

Prefixes

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Prefixes	Meaning	Examples
anti -	against	antisocial
bi -	two	biannual
co –	with, together	co-driver
counter -	against, in opposition to	counterbalance
dis -	causes the action to be reversed	disobedient
ex -	previous, former	ex-husband
en -	make	enlarge

Prefixes	Meaning	Examples
mis -	done wrongly or badly	misbehave
mono -	one / single	monologue
multi -	many	multinational
non -	not	non-fiction
over -	too much	overpay
pre -	before	prehistoric
post -	after	postwar

Prefixes	Meaning	Examples
re -	again, back	rebuild
trans -	across, to the other side	transcontinental
under -	too little	underestimate
semi -	half	semi-detached
sub -	under	submarine

Prefixes for negative adjectives

Prefixes	Meaning	Examples
un -	not	unhealthy
in -	not	indefinite
im -	not	impossible
ill -	not	illegal
ir -	not	irregular

Task 1. Complete this chart using the prefixes **in-, **im-**, **un-**, **mis-**, **dis-**, **ir-** to make the opposites of the adjectives and the verbs given.**

Adjective /Verb	Opposite
active	inactive
secure	insecure
capable	incapable
modest	immodest
possible	impossible
fortunate	unpopular

Task 1. Complete this chart using the prefixes **in-, **im-**, **un-**, **mis-**, **dis-**, **ir-** to make the opposites of the adjectives and the verbs given.**

Adjectives / Verbs	Opposites
obey	disobey
calculate	miscalculate
approve	disapprove
understand	misunderstand
mature	immature
responsible	irresponsible

Task 2. Use the words in the right column to form a word that fits in each gap adding prefixes **mis-, **over-**, **pre-**, **re-**, **multi-**, **sub-**.**

1. She works for a large **multinational** company.

2. The letter I wrote is so messy. I'll have to **rewrite** it.

3. The ship was completely **submerged** in the sea.

4. There was a **misprint** in her address. Therefore, the letter didn't arrive.

5. Dinner wasn't very good because the potatoes were **overcooked** .

6. You need to **preheat** the oven before putting the meat to it.

• national

• write

• merge

• print

• cook

• heat

Task 3. Fill in the gaps using a suitable form of the words given in brackets. Use negative prefixes **dis-, **un-**, **in-**, **ir-**, **il-**, **im-**.**

- The British government has decided to take the unpopular (popular) decision to ban smoking in a lot of public places. Though a lot of people find smoking displeasing (please) and though experts all agree it is unhealthy (health) and it costs the state a lot to treat victims of smoking, irresistible (resist) when they are in company.
- However, it is now impossible (possible) to deny the antisocial nature of the habit. As advertising has proved ineffective (effect) with many smokers, the government has now made smoking illegal (legal) in most public places. Smokers who are unable (ability) to stop smoking may feel the new measures are unjust, but the passive smokers for whom a room full of smoke is unbearable (bear) they will come as a breath of fresh air.

Task 4. In each sentence one word needs the addition of a prefix to give meaning to the sentence. Identify the words which need prefixes and add them.

1. He never phones his friends or goes out any more: he is becoming really social. antisocial
2. With 600 billion people, the country faces population. overpopulation
3. Don't you think it was very responsible to leave a six-year-old alone in the house. irresponsible
4. There are too many mistakes in this essay: I'm afraid you'll have to write it. rewrite
5. He added a script to his letter to say that he received her check. postscript
6. I think I have done the steaks: they are very tough. overdone

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