

The names of English words

A good student works hard at his books and he enjoys learning.

A: article

student: noun

works: verb

good: adjective

hard: adverb

at: preposition

and: conjunction

he: pronoun

Nouns:

An artist loves beauty

artist => plural form: artists (countable)

beauty => plural form: x (uncountable)

artist => subject => Describes who does the verb

beauty => object => What is affected by the verb

Construction of words

Irregularity
ir-regular-ity

ir- : prefix

-regular- : root

-ity : suffix

Suffixes

A) Noun suffixes

- er: used for the person who does an activity : writer, worker, teacher etc.
-or instead of -er: actor, sailor, supervisor.
Also used for things which do a particular job: pencil-sharpener, bottle-opener, projector, stapler.
- er and -ee can contrast each other meaning:
-er: person who does the activity
-ee: person who receives or experiences the action
E.g. employer/employee,
sender/addressee, payer/payee.

- (t)ion: used to make nouns from verbs
Examples: reduction, pollution, alteration, complication, admission.
- ist (person) and -ism (activity or ideology) used for people's beliefs and ideologies and sometimes their profession.
E.g. Marxism, Buddhism, journalism, physicist, terrorist etc.
-ist is also used for people who play musical instruments: pianist, violinist, cellist.
- ness: used to make nouns from adjectives
goodness, weakness, sadness, happiness, readiness, forgetfulness.
- Other noun suffixes include:
-ment (replacement), -ity (flexibility), -hood (childhood), -ship (friendship).

B) Verb suffixes

- ise (or -ize) are used to make verbs from adjectives: modernise, industrialise, commercialise.
- ify: beautify, purify, terrify.

C) Adjective suffixes

- able/-ible are used to make adjectives from verbs and mean "can be done".
-able: drinkable, washable, recognisable, countable, readable.
-ible: edible, flexible.
- Other adjective suffixes include:
-ive: active, productive.
-al: legal, brutal (Nouns: arrival, refusal)
-ous: delicious, furious, famous.
-ful: helpful, useful, hopeful, forgetful.

Exercise 1:

- Most of his crimes can be forgiven.
Most of his crimes are forgivable.
- The Club refuses to admit anyone not wearing a tie.
The Club refuses admission to anyone not wearing a tie.
- Her only fault is that she is lazy.
Her only fault is her laziness.
- This firm has produced a lot in recent years.
This firm has been very productive in recent years.
- I found the book very easy and pleasant to read.
I found the book very readable.

Prefixes

Prefixes are often used to give adjectives a negative meaning:

- Comfortable ≠ **un**comfortable, just ≠ **un**just
- Convenient ≠ **in**convenient, edible ≠ **in**edible
- Similar ≠ **dis**similar, loyal ≠ **dis**loyal

No rule!

New adjective => note opposite!

'in'

- 'in' becomes 'im' before a root beginning with 'm' or 'p': immature, impatient, impartial, improbable etc.
- 'in' becomes 'ir' before a word beginning with 'r': irreplaceable, irreversible etc.
- 'in' becomes 'il' before a word beginning with 'l': illegal, illiterate etc.
- 'in' does not always have a negative meaning – often it gives an idea of inside or into e.g. internal, import, insert, income etc.

Verbs with 'un' and 'dis'

- Although it is mainly adjectives which are made negative by prefixes, 'un' and 'dis' can also form the opposites of verbs too, e.g. appear ≠ disappear.
- The prefix is used here to reverse the action of the verb.

More examples:

Disagree, Disapprove, Disprove, Disbelieve, Disconnect, Discredit, Dislike, Dismount, Disqualify

Unbend, Undo, Undress, Unfold, Unload, Unlock, Unveil, Unwrap, Unzip

Exercise 2: Which negative fits each of the following definitions?

- **Unmarried** means not having a husband or wife.
- **Illiterate** means unable to read or write.
- **Unemployed** means not having a job.

Exercise 3: Answer the following questions.

- What kind of drug can help somebody with an infection?
- What kind of company had branches in many countries?
- What is a student who is studying for a second degree?

Exercise 4: Construct words or phrases to replace the underlined words.

- He's in favour of the American approach.
- The BBC tries to avoid pronouncing foreign words incorrectly.
- He dated his cheque with a date that was later than the real date?
- He made so many mistakes in the letter that he had to write it again.

Other prefixes

Prefix	Meaning	Examples
Anti	Against	Anti-war, antisocial, antibiotic
Auto	Of or by oneself	Autograph, autopilot, autobiography
Bi	Two, twice	Bicycle, biannual, bilingual
Ex	Former	Ex-wife, ex-student, ex-president
Ex	Out of	Extract, exhale, excommunicate
Micro	Small	Microwave, microscopic
Mis	Badly or wrongly	Misunderstand, mistranslate, misinform
Mono	One, single	Monologue, monogamous
Multi	Many	Multi-national, multi-purpose
Over	Too much	Overdo, overtired, oversleep
Post	After	Postwar, postgraduate
Pro	In favour of	Pro-government, pro-revolutionary
Pseudo	False	Pseudo-scientific, pseudo-intellectual
Re	Again or back	Retype, reread, replace, rewind
Semi	Half	Semi-final, semi-detached
Sub	Under	Subway, submarine, subdivision
Under	Not enough	Underworked, underused, undercooked