

# 5 Help yourself

## Word formation reference

### 50 common prefixes and suffixes

Prefixes and suffixes in *italics* are often used in more technical or academic contexts.

Prefix/suffix	Meaning	Added to	Forms	Examples
1 -able	this can be done	verbs	adjectives	doable, recoverable
2 anti-	against, opposed to	nouns	adjectives	antisocial, anti-establishment
3 -ation	process or product of an activity	verbs	nouns	authorization, realization
4 auto-	relating to self, or self-acting	adjectives, nouns	adjectives, nouns	autobiographical, autopilot
5 bi-	two, having two	adjectives, nouns	adjectives, nouns	biannual, bicycle
6 co-	together	verbs, nouns	verbs, nouns	cohabit, co-driver
7 cyber-	relating to computers or the Internet	nouns	nouns	cyberspace, cybercafe
8 de-	undo an action or process	verbs	verbs	decode, de-ice
9 dis-	not, or the opposite of	adjectives, verbs	adjectives, verbs	dishonest, disappear
10 e-	relating to the Internet and email	adjectives, nouns	adjectives, nouns	e-commerce, email
11 -ee	the object of an action	verbs	nouns	interviewee, payee
12 -en	make something have this quality	adjectives, nouns	verbs	brighten, strengthen
13 -er/-or	the person who does this	verbs	nouns	racer, editor
14 ex-	former	nouns	nouns	ex-husband, ex-manager
15 -ful	having or providing this quality	nouns	adjectives	wonderful, plentiful
16 -ify	make something become	adjectives, nouns	verbs	beautify, purify
17 in- / il- / im- / ir-	not, or the opposite of	adjectives	adjectives	inadequate, illogical, impossible, irrational
18 inter-	between	adjectives, verbs	adjectives, verbs	interdepartmental, interconnect
19 -ism	system or tendency of thought	nouns	nouns	capitalism, sexism
20 -ist	person who believes or does something	nouns	nouns	racist, violinist
21 -ity	a quality, often abstract	adjectives	nouns	purity, security
22 -ize	to become, make, or make like	adjectives, nouns	verbs	Anglicize, publicize
23 -less	without	nouns	adjectives	penniless, meaningless
24 -like	similar to, typical of	nouns	adjectives	childlike, plant-like
25 -ment	the action or result of	verbs	nouns	encouragement, employment

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26 mid-	in the middle of	nouns	adjectives, nouns	mid-century, mid-term
27 mis-	bad or wrongly	nouns, verbs	nouns, verbs	misbehaviour, mismanage
28 <i>mono-</i>	one, having one	nouns	nouns	monopod, monorail
29 <i>neo-</i>	new, or in a later form	adjectives, nouns	adjectives, nouns	neo-classical, neo-natal
30 -ness	quality of, character of	adjectives	nouns	sadness, roughness
31 -ous	having this quality	nouns	adjectives	poisonous, spacious
32 out-	greater than, better than	verbs	verbs	outdo, outlast
33 over-	more than usual, too much	adjectives, nouns, verbs	adjectives, nouns, verbs	overfriendly, overreaction, overcook
34 <i>photo-</i>	relating to light	adjectives, nouns	adjectives, nouns	photograph, photosynthesis
35 <i>poly-</i>	many	adjectives, nouns	adjectives, nouns	polymorphous, polytheism
36 post-	after	adjectives, nouns	adjectives, nouns	postgraduate, post-war
37 pre-	before	adjectives, nouns	adjectives, nouns	pre-war, prehistory
38 proof-	resistant against something	nouns	adjectives	waterproof, windproof
39 <i>pseudo-</i>	false or pretend	adjectives	adjectives	pseudo-intellectual, pseudo-science
40 <i>psycho-</i>	connected with the mind	adjectives, nouns	adjectives, nouns	psychometric, psychoanalyst
41 <i>semi-</i>	half or partly	adjectives, nouns	adjectives, nouns	semi-complete, semi-skilled
42 -ship	a state relating to a roles or relations	nouns	nouns	friendship, membership
43 <i>sub-</i>	less than usual, below	adjectives, nouns	adjectives, nouns	subnormal, subheading
44 <i>super-</i>	more than usual, above	adjectives, nouns	adjectives, nouns	superhuman, superstructure
45 <i>thermo-</i>	relating to heat	adjectives, nouns	adjectives, nouns	thermodynamic, thermometer
46 <i>tri-</i>	three, having three	adjectives, nouns	adjectives, nouns	tripod, tricycle
47 un-	not, or the opposite of	adjectives, verbs	adjectives, verbs	unfamiliar, undo
48 under-	less than usual, too much	adjectives, verbs	adjectives, verbs	underpriced, undercook
49 -ward	in the direction of	nouns	adjectives	westward, homeward
50 -y	having the quality of something	nouns	adjectives	sandy, muddy