



SUFFIXES IN AMERICAN
AND BRITISH ENGLISH:
IZ, IS, YZ AND YS VARIANTS

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Acceptable variants

The majority of verbs that can be spelled with -iz- can also take -is- in British English. In American English, only the -iz- variant is considered standard. Here are some examples:

Examples of verbs	Acceptable in American English	Acceptable in British English
finalizes	✓	✓
finalises	x	✓
organized	✓	✓
organised	x	✓
traumatize	✓	✓
traumatise	x	✓
normalizing	✓	✓
normalising	x	✓
bastardize	✓	✓
bastardise	x	✓
Examples of noun form	Acceptable in American English	Acceptable in British English
realization	✓	✓
realisation	x	✓
rationalization	✓	✓
rationalisation	x	✓

-is- in British and American English

Some verbs take only the -is- variant, whichever English you're writing in:

Verb	Gerund	Present / past tense
advertise	advertising	advertises / advertised
advise	advising	advises / advised
apprise	apprising	apprises / apprised
chastise	chastising	chastises / chastised
comprise	comprising	comprises / comprised
compromise	compromising	compromises / compromised
despise	despising	despises / despised
devise	devising	devises / devised
disguise	disguising	disguises / disguised
excise	excising	excises / excised
exercise	exercising	exercises / exercised
improvise	improvising	improvises / improvised
incise	incising	incises / incised
prise (as in open)	prising	prises / prised
promise	promising	promises / promised
revise	revising	revises / revised
supervise	supervising	supervises / supervised
surmise	surmising	surmises / surmised
surprise	surprising	surprises / surprised
televise	televising	televises / televised

-ys- versus -yz-

A small group of verbs are spelled with -yz- in American English but with -ys- in British English:

Standard in American English	Standard in British English
analyze / analyzing / analyzed	analyse / analysing / analysed
breathalyze / breathalyzing / breathalyzed	breathalyse / breathalysing / breathalysed
catalyze / catalyzing / catalyzed	catalyse / catalysing / catalysed
dialyze / dialyzing / dialyzed	dialyse / dialysing / dialysed
electrolyze / electrolyzing / electrolyzed	electrolyse / electrolysing / electrolysed
hydrolyze / hydrolyzing / hydrolyzed	hydrolyse / hydrolysing / hydrolysed
paralyze / paralyzing / paralyzed	paralyse / paralysing / paralysed
psychoanalyze / psychoanalyzing / psychoanalyzed	psychoanalyse / psychoanalysing / psychoanalysed

