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Today at 7:11 PM Today at 11:10 AM Yesterday at 2:30 PM Tuesday at 8:21 AM Sunday at 7:28 PM Jun 12, 2025 Jun 12, 2025 Jun 11, 2025 Jun 4, 2025 Jun 4, 2025 Jun 1, 2025 May 27, 2025 May 27, 2025 May 26, 2025 May 26, 2025 May 24, 2025 May 24, 2025 Page 2 May 21, 2025 May 18, 2025 May 16, 2025 May 15, 2025 May 6, 2025 May 5, 2025 Page 3 Apr 29, 2025 Apr 27, 2025 Apr 14, 2025 Apr 13, 2025 Apr 11, 2025 Apr 10, 2025 Page 4 Apr 6, 2025 Apr 4, 2025 Apr 4, 2025 Apr 4, 2025 Apr 4, 2025 Apr 1, 2025 Mar 29, 2025 Mar 29, 2025 Mar 28, 2025 Mar 26, 2025 Mar 26, 2025 Mar 25, 2025 Mar 25, 2025 Mar 24, 2025 Mar 24, 2025 Mar 24, 2025 Mar 20, 2025 Mar 20, 2025 Page 5 Mar 17, 2025 Mar 17, 2025 Mar 8, 2025 Feb 22, 2025 Feb 21, 2025 Feb 21, 2025 Feb 20, 2025 Page 6 Feb 17, 2025 Feb 15, 2025 Feb 13, 2025 Feb 4, 2025 Feb 2, 2025 Feb 2, 2025 Jan 30, 2025 Jan 28, 2025 Jan 21, 2025 Jan 10, 2025 Jan 9, 2025 Jan 9, 2025 Page 7 Dec 23, 2024 Dec 20, 2024 Dec 10, 2024 Dec 3, 2024 Nov 29, 2024 Page 8 Nov 24, 2024 Nov 22, 2024 Nov 21, 2024 Nov 16, 2024 Nov 12, 2024 Nov 7, 2024 Nov 4, 2024 Oct 31, 2024 Oct 30, 2024 Oct 28, 2024 Page 9 Oct 27, 2024 Oct 12, 2024 Oct 10, 2024 Oct 9, 2024 Sep 27, 2024 Sep 26, 2024 Sep 25, 2024 Page 10 Sep 22, 2024 Sep 22, 2024 Sep 21, 2024 Sep 20, 2024 Sep 11, 2024 Sep 10, 2024 Sep 1, 2024 Aug 30, 2024 Page 11 Aug 25, 2024 Aug 19, 2024 Aug 18, 2024 Aug 10, 2024 Aug 10, 2024 Aug 9, 2024 Page 12 Jul 18, 2024 Jul 17, 2024 Jul 16, 2024 Jul 2, 2024 Page 13 Jun 21, 2024 Jun 19, 2024 Jun 18, 2024 Jun 18, 2024 Jun 17, 2024 Page 14 May 29, 2024 May 27, 2024 May 27, 2024 May 24, 2024 May 19, 2024 May 18, 2024 May 15, 2024 Page 15 May 15, 2024 May 13, 2024 May 1, 2024 Apr 24, 2024 Apr 18, 2024 Apr 10, 2024 Page 16 Apr 7, 2024 Mar 29, 2024 Mar 28, 2024 Mar 28, 2024 Mar 25, 2024 Mar 21, 2024 Page 17 Mar 19, 2024 Mar 17, 2024 Mar 17, 2024 Mar 16, 2024 Mar 6, 2024 Mar 3, 2024 Feb 28, 2024 Feb 28, 2024 Feb 27, 2024 Page 18 Feb 24, 2024 Feb 24, 2024 Feb 22, 2024 Feb 22, 2024 Feb 17, 2024 Feb 12, 2024 Feb 7, 2024 Page 19 Feb 5, 2024 Feb 3, 2024 Feb 2, 2024 Jan 30, 2024 Jan 26, 2024 Jan 25, 2024 Jan 23, 2024 Page 20 Jan 15, 2024 Jan 5, 2024 Dec 25, 2023 Dec 25, 2023 Dec 19, 2023 Dec 18, 2023 Dec 12, 2023 Dec 6, 2023 Page 22 Nov 25, 2023 Nov 25, 2023 Nov 21, 2023 Nov 20, 2023 Nov 19, 2023 Nov 18, 2023 Nov 17, 2023 Nov 17, 2023 Nov 13, 2023 Page 23 Nov 13, 2023 Nov 12, 2023 Oct 23, 2023 Oct 20, 2023 Page 24 Oct 13, 2023 Oct 13, 2023 Oct 12, 2023 Oct 8, 2023 Oct 4, 2023 Sep 21, 2023 Sep 20, 2023 Page 25 Sep 17, 2023 Sep 16, 2023 Sep 10, 2023 Aug 26, 2023 Page 26 Aug 17, 2023 Aug 3, 2023 Aug 2, 2023 Jul 27, 2023 Which is correct? Are both suddenly OK to use? I would always use focusing, but my computer does not correct focussing. Is this something that has crept in from American English or vice versa?? Thanks if anyone can answer this for me! Welcome, Helen Even the (Compact) Oxford English Dictionary gives verb (focused, focusing or focussed, focussing) so it would appear it's a matter of personal preference. Like you I'd always go, though, for focused myself - because that agrees with the usual stress-based rule (enter - entered versus refer - referred, etc.) F Just informationally, I have never seen the word spelled as focussing. That looks very strange to me. Focusing looks better to me and focused, not focussed. Noun: focus and focuses and focussing Verb: focus, focuses or focusses, focusing or focussed, focused or focussed. I've used both forms, but when I'm more conscious with spelling then I use the ones with the extra 's'. Don't exactly know why when both forms are correct. I guess I just want to conform to the rule of consonant-vowel-consonant + the last consonant + the verb inflection(s). Actually I think it's American English that has created this shortcut spelling. In my mind the correct spelling is "focussing" and I learned to read over 40 years ago, so the single "s" is newer. In this case, it is BrE that allows the option of -ss- or -s-. AmE only allows -s-. Similarly, you can write biased or biased. There is actually a spelling rule for this. In British English when a 2 syllable word has the accent on the second syllable and the word ends in one vowel and one consonant (as in focus / travel etc), you must double the last consonant. As far as I am aware American English doesn't apply this rule which is why it uses focusing / traveling and so on. There is actually a spelling rule for this. In British English when a 2 syllable word has the accent on the second syllable and the word ends in one vowel and one consonant (as in focus / travel etc), you must double the last consonant. As far as I am aware American English doesn't apply this rule which is why it uses focussing / traveling and so on. I can't comment on this "rule" but it seems to me that the stress in "focus" is on the first syllable, not the second. I have always written "focused", for what it is worth. I can't comment on this "rule" but it seems to me that the stress in "focus" is on the first syllable, not the second. I have always written "focused", for what it is worth. This is a valid spelling/phonetic rule, honest. Most 2 syllable words when they are nouns or adjectives have the stress on the first syllable, but the stress usually moves to the second syllable when the word becomes a verb. Unfortunately I don't have a dictionary to hand to confirm if this is the case with "focus". Well, my dictionary does not indicate that the verb is pronounced differently from the noun. The second syllable is a schwa, and English does not admit schwas as stressed syllables. I have never heard anyone give second-syllable stress to the verb "focus". Thank you for that. Hi everyone, there is a rule about stressed syllables, but it doesn't apply in this case. That is the rule that makes us write opening with one 'n' (because stress is on the 'oh' part at the beginning), but beginning with double 'n' (because stress is on the 'gin' part (second syllable)) However, in British English we spell two syllable verbs ending in 'l' or 'r' with a double letter in gerund or regular past simple or past participle, even if stress is on the first syllable: travelling, travelled, cancelling, cancelled, referring, referred, preferring, preferred. In the same way we write 'focussing' and 'focussed', although I can't think of any other two syllable verbs ending in single 's' to make a more general rule of it! I do use 'focussing', and 'focussed' and I stress the first syllable. (And I suppose I do it because I can! ) However, 'referring', 'preferring', etc receive second-syllable stress for me. Sorry, yes, you're quite right about refer and prefer. The same would also apply to occur and concur. I guess an example I could have used for the same spelling with first syllable stress could be offer - offering, offered. Thanks for pointing this out I'd write those as offering and offered, Kris. I'd write those as offering and offered, Kris. Yes, so would many others, even in the UK, but I think this is something that has come from America, like preferred, travel and focused. American English, through the mass media, has a huge effect on British English, so much so that a billion has been devalued by a power of 1000 over the last few decades! In Latin languages it still means a million million, as it used to in English, but now, even on the BBC, thanks to American English, it is only a thousand million (which Latin languages usually call a 'milliard'). I am surprised that no one has mentioned the pronunciation of the 's', which is like 'nonplussed' rather than 'amused', hence my inclination to write 'focussed'! The pronunciation of the 's' in 'amuse' is due to the presence of the final 'e'. And, precisely because of the final 'e', 'amuse' does not form part of the discussion about doubling the final consonant. Thanks for this most knowledgeable and comprehensive discussion. I have been struggling for the better part of a day to find an authoritative, repeatable rule for doubling the final consonant of an English word when adding a suffix beginning with a vowel. In particular, the troublesome focus. This thread has given me the ammo I need. Cheers! HJK I speak the Australian variant of English, and Down Under we tend to use British English spelling but are fully cognizant of US spellings. In this particular case, it's not a matter of where the stress. It's all to do with whether or not the "s" sound is sibilant (as with a hissing snake) or like the "z" sound in words like "amaze" and "zoo" to pick a couple. It will come to you as you pronounce words such as "hosing" or "closing" versus "tossing" or "flossing" where the intention of the "ss" spelling is to indicate that the sound is sibilant. Aussies and Brits are taught to use the "ss" spelling. Ah, the fun of becoming attuned to the different spellings and sounds of English language variants and dialects. Look up "sibilant" in Wikipedia or elsewhere. In this particular case, it's not a matter of where the stress. It's all to do with whether or not the "s" sound is sibilant (as with a hissing snake) or like the "z" sound in words like "amaze" and "zoo" to pick a couple. How does that work with "focussing" and "focusing", both of which are pronounced the same, and not, in my experience, with the "z" sound of "hosing"? The OED observes: Against the broad rule that final consonants are not doubled after short unstressed vowels, inflected forms with -ss- are attested, especially in British English, but are nonetheless considerably rarer in current usage than forms without doubled final consonant; in the British National Corpus, the ratio of -ss- forms to -s- forms is about nine to one. P. Peters Cambridge Guide Eng. Usage (2004) notes that in a recent language usage survey in the United Kingdom, over 75% of respondents endorsed single-s inflected forms. This ngram also makes the point focussed,focused,focussing,focusing in British English. I do not use the "ss" spelling, and I was not taught to do so. Okay, okay, I will throw in the towel at this point! It's all getting too messy for me. I suppose that there's a fair degree of pointlessness (or should that be "pointlessness") in being too pedantic. The only important thing is to get the message across. Id say focussed, personally, but either is acceptable in the UK. My parents would disagree and say focused, so it can't even be put down to a difference between BE and AE! I think the problem here is that there are very few verbs ending with consonant-vowel-s that we can study in order to extract a rule. I can only say that to me "focussed" would sound like "discussed". It is generally considered that doubling the final "s" when forming the plural is a mistake, as in "busses" or "gasses". No one thinks that with a single "s" "buses" would rhyme with "amuses" or "gases" would rhyme with "erases". Still, let's not lose sleep over it... Happy New Year everyone! As a former elementary school teacher in the USA, I taught my pupils that if a 1-syllable word ends with a single vowel and single consonant, you double the last consonant before adding ed or ing. If a 2-syllable word ends with a single vowel and single consonant, you double the consonant if the accent is on the second syllable. So, for example, the word ban would be banned/banning; the word gab would be gabbed/gabbing. If a 2-syllable word ends with the one vowel-one consonant pattern, you double the final consonant only if the second syllable is accented. For example, regret would be regretted/regretting and refer would be referred/referring. But if the accent is on the first syllable, you do not double the final consonant. Examples: cancel becomes canceled/canceling and budget becomes budgeted/budgeting. This is learned in the lower grades and in my experience holds well for most writing even as a senior citizen. Of course, I recognize that alternate spellings are also considered correct at times. I usually check a dictionary. The problem is we really have two rules at play here: the first rule is that if the final syllable is unstressed there is no need to double the final consonant in the United States. The second rule, which is in conflict with the first, says that an s between two vowels is pronounced as a z and that as a consequence in order to preserve the s sound one must double the consonant.. Thus there is a conflict between the two rules and the British have chosen to go one way while the Yanks the other. Typical! Afterthought: with buses and gases clearly the whole rulebook has been thrown out the window! Not to mention arcing, my personal favorite! All this clearly demonstrates that language is not math. Promise, premise, divisive, elusive - there are quite a few exceptions to the rule you cite. In any case, the focused, focussed etc preference of one s was not the original preference, even in AE, so rules change and probably at different speeds for different examples. Gasses has never been popular while busses was originally favoured over buses in AE more than in BE. Where the accent does NOT fall on the (original, multisyllable word's) final syllable (...vowel+consonant), there is simply no need to double that consonant; there is no point to it. Don't do it. (Unless you're a speaker of BrE and the consonant is - . AmE is much more logical!) Skip to main content Reddit and its partners use cookies and similar technologies to provide you with a better experience. By accepting all cookies, you agree to our use of cookies to deliver and maintain our services and site, improve the quality of Reddit, personalize Reddit content and advertising, and measure the effectiveness of advertising. By rejecting non-essential cookies, Reddit may still use certain cookies to ensure the proper functionality of our platform. For more information, please see our Cookie Notice and our Privacy Policy. Verb tenses, conjugation, agreement, prepositions, articles, pronouns, etc., in English and in French. No other languages allowed here. Conjugaison, accords, prpositions, dterminants, pronoms, etc., en franais et en anglais. Aucune autre langue autorise ici. Page 2 Verb tenses, conjugation, agreement, prepositions, articles, pronouns, etc., in English and in French. No other languages allowed here. Conjugaison, accords, prpositions, dterminants, pronoms, etc., en franais et en anglais. Aucune autre langue autorise ici. 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Which reference book contains a complete listing of synonyms and antonyms.