10 top tips on how to help your child to learn their spellings:

1. 1. Highlight the hard bit.
2. Frequently, there will be one part of a word that trips up your child each time. Look at the word together and highlight the part that they find particularly tricky. For example:
3. N**igh**t  Sep**a**rate  W**a**s  Rec**ei**ve   W**ei**rd  
   W**ha**t   T**w**o   Fr**i**end   S**ai**d   Ch**ea**p
4. Or there may be two parts that need attention, for instance;
5. A**cc**o**mm**odate  A**dd**re**ss**   Ne**c**e**ss**ary
6. Once you’ve done the highlighting together, get them to write out the word again without looking. This time they’ll be more focused on getting that tricky bit right, and will be able to remember how it looks.
7. 2. Make the spelling stick
8. If one or two parts of a particular word just don’t seem to ‘sink in’ by simply highlighting them, try to think of other ways to help them stick.

For example:

1. With weird, people often get the i and e confused. Help by saying **we** are **we**ird, so your child remembers that **we** is the first part of the word.

For the double s in dessert: desserts are both **s**weet and **s**ugary.

For a word with two ‘tricky’ parts, like necessary, think **C**ats **E**at **S**alty **S**ardines to remember the c and the double s

3. Break it down

Try breaking down polysyllabic words to make each [syllable](http://www.theschoolrun.com/what-is-a-syllable) easier to remember. Your child might call these syllables ‘beats’. Help them decipher how many ‘beats’ or syllables there are in a word by clapping the word together, one clap per syllable.

So, for **two-syllable** words…  
Danger        Dan / ger  
Windmill      Wind / mill  
Option          Op / tion

And for **three-syllable** words…  
Relation      Re / la / tion  
Beautiful     Beau / ti / ful

It may help to segment the words into a chart like this:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Syllable 1** | **Syllable 2** | **Syllable 3** |
| Re | la | tion |
|  |  |

1. Look, cover, write check:

Another classic technique is known as ‘[Look, cover, Write and Check](http://www.theschoolrun.com/Look-Cover-Write-Check-explained)**’.**   
So, they **look**at the word...  
**Cover**the word...  
**Write**the word...  
And finally **check**it.

1. Create pictures in your mind:

It’s a well-researched memory trick: if you can conjure up a visual image, what you’re trying to remember (in this case spellings!) may come more readily.

For example, if your child is learning ‘bank’ but writing ‘banc’, help them remember it’s a ‘kicking K’ by saying, “I kicked my legs into the bank”. If they’re writing ‘cat’ as ‘kat’ remind them it’s a ‘curly c’ by saying, “The cat likes to curl up and go to sleep”.  Encourage your child to invent their own ways of remembering words; if they have thought up the image themselves, it will be a more powerful tool

1. Say it as it’s spelled

To remember **double s**, really stress and extend the sound: fussssssss.  
To remember **double z**, again stress and extend it: buzzzzzzzz.  
Same for **double e**: seeeeeeeeem.  
To remember **ea** instead of **ee**, pronounce it as two separate sounds: cre – a –m.

1. Make it an acrostic

(A popular way to learn spellings that are frequently spelt incorrectly).

Sometimes, visualising a difficult word in a different way can suddenly make it stick. Create a phrase from each letter of a word and turn it into an acrostic, which can be easier to remember than the word itself. Try these, or have your child make up their own!

**Because:**  
**B**ig  
**E**lephants  
**C**an  
**A**lways  
**U**nderstand  
**S**mall  
**E**lephants

**Ocean:** **O**nly **C**ats’ **E**yes **A**re **N**arrow  
**Rhythm:** **R**hythm **H**elps **Y**our **T**wo **H**ips **M**ove  
**Necessary:** **N**ever **E**at **C**hips **E**at **S**alad **S**andwiches **A**nd **R**aspberry **Y**oghurt

1. In the palm of your hands.

If your child is a [kinaesthetic learner](http://www.theschoolrun.com/learning-tips-kinaesthetic-learners) (in other words they learn best through doing), ask them to write each letter of the word into the palm of their hand or onto their leg with their finger. With enough repetitions, they’ll remember how the word felt to write (this is known as muscle memory).

1. Sing the word

Simply learn the word by saying or singing the letters out loud, developing a melody. This melody should then imprint in your child’s memory; if they forget a spelling they will still remember how the word’s rhythm and sound, which will serve as a prompt.

1. 30 second rule

Write the word out carefully then set a timer for 30 seconds. As it is counting down, see how many times you can accurately write down each word. After the 30 seconds ends, count how many times you have accurately spelt the word.