

Spelling list: Adjectives ending in *ous*

There are two ways of spelling the *schwa* in the *us* sound when it falls at the end of a word: *us* and *ous* .

Fortunately there is an easy trick to help you remember when to use which spelling pattern:

The spelling pattern *us* is used for people, places, or things; like in the words *cactus* , *fungus* , or *octopus* .

The *ous* ending, on the hand, is used for descriptive words like *poisonous* , *jealous* , and *enormous* .

Adjectives ending in *ous* are commonly used in English to describe being *full of* or *possessing the quality of* a base word. For example, *ambitious* means being *full of ambition* and *curious* means *possessing the quality of curiosity* .

adventurous	I'm trying to be more adventurous with my cooking.
anonymous	I wonder who sent this anonymous letter.
disastrous	My first attempt at baking was disastrous .
enormous	Elephants are enormous .
fabulous	Spotted dresses look fabulous in the summer.
famous	The new building was to be designed by a famous architect.
generous	The charity received a generous donation.
hazardous	He warned the hikers that it would be a hazardous climb.
jealous	She has a very jealous boyfriend.
joyous	The birth of their baby was a joyous occasion.
miraculous	He has made a miraculous recovery.
mischievous	Puck is a mischievous fairy.
momentous	Their wedding will be a momentous occasion.
mountainous	A large part of Austria is mountainous .
nervous	I am nervous about the test.

numerous	He has had numerous offers of employment.
prosperous	The film star is marrying a prosperous banker.
ravenous	I missed my lunch and now I'm ravenous .
ridiculous	She thought his idea was ridiculous .
tremendous	The thunder made a tremendous noise.