

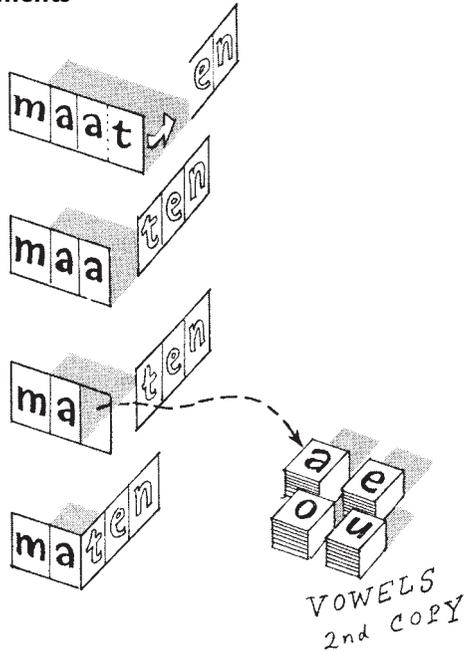
Making the spelling adjustments

putting an ending (most often -e, -en, -er) onto a syllable that contains a vowel spelled with two letters –

an ending beginning with -e attracts a consonant to it and a two-letter vowel gives one up easily, so the consonant 'turns the corner' –

but now the second of two identical vowels becomes superfluous, so it is stored away (to give back when we take the ending off again) –

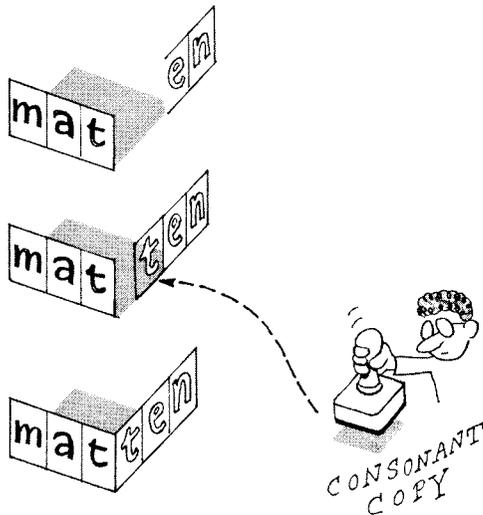
resulting in this economical spelling.

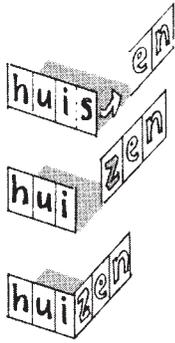


putting an ending onto a syllable containing a vowel spelled with one letter –

the ending still attracts a consonant to it, but a one-letter vowel holds onto the consonant –

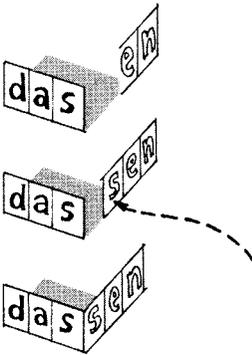
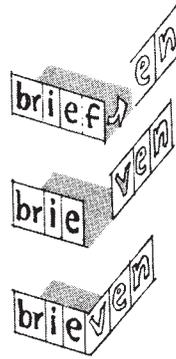
so a second copy of that consonant is brought in from storage (where we put it back when we take the ending off again).



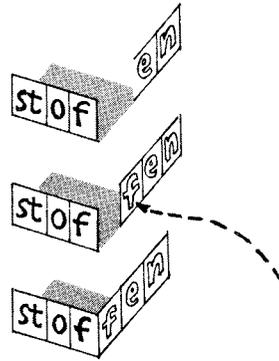


when an **s** or **f** “turns the corner” (after any two-letter vowel) –

it normally turns into a **z** or **v**.



but when an **s** or **f** doesn’t “turn the corner” (after any one-letter vowel), it stays the same and has the usual copy brought in.



Chapter 3

The plural

The plural of nouns in Dutch is roughly divided up into three groups: plural ending *-en*, plural ending *-s* and other plurals.

3.1 The plural in *-en*

The regular sign of the plural is *-en*.

3.1.1 Note

The spelling rules given in the preceding chapter are applied.

krant	kranten	newspapers	(no change)
boer	boeren	farmers	(no change)
woord	woorden	words	(no change)
fles	flessen	bottles	(double consonant after short vowel)
boot	boten	boats	(single vowel in open syllable)
prijs	prijzen	prices	(s replaced by z)
bos	bossen	forests	(double consonant after short vowel)
mens	mensen	people	(no change)
brief	brieven	letters	(f replaced by v)
fotograaf	fotografen	photographers	(single vowel in open syllable)

3.1.2 Irregularities

- 1 A small number of very frequently occurring words do have a different vowel quality in the plural. A short vowel in the singular becomes a long vowel in the plural, marked by the single consonant following it:

bad	baden	baths
dag	dagen	days
dak	daken	roofs
gat	gaten	holes
glas	glazen	glasses
weg	wegen	ways
oorlog	oorlogen	wars
god	goden	gods
bedrag	bedragen	amount
verdrag	verdragen	treaties

Within this type there are three exceptions:

stad	steden	cities
schip	schepen	ships
lid	leden	members

Note: The change in vowel is still from short vowel in the singular to long vowel in the plural.

- 2 Another small group forms the plural by adding **-eren**:

been	beenderen	bones	but: been	benen	legs
blad	bladeren	leaves	but: blad	bladen	trays, sheets
ei	eieren	eggs			
kind	kinderen	children			
lied	liederen	songs			
volk	volkeren	peoples			

3.2 The plural in -s

Another common sign of the plural is -s, used with a considerable number of words. There are three main groups:

- 1 Most words ending in unstressed -el, -em, -en, -er, -aar, -erd, -e:

tafel	tafels	tables
bezem	bezems	brooms
deken	dekens	blankets
bakker	bakkers	bakers
leraar	leraren (leraars)	teachers
engerd	engerds	creeps
tante	tantes	aunts
studente	studentes	(female) students

- 2 All diminutives, marked by their ending -je (see Chapter 22):

huisje	huisjes	little houses
dubbeltje	dubbeltjes	10-cent coins
meisje	meisjes	girls

- 3 Many words originally of foreign origin, often ending in a vowel. When the vowel is a, i, o, u or y, an apostrophe is inserted:

firma	firma's	firms
paprika	paprika's	sweet peppers
taxi	taxi's	taxicabs
auto	auto's	cars
foto	foto's	pictures
paraplu	paraplu's	umbrellas
baby	baby's	babies
hobby	hobby's	hobbies