

Vocabulary

Building words – prefixes and suffixes

By adding prefixes or suffixes to words you can make lots of different words, with lots of different meanings. Knowing the meanings and uses of common prefixes and suffixes will help boost your vocabulary as you will be able to form new words and also work out the meanings of new words that you encounter.

 Lesson Outcomes

By the end of this lesson, you should be able to:

- define prefixes and suffixes
- differentiate between different prefixes and suffixes

 Curriculum Links

LO 4: Language

- identify and explain the meanings of words and use them correctly in a range of texts
- apply knowledge of roots, prefixes and suffixes to determine the meaning of new words in texts

 Lesson notes

A prefix is a group of letters that is added to the beginning of a root word, changing its meaning.

A root is a basic word from which other words are developed.

A derivative is a word created by adding a prefix and/or suffix to the root.

Here are some common prefixes, what they usually mean, and some examples of derivatives made by using each prefix.

Prefix	Meaning	Derivatives
ante-	before	An <u>antenuptial</u> contract is signed before a wedding. Pregnant woman may attend <u>antenatal</u> classes.
anti-	against	<u>Antibacterial</u> soap kills bacteria <u>Antiretroviral</u> medicines help people to combat viruses.
mis-	wrong	A <u>misguided</u> decision is based it on bad advice. You're <u>misinformed</u> if you have been given incorrect information.
multi-	many	<u>Multicultural</u> music festivals celebrate music from around the world. A <u>multiparty</u> conference would include delegates from various political organisations.
post-	after	After someone has had surgery they may need <u>postoperative</u> care. After you have signed off a letter you may add a p.s. or a <u>postscript</u> .

A suffix is a group of letters that are added at the end of a root word, changing its meaning.

Here are some common suffixes, what they usually mean, and some examples of derivatives made using each suffix.

Prefix	Meaning	Derivatives
-able or -ible	able to be...	You can overcome a <u>manageable</u> problem. An <u>edible</u> mushroom is safe to eat.
-ful	full of	She is a <u>beautiful</u> girl. A wedding is a <u>joyful</u> occasion.

Suffixes perform a range of functions:

Function:	Example:
Suffixes can be added to verbs to name the people who do specific jobs.	<u>Decorators</u> decorate homes and offices. <u>Actors</u> and <u>actresses</u> act in films.
When added to the same root, suffixes can create completely different meanings.	" <u>Childlike</u> " means innocent. " <u>Childish</u> " means immature.
Suffixes often form parts of speech.	<u>Manage</u> is a verb, but <u>manager</u> is a noun. <u>Quick</u> is an adjective, but <u>quickly</u> is an adverb.
Suffixes indicate tense.	walk – present tense walked – past tense walking – present participle

 TASK

Use your knowledge of what the prefixes mean and the context of the sentence to work out what the underlined words mean.

- Before the interview, I waited in an anteroom.
- He was accused of misappropriating funds.
- Her biography was released posthumously.
- Amethysts are semiprecious stones.