



Programming for Spelling

Alphabetical
Ordering

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Introduction

The ability to order words alphabetically is a pre-requisite skill for competent usage of any written reference material. As with any skill, alphabetical ordering needs to be taught in a systematic way starting with the easiest of tasks and progressing to the more difficult tasks.

Activities are structured as follows.

1. c-v-c, initial consonant blends, final consonant blends, digraphs
2. Progression from easiest tasks to hardest tasks
3. c-v-c words (e.g., 'nut') to complex digraph words (e.g., 'audacious')
4. Beginning exercises contain 3 words to be ordered, with subsequent exercises containing 4-8 words.
5. Beginning exercises include words that begin with *different* letters of the alphabet (e.g., 'nut', 'can', 'peg')
The next level of exercises contains words that start with the same first letter ('sway', 'spin', 'step').
The final level includes words that start with the same blends and digraphs (e.g., 'crab', 'cross', 'crust' and 'audience', 'audacious', 'auditor').

Steps for putting words into alphabetical order.

1. Underline the first letter in each word.
2. Underline the *same first letters* in the alphabet list.
3. Write the first, underlined letters (from the previous step) in a list, in the same order as they occur in the alphabet.
4. Fill in the rest of the words.
5. Hey presto! Alphabetical order!

Example

Put these words into alphabetical order - fan, kiss, bin.

Step 1 Underline the first letter in each word.

fan kiss bin

Step 2 Underline the same first letters in the alphabet list.

a b c d e f g h i j k l m

Step 3 Write the first letters in a list in the same order as they occur in the alphabet.

b _ _

f _ _

k _ _

Step 4 Fill in the rest of the words

bin

fan

kiss

Note If the words to be ordered start with the same letter, then underline the *second* letter.
If the words to be ordered start with the same initial consonant blend, then underline the *third* letter, etc.

c-v-c Words (whole alphabet – 3 words)

9.

red

tip

bus

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z

-- -- --

-- -- --

-- -- --

10.

well

jet

ram

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z

-- -- --

-- -- --

-- -- --

11.

ban

pig

fox

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z

-- -- --

-- -- --

-- -- --

12.

doll

rim

fun

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z

-- -- --

-- -- --

-- -- --

tw, fl, bl, gl (4 words)

9. blot glum floss twin

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z

-- -- -- --
-- -- -- --
-- -- -- --
-- -- -- --

10. such flog glad bliss

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z

-- -- -- --
-- -- -- --
-- -- -- --
-- -- -- --

11. chip twig flash bluff

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z

-- -- -- --
-- -- -- --
-- -- -- --
-- -- -- --

12. bled twig flip glum

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z

-- -- -- --
-- -- -- --
-- -- -- --
-- -- -- --

Step 1 If the words start with the same letter, underline the second letter in each word.

swag skip step

Step 2 Underline the second letters in the alphabet list.

k l m n o p q r s t u v w

Step 3 Write the second letters in a list in the same order as they occur in the alphabet.

s k _ _

s t _ _

s w _ _

Step 4 Fill in the rest of the words

skip

step

swag

Order by *second letter* in each word (3 Words)

Put these words into alphabetical order.

1. spin swam scab

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z

— — — —

— — — —

— — — —

2. skid stop smell

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z

— — — —

— — — —

— — — —

Lists that contain some words that begin with the same letter.

If two words in the list start with the same letter underline the *first* letter then put a box around the *second* letters in those two words.

Example:

Put these words into alphabetical order: force thorn flee short

Step 1 Underline the first letter in each word:
force thorn flee short

Step 2 Underline the same first letters in the alphabet list:

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z

(Because there are two words beginning with 'f', write the number '2' under 'f' in the alphabet.)

Step 3 When you get to a letter with a '2' under it you need to write that letter twice in the list:

f _ _ _
f _ _ _
s _ _ _
t _ _ _

Step 4 Now look at the two words that begin with the same letter:
 force flee

Put a box around the *second* letter in each word:

f o rce f l ee

Step 5 Put a box around the *second* letters in the alphabet

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z

Step 6 Write the second letters, in order, next to the same letters in the list.

f l _ _
f o _ _
s _ _ _
t _ _ _

Step 7 Fill in the rest of the words

f l e e
f o r c e
s h o r t
t h o r n

Digraphs: '-oi-', '-ow' (low), '-ea-' (5 words, one first letter is repeated in list)

1. heat low boil mow beat
a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z

--- --- -----
--- --- -----
--- --- -----
--- --- -----
--- --- -----

2. tow coil bead team oil
a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z

--- --- -----
--- --- -----
--- --- -----
--- --- -----
--- --- -----

3. join row leaf rear void
a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z

--- --- -----
--- --- -----
--- --- -----
--- --- -----
--- --- -----

4. show mean spoil throw beat
a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z

--- --- -----
--- --- -----
--- --- -----
--- --- -----
--- --- -----

5. team hoist grown throw noise
a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z

--- --- -----
--- --- -----
--- --- -----
--- --- -----
--- --- -----