

Most Frequent Prefixes and Suffixes in Printed Academic English

PREFIXES

Prefix	Meaning of Prefix	Sample Word with Prefix	Percentage of All Prefixed Words
un-	1. not 2. opposite of	1. unhappy 2. unrest	26%
re-	1. again 2. back	1. retest 2. recline	14%
in-, im-, il-, ir-	1. not	inappropriate, impossible, illiterate, irrational	11%
dis-	1. not 2. opposite of 3. remove	1. disappear 2. disobey 3. disarm	7%
en-, em-	1. put or go into or onto 2. to cause to be	1. enrage 2. embolden	4%
non-	1. not	non-ambulatory	4%
in-, im-, il-	1. into, inside, within	induce, immerse, illuminate	3%
over-	1. above, too much	overindulge	3%
mis-	1. bad, wrong 2. failure, lack	mislead, misadventure	3%
sub-	1. under, below 2. secondary 3. less than complete	1. subzero 2. subcontract 3. suballocate	3%
pre-	1. before, in front of	pretest, premolar	3%
inter-	1. between, among	international	3%
fore-	1. before, in front of	forehead	3%
de-	1. opposite of 2. remove 3. reduce	1. dehumanize 2. detoxify 3. deduct	2%
trans-	1. across, beyond	transplant, transportation	2%



super-	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. above, over 2. superior 3. excessive 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. supervise 2. superlative 3. supercautious 	1%
semi-	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. half 2. partial 3. happening 2 times during 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. semicircle 2. semiconductor 3. semiannually 	1%
anti-	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. opposite 2. counteracting 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. antifreeze 2. antibody 	1%
mid-	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. middle 	Mid-Atlantic states	1%
under-	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. below, beneath, lesser in degree 	underrepresented	1%
All Other Prefixes			3%

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SUFFIXES

Suffix	Meaning of Suffix	Sample Word with Suffix	Percentage of All Suffixed Words
-s, -es	1. plural noun 2. present tense verb 3. possessive adjective	1. bikes, dresses 2. jumps, fixes 3. girl's, girls'	31%
-ed	1. past tense verb 2. descriptive adjective	1. landed, jumped, yelled 2. left-handed	20%
-ing	1. progressive tense verb 2. descriptive adjective	1. eating 2. jumping [frog]	14%
-ly	adverb telling 'how'	quickly	7%
-er, -or	person who____ (noun)	teacher, illustrator	4%
-ion, -tion, -ation, -ition	noun forming suffix	notion, information, competition	4%
-able, -ible	adjective forming suffix	understandable, impossible	2%
-al, -ial	adjective forming suffix	original, colonial	1%
-y	adjective forming suffix	funny, rosy	1%
-ness	noun forming suffix	fondness, cheerfulness (note 2 suffixes may be added to words)	1%
-ity, -ty	noun forming suffix	purity, safety	1%
-ty	ten (adjective forming suffix)	twenty, thirty, etc.	1%
-ment	noun forming suffix	equipment	1%
-ic	adjective forming suffix	organic, synthetic	1%
-ous, -eous, -ious	adjective forming suffix	dangerous, erroneous, previous	1%
-en	verb forming suffix	soften, enlighten	1%



-er (comparative)	comparative adjective forming suffix	faster, quicker	1%
-ive, -ative, -tive	adjective forming suffix	expensive, imperative, inquisitive	1%
-ful	adjective forming suffix (full of ___)	hopeful, careful	1%
-less	adjective forming suffix (having 'no ___')	Hopeless, careless	1%
-est	superlative adjective forming suffix	Fastest, quickest	1%
All Other Suffixes			1%

Created by Lori C. Josephson 2024

Adapted from:

White, T.G., Sowell, J., Yanagihara, A. (1989) Teaching Elementary Students to Use Word Part Clues, *The Reading Teacher* 42, 302-308.

Sedita, J. (2009) The Key Vocabulary Routine, Danvers MA, *Keys To Literacy*