

PREFIXES

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A prefix can either be a syllable or a small word which is put in front of a root word to change its meaning. Most prefixes which we use today originated from either Greek (anti = against), Latin (sub = under) or Old English (mis = wrong). The main prefixes with their meanings and examples are listed below:-

a- (on) - ashore, asleep
ab- (away from) - about, abduct
ad- (to) - adverb, address
auto- (self) - autograph, automatic
be- (make) - befriend, belief
bi- (two of) - bicycle, binoculars
com- (with) - combine, complete
con- (with) - concentrate, conclude
de- (away) - decompose, descend
dec- (ten) - decimal, decagon
dis- (negative) - disappoint, disgusting
em- (in) - employ, embark
ex- (out of) - express, expel
for- (remove) - forget, forbid
hyper- (over) - hyperactive, hypercritical
in- (not) - incredible, inarticulate
in- (in) - inside, in-law
inter- (between) - international, interpreter
mis- (wrong) - mistake, misspell
non- (not) - nonsense, nonconformist
ob- (against) - obstruct, object
out- (beyond) - outside, outlaw
over- (over, above) - overdone, overrule
post- (after) - postgraduate, postpone
pre- (before) - previous, prefix
pro- (before) - progress, proceed
quad- (four) - quadrilateral, quadrangle
re- (again) - repeat, return
sub- (under) - submarine, substance
tri- (three) - triangle, tripod
ultra- (beyond) - ultrasound, ultra-violet
un- (not) - unstoppable, unthinkable
uni- (one) - uniform, universe
with- (take back) - withhold, wither

Note:- these prefixes make the root word have an opposite meaning

de- e.g. decompose
dis- e.g. disappear
in- e.g. inaudible
un- e.g. unusual

Sometimes there are some words which combine two prefixes:-

e.g. monopoly, autograph, kilogram, forwards, etc.

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