

ant - ent / ance - ence / ancy - ency

When learning how to spell this group of words here are some helpful tips:

- Consider whether you can link any of the words to similar 'ation' words. The a in these words is the clue. E.g hesitation - hesitant, observation - observant.
- Same rule applies to ance and ancy words. If you can link them to similar 'ation' words, then they are usually spelt with an a not e. E.g observation - observance, hesitation - hesitant - hesitancy.
- 'ent', 'ence' and 'ency' are normally used when the preceding letter is either a soft c (decent), soft g (regent) or qu (frequent).
- As with any other rules, there are always exceptions which just need to be learnt. Try emphasising the e or a when reading the words to help you recall the correct spelling.

ant

significant

important

applicant

fragrant

vacant

hesitant

assistant

observant

tolerant

attendant

brilliant

ance

significance

importance

fragrance

hesitance

assistance

observance

tolerance

attendance

brilliance

ancy

vacancy

hesitancy

disturbance

ent

ence

ency

ancient

agent

agency

decent

decency

frequent

frequency

benevolent

benevolence

regent

regency

student

confident

confidence

consequently

consequence

licence

emergent

emergence

emergency

urgent

urgency

tendency

dependent

dependency

independent

independence

independency

innocent

innocence

Exceptions

Assistant, assistance

Benevolent, benevolence