



Soft C and Soft G: look at the next letter

Point at the letter **right after** the c or g.
e, i or y next? It is usually **soft**. a, o, u, l, r, or the end of the word? It is **hard**.

c

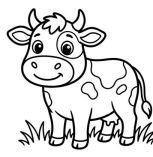
c has two sounds

hard c says /k/

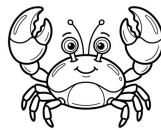
before a, o, u, l, r
or at the end



cat



cow



crab

soft c says /s/

before **e i y**



race



mice on ice

city • cent • cycle • face • rice

Before e, i or y, c is **almost always** soft.

g

g has two sounds

hard g says /g/

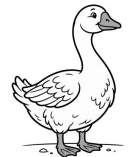
before a, o, u, l, r
or at the end



gate



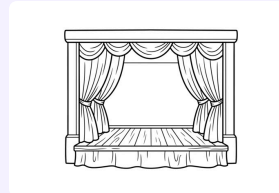
goat



goose

soft g says /j/

before **e i y**



stage



gem in a cage

gem • giant • gym • huge • page

Before e, i or y, g is **usually** soft. It is dependable when a word ends in ge: cage, huge, large.

Teams make their own sound

ch in chip and chance, **ng** in sing and king.

Need /k/ before e, i or y? Use k.

kit, kite, keep, key, sky



girl

Rule breakers. Hard g before e or i: **get, give, girl, gift.**

Hard c before e: **soccer** (its cc says /k/).



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Soft C and Soft G Words List

In every word in the two lists, the highlighted c or g comes right before e, i or y, so it is **soft: c says /s/, g says /j/**. Start with the top row, the words that end in ce or ge. Check off each word your child reads.

Soft c words ce, ci, cy

At the end, after a long vowel (face, mice)

- ☐ face ☐ race ☐ lace ☐ space
☐ place ☐ grace ☐ trace ☐ ice
☐ mice ☐ rice ☐ nice ☐ dice
☐ slice ☐ twice ☐ price

At the end, after n (dance, fence)

- ☐ dance ☐ chance ☐ glance
☐ fence ☐ prince ☐ since

At the start (cent, city)

- ☐ cent ☐ cell ☐ city ☐ cycle
☐ center

Longer words (pencil, circle)

- ☐ pencil ☐ circle ☐ circus ☐ bicycle
☐ fancy ☐ cereal

circle, circus, cycle and bicycle have both sounds: soft c before i or y, hard c before l or u.

Soft g words ge, gi, gy

At the end, after a long vowel (cage, huge)

- ☐ age ☐ cage ☐ page ☐ rage
☐ wage ☐ stage ☐ huge ☐ change
☐ range ☐ strange

In change, range and strange the a stays long even though an n comes before the g.

At the end, after n or r (hinge, large)

- ☐ hinge ☐ fringe ☐ plunge ☐ large
☐ charge

At the start (gem, giant)

- ☐ gem ☐ gel ☐ gym ☐ germ
☐ giant

At the start, g is less dependable: see the rule breakers on page 1.

Longer words (giraffe, magic)

- ☐ giraffe ☐ magic ☐ gentle
☐ ginger ☐ orange ☐ energy
☐ danger ☐ engine

Add an e: one letter, two changes

The e makes the vowel long **and** the g soft, both at once.

rag to rage hug to huge stag to stage wag to wage



stag

stage

Later: -dge after a short vowel

Right after a short vowel at the end of a one-syllable word, /j/ is spelled dge. That is a later lesson.

badge • edge • bridge • fudge • judge • hedge • ledge • ridge



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Hard or Soft?

1. Sort the words

Read each word. **Circle the letter right after the c or g.** Write the word in its box. ★ = a rule breaker (hard g).

cent gate cup gym face goat crab huge
get★ city cot page cell girl★ cat gem

hard c says /k/

soft c says /s/

hard g says /g/

soft g says /j/

2. Add an e Write the new word. Read both words out loud. What changed?

rag + e = _____

hug + e = _____

stag + e = _____

wag + e = _____

3. Read it out loud

1. Mice race on ice.

2. Grace has a nice face.

3. The stage is huge.

4. Place the cage on the stage.

Answer key. 1. Hard c: cat, cup, crab, cot. Soft c: cent, city, face, cell. Hard g: gate, goat, get, girl (get and girl are rule breakers). Soft g: gem, gym, huge, page. Circled letters: e, i or y in every soft word; a, o, u or r in every hard word, except get (e) and girl (i). 2. rage, huge, stage, wage.



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