

The most common roots, prefixes, and suffixes



Root	Meaning	Examples
act	do	action, actor, react, transact, enact
aud	hear	audience, auditorium, audible, audition
bio	life	biology, biodiversity, biophysics, bioscope
centr	center	central, eccentric, egocentric
chron	time	chronic, chronicle, chronological, synchronize
claim, clam	shout	acclaim, clamor, exclaim, proclaim
cycl	circle	cycle, cyclone, bicycle, recycle, cyclical
cred	believe	credit, discredit, incredible, credulous
dic	speak	dictate, predict, contradict, verdict, diction
div	divide	divide, dividend, division, divorce
form	shape	deform, form, reform, transformation, uniform
graph	write	autograph, paragraph, phonograph, photograph, telegraph
grat	pleasing	congratulations, grateful, gratitude, ungrateful
hydro	water	dehydrate, hydration, hydrant
loc	place	allocate, dislocate, locate, location
man	hand	manual, manufacture, manuscript, manipulate
min	small	mini, minimize, minor, minute
mob	move	automobile, mobile, mobility, mobilize
mot	move	demote, motion, motor, promote
path	feeling	antipathy, empathy, pathology, sympathy
ped	foot	pedal, pedestrian, pedestal
pel	drive	compel, expel, propel, repel
phon	sound	microphone, phonics, phonograph, symphony
poli	city	cosmopolitan, metropolis, police, political
pop	people	population, popular, populace
port	carry	import, export, portable, porter, transport
pug	fight	impugn, pugnacious, pugilist, repugnant
quer, ques, quir	ask	query, inquiry, inquest, quest, questions, request
sign	mark	insignia, signal, significant, signature
sol	alone	desolate, solitary, soliloquy, solo
soph	wise	philosopher, sophisticated, sophomore
spec	see	inspect, respect, spectacle, spectator
struct	build	construct, destruct, destruction, instruct,

		structure
therm	heat	thermal, thermometer, thermos
tract	pull, drag	attract, detract, contract, subtract, traction, tractor
urb	city	urban, suburb, suburban, urbane
ver	truth	veracity, verdict, verify
vid	see	evidence, video, provide
volve	roll	evolve, involve, revolve, revolver, revolution
vor	eat	carnivorous, herbivore, omnivore, voracious

Prefix	Meaning	Examples
a-	without, not	amoral, anarchy, anhydrous
ad-	to	adapt, addict, adhere, admit
amphi-	both, around	amphibian, amphitheater
an-	not	anarchy, anesthesia, anorexia, anonymous
anti-	against	antipathy, anticlimax, antiviral, antiseptic
audio-	sound	audiocassette, audiology, audiotape, audiovisual
auto-	self	automobile, automatic, autograph, autobiography
be-	make or cause	befriend, belittle
bi-	two	bicultural, bilateral, bilingual, bifurcate
co-	together	coauthor, cognate, coincide, cooperate, coordinate
counter-	against	counter-argument, counter-example, counter- proposal
de-	opposite	deactive, deform, degrade, deplete, descend
dis-	opposite/ reverses meaning of	disagree, disarm, discontinue, disgust, dishonest
ex-	former	ex-chairman, ex-leader, ex-president
ex-	out	export, express, exchange
extra-	beyond	extraordinary, extrasensory, extraterrestrial
for-	not	forbid, forget, forgo
fore-	earlier	foreclose, foresight, before
hyper-	extreme	hyperactive, hypertension, hyperventilate
il-	not	illegal, illegible, illegitimate, illiterate, illogical
im-	into	immediate, immerse, immigrate, implant, import
im-	not	imbalance, immature, immobilize, impossible
in-	not	inaccurate, inactive, incognito, indecisive
inter-	between	interact, interface, intermix, interchangeable
ir-	not	irregular, irreconcilable, irredeemable, irresponsible
kilo-	thousand	kilobyte, kilowatt, kilometer
mal-	bad	maladjusted, malaise, malevolent, malfunction, malice

Prefixes (cont.)		
mega-	million or huge	megalomaniac, megalopolis, megabyte
mini-	small	mini-skirt, minimize, minivan, minimum
mis-	badly or wrongly	mislead, misinform, misidentify
mono-	one	monosyllable, monograph, monogamy
neo-	new	neo-colonialism, neophyte, neoliberal
non-	not	nonnegotiable, nonfat, noncommittal, noncompliant,
out-	more, better, separate	outperform, outbid, outpace, outlast, outgrow, outbuilding, outfield, outside
over-	too much	overbook, oversleep, overwork
poly-	many	Polychromatic, polypropylene, polygamist, polygonal
pre-	before	prefabricate, prejudge, pretest, pre-expose
pro-	before	prognosis, progeny, proactive, protect, profile
pro-	forward	proceed, proficient, progress, project
pseudo-	false	pseudoscience, pseudonym,
re-	again	redo, rewrite, reappear, repaint, relive
semi-	half, partial	semicircle, semidarkness, semiaudible
sub-	under	subcontract, subject, submarine, submerge, subordinate, subterranean
super-	more than	superpower, superior, supernova, superstar
tele-	distant, between	teleconference, telephone, telecommunications, telepathy
trans-	across	transatlantic, transcend, transcribe, transfer, translate
tri-	three	tripart, triangle, triple, triceratops, tribune
ultra-	beyond	ultrasound, ultraviolet, ultraconservative
un-	not	unable, uncomfortable, uncertain, unhappy
under-	not enough	underfund, undersell, undervalue, underdevelop
vice-	deputy	vice-president, viceroy, vice-chancellor

Suffix	Meaning	Examples
-able	to be able	pliable, useable, replicable, communicable
-ade	action or process	blockade, escapade, parade
-age	action or process	marriage, pilgrimage, voyage
-al	action, result of	bacterial, abdominal, adversarial, amoral, anarchical, critical
-ant	one who	assistant, immigrant, merchant, servant
-cle	small	cubicle, particle,
-dom	state or quality of	boredom, freedom, martyrdom, wisdom
-ent	one who	resident, regent, superintendent
-er	more	closer, funnier, quieter, happier
-er	one who	climber, porter, engineer, teacher
-ful	full of	careful, fearful, joyful, thoughtful
-ic	relating to	comic, heroic, historic, metallic, poetic, public,
-ion	action/ process	confusion, cushion, fusion, vision
-ism	action, state, or quality	baptism, racism, alcoholism, colloquialism
-ist	one who, member of	Baptist, dentist, artist, motorist
-ize (-ise)	become, do,	fossilize, agonize, hospitalize, theorize
-less	without	ageless, careless, thoughtless, tireless
-let	small	islet, leaflet, owlet, rivulet, starlet
-ly	resembling	motherly, fatherly, scholarly, amply
-ly	every	daily, weekly, monthly, yearly, annually
-ly	manner of executing	stealthily, quietly, timidly, uncertainly, auspiciously
-ment	action/process, quality of	amusement, amazement, development, embezzlement, government, procurement,
-ness	quality of	calmness, contrariness, fairness, fitness, kindness, openness, tidiness
-or	one who	actor, auditor, doctor, donor, facilitator
-ous	characterized	hydrous, dangerous, mountainous
-tion	action or process	contradiction, diction, eviction, fruition, motion, position, question, tradition