*

desolate

/re/

reservoir  
residuer  
reseolute  
reseonance  
resurrer

*exception, /s/:*

research (v) /rɪ'sɜ:(r)tʃ/  
research (n) /'ri:sɜ:tʃ/ /rɪ'sɜ:(r)tʃ/  
resurgent (adj) /rɪ'sɜ:dʒənt/  
resuscitate (v) /rɪ'sʌsɪteɪt/

/pre/

present (n)(adj)

*exception, /s/:*

preseage (v) /'presɪdʒ/

/s/**after prefixes****'con'** [after /n/]conserveconsensusconsentconsiderconsignconsoleconsistconsumeconsult**'anti'**antisepticantisocial**'be'**besetbesidebesiegebesottedbeseech**'super'**supersedesupersizesuperstarsuperstate/z/**after non-prefixes****'un'** [after /n/]unsafeunsatisfiedunseenunsuitableunsigned**'sub'**subsetsubsistsubstancesubsidissubser

/z/

**between 2 vowels:  
(usually after a monophthong)**

cuiszine /kwɪ'zi:n/

miszery /'mɪzəri/

physziology /,fɪzi'ɒlədʒi/

physzics /'fɪzɪks/

peaszant /'pezn̩t/

pleaszant /'plezn̩t/

requiszite /'rekwɪzɪt/ → requiszition

euthanaszia /,ju:θə'neɪziə/

chaszm /'kæz(ə)m/

spaszm /'spæz(ə)m/

**between 2 consonants:**

dogszbody

eaveszdrop

groomszman

hogszhead

menszwear

transzlation

Louisziana

**compound nouns do not follow the above patterns:**

/s/

basesball

grandson

handsome

milestone

themselves

tombstone

/z/

cheeszecake

hoszepipe

hands-free

kinsfolk

saleszperson