

# Help Centres – English Support



## Common Prefixes and Suffixes

**Prefixes** do not change the part of speech of a word, but they do change the meaning. Below is a list of the most common prefixes in English.

### Common Prefixes

Prefix	Definition	Example
anti-	against	anticlimax
de-	opposite	devalue
dis-	not; opposite of	discover
en-, em-	cause to	enact, empower
fore-	before; front of	foreshadow, forearm
In-, im-	in	income, impulse
in-, im-, il-, ir-	not	indirect, immoral, illiterate, irreverent
inter-	between; among	interrupt
mid-	middle	midfield
mis-	wrongly	misspell
non-	not	nonviolent
over-	over; too much	overeat
pre-	before	preview
re-	again	rewrite
semi-	half; partly; not fully	semifinal
sub-	Under	subway
super-	above; beyond	superhuman
trans-	across	transmit
un-	not; opposite of	unusual
under-	under; too little	underestimate

**Suffixes** do change the part of speech of a word. Here are the common suffixes for each part of speech from the list below:

- **Nouns:** *-er, -ion, -tion, -ty, ity, -ment, -ness, -e, -es*
- **Verbs:** *-en, -ing*
- **Adjectives:** *-able, -ible, -al, -ial, -er, -est, -ful, -ic, -ive, -ative, -less, -ous, -eous, -y*
- **Adverbs:** *-ly*

### Common Suffixes

Suffix	Definition	Example
-able, -ible	is; can be	affordable, sensible
-al, -ial	having characteristics of	universal, facial
-ed	past tense verbs; adjectives	the dog walked, the walked dog
-en	made of	golden
-er, -or	one who; person connected with	teacher, professor
-er	more	taller
-est	the most	tallest
-ful	full of	helpful
-ic	having characteristics of	poetic
-ing	verb forms; present participles	sleeping
-ion, -tion, -ation, -ition	act; process	submission, motion, Relation, edition
-ity, -ty	state of	activity, society
-ive, -ative, -itive	adjective form of noun	active, comparative, sensitive
-less	without	hopeless
-ly	how something is	lovely
-ment	state of being; act of	contentment
-ness	state of; condition of	openness
-ous, -eous, -ious	having qualities of	riotous, courageous, gracious
-s, -es	more than one	trains, trenches
-y	characterized by	gloomy

Reproduced with permission from Corwin Press.

Chart from: [Root Words, Roots and Affixes | Reading Rockets](#)

I:\Help Centres English Language Handouts\Grammar\Affixes\CBA 160 Student Handouts on Display