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A List of 26 Common Suffixes in English

How knowing common suffixes can help you understand what words mean

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Noun, Verb and Adjective Suffixes

Suffix	Meaning	Example
-acy	state of quality	privacy
-al	act or process of	refusal
-ance, -ence	state or quality of	maintenance
-ate	become	regulate
-en	become	enlighten
-ify, fy	make or become	terrify
-able, -ible	capable of being	edible
-al	pertaining to	regional
-esque	reminiscent of	picturesque

Illustration by Melissa Ling. ThoughtCo.

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A suffix is a letter or a group of letters attached to the end of a word to form a new word or to change the grammatical function (or part of speech) of the word. For example, the verb *read* is made into the noun *reader* by adding the suffix *-er*. Similarly, *read* is made into the adjective *readable* by adding the suffix *-able*.

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adjective *beautiful* and the noun *ugliness*). In words ending in silent *-e* (such as *use* and *adore*), the final *-e* may be dropped when the suffix that's added begins with a vowel (as in *usable* and *adorable*).

As with all spelling rules, there are exceptions. Not all suffixes can be added to all roots. For example, the adjective *beautiful* is formed by adding the suffix *-ful* to the noun *beauty*, and the noun *ugliness* is formed by adding the suffix *-ness* to the adjective *ugly*.

Also note that a suffix may have more than one meaning. With adjectives and adverbs, for instance, the *-er* suffix usually conveys the comparative meaning of "more" (as in the

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in mind that the meanings of words are best determined by studying the contexts in which they are used as well as the construction of the words themselves.

Noun Suffixes:

Suffix	Meaning	Example
-acy	state or quality	privacy, fallacy, delicacy
-al	act or process of	refusal, recital, rebuttal
-ance, -ence	state or quality of	maintenance, eminence, assurance

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-ist	one who	chemist, narcissist, plagiarist
-ity, -ty	quality of	inactivity, veracity, parity, serenity
-ment	condition of	argument, endorsement, punishment
-ness	state of being	heaviness, sadness, rudeness, testiness
-ship	position held	fellowship, ownership, kinship, internship
-sion, -tion	state of being	concession, transition, abbreviation

Verb Suffixes:

Suffix	Meaning	Example
-ate	become	regulate, eradicate, enunciate, repudiate
-en	become	enlighten, awaken, strengthen
-ify, -fy	make or become	terrify, satisfy, rectify, exemplify
-ize, -ise*	become	civilize, humanize, socialize, valorize

Adjective Suffixes:

Suffix	Meaning	Example

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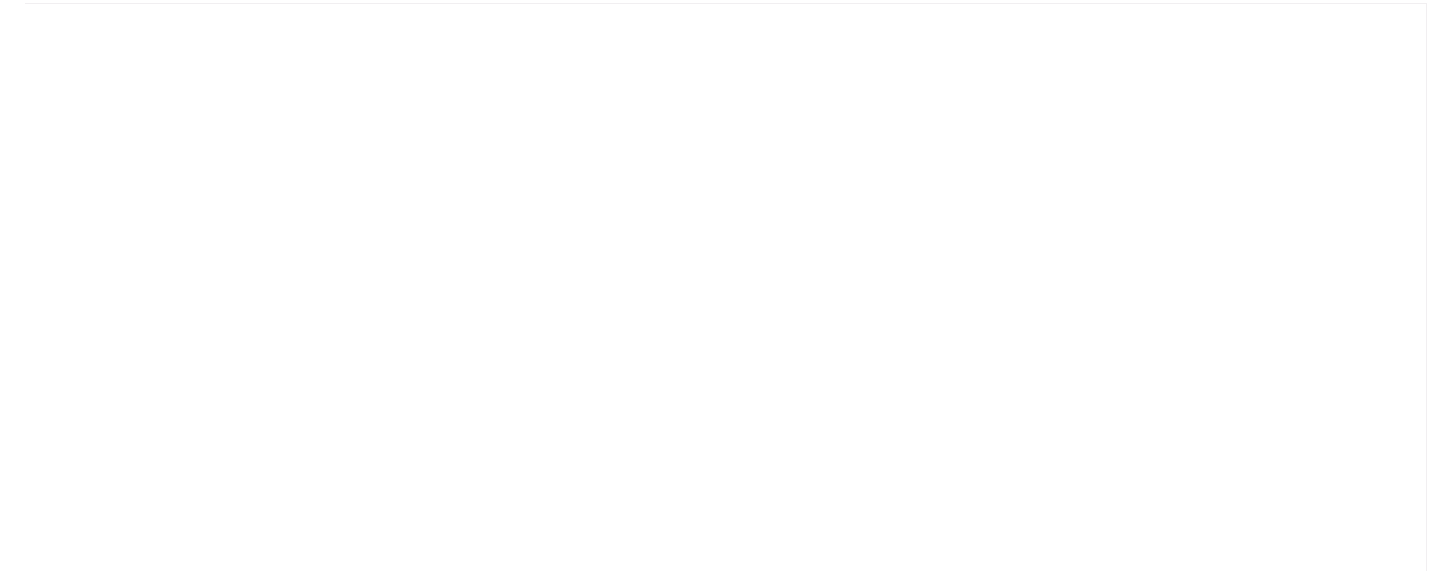| | ciful, resentful, woeful, doubtful |
	sical, mythic, domestic, chiastic
	tritious, portentous, studious
	dish, childish, snobbish
	ative, punitive, divisive, decisive
	less, ageless, lawless, effortless
	azy, hasty, greasy, nerdy, smelly

e, versus British English, in which the spelling

e, emphasize, standardize

British English: *finalise, realise, emphasise, standardise*

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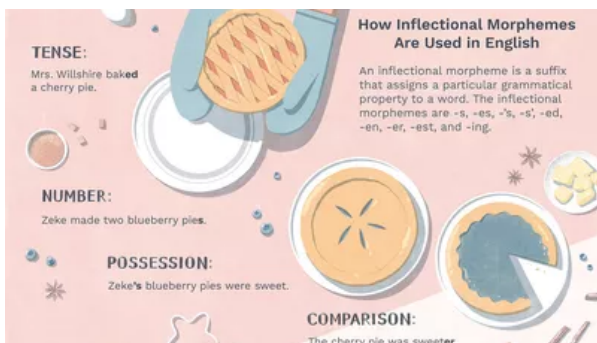
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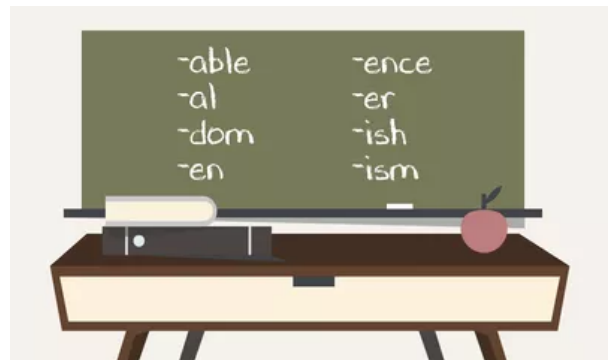
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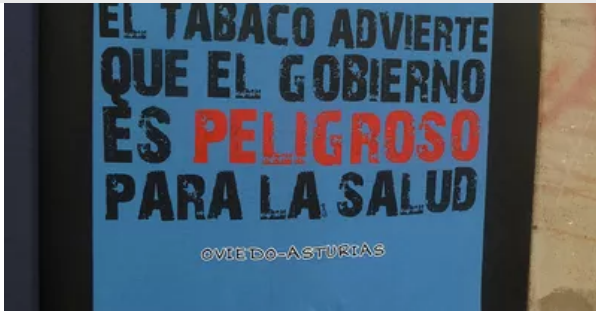

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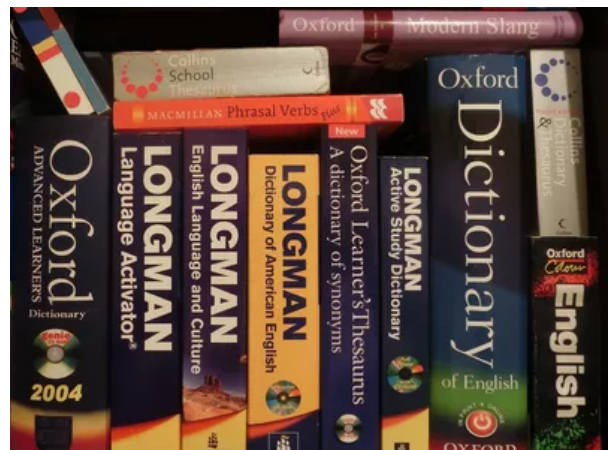
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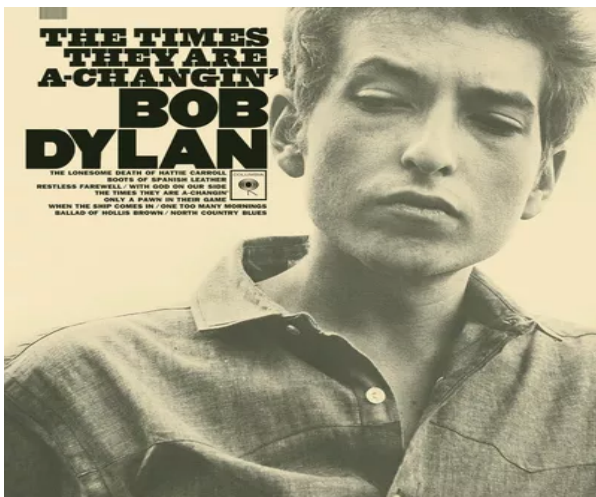**Understanding the Types of Nouns in English Grammar**

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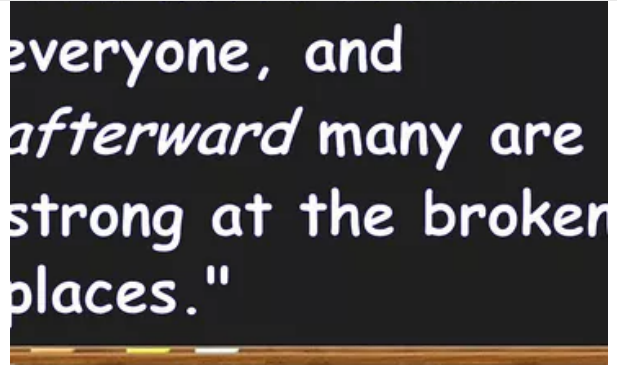
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