

What is a common exception word?

Common exception words are words where the usual spelling rule doesn't apply. As children come across unfamiliar spelling and sound patterns in tricky words, their phonics knowledge won't always help them to sound out and read the word; such as the common exception words "sugar", "improve", "climb" and "because". Some of these exception words are used frequently, so children are introduced to common exception words in Year 1 and Year 2. However some of these words will be introduced to children in Reception.

Children have a list of these words which they are expected to learn to read and spell by the end of each year in primary school. The following pages have a list of these words.



Year 1 Common Exception Words Checklist

Word	R	W	Word	R	W	Word	R	W
a			I			school		
are			is			she		
ask			love			so		
be			me			some		
by			my			the		
come			no			there		
do			of			they		
friend			once			to		
full			one			today		
go			our			was		
has			pull			we		
he			push			were		
here			put			where		
his			said			you		
house			says			your		
Including from Phonics: Phase 2 Phase 3 Phase 4								
all			into			out		
have			like			what		
her			little			when		

Year 2 Common Exception Words Checklist

Word	R	W	Word	R	W	Word	R	W
after			eye			only		
again			fast			parents		
any			father			pass		
bath			find			past		
beautiful			floor			path		
because			gold			people		
behind			grass			plant		
both			great			poor		
break			half			pretty		
busy			hold			prove		
child			hour			should		
children			improve			steak		
Christmas			kind			sugar		
class			last			sure		
climb			many			told		
clothes			mind			water		
cold			money			who		
could			most			whole		
door			move			wild		
even			Mr			would		
every			Mrs					
everybody			old					

Year 3 / 4 Common Exception Words Checklist

Word	R	W	Word	R	W	Word	R	W
accident			consider			group		
accidentally			continue			guard		
actual			decide			guide		
actually			describe			heard		
address			different			heart		
although			difficult			height		
answer			disappear			history		
appear			early			imagine		
arrive			earth			increase		
believe			eight			important		
bicycle			eighth			interest		
breath			enough			island		
build			exercise			knowledge		
busy			experience			learn		
business			extreme			length		
calendar			famous			library		
caught			favourite			material		
centre			February			medicine		
century			forward			mention		
certain			forwards			minute		
circle			fruit			natural		
complete			grammar			naughty		

Year 5 / 6 Common Exception Words Checklist

Word	R	W	Word	R	W	Word	R	W
accommodate			convenience			government		
accompany			correspond			guarantee		
according			criticise			harass		
aggressive			curiosity			hindrance		
amateur			definite			identity		
ancient			desperate			immediate		
apparent			develop			individual		
appreciate			dictionary			interfere		
available			disastrous			interrupt		
average			embarrass			language		
awkward			environment			leisure		
bargain			equipment			lightning		
bruise			equipped			marvellous		
category			especially			mischievous		
cemetery			exaggerate			muscle		
committee			excellent			necessary		
communicate			existence			neighbour		
community			explanation			nuisance		
competition			familiar			occupy		
conscience			foreign			occur		
conscious			forty			opportunity		
controversy			frequently			parliament		

