

Prefixes and Suffixes

Prefixes and suffixes are grammatical “affixes” (prefixes come **before** the root word, and suffixes come **after**).

In very simplistic terms, prefixes change the meaning of words, and suffixes change their form (including plural, tense, comparative, and part of speech).

Prefixes – Change the Meaning of Words

Some of the most common prefixes are:

Prefix	Meaning	Examples
un-	not	unhappy, unsuccessful, unable
re-	again	redo, return, reappear
dis-	not, undo	disappear, disgrace, discontinue
inter-	between	International, internet, intermission
non-	not	nonsense, nonfiction, nonviolent
pre-	before	predawn, prefix, precaution
post-	after	postpone, postscript, postwar
poly-	many	polygamy, polyester, polyglot
sub-	under	subterranean, submarine, subordinate
co-	together	cooperate, collaborate, coordinate

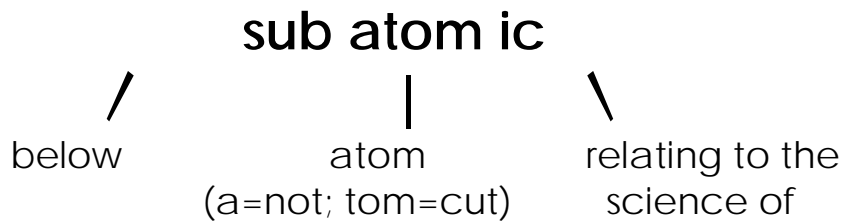
Suffixes – Change the Form of Words

Some of the most common suffixes are:

Form	Suffix	Meaning	Examples
Noun	-age	action or process	marriage, voyage, pilgrimage
	-ence	state or quality of	violence, absence, reticence
	-ant	one who	servant, immigrant, assistant
	-arium	place for	aquarium, planetarium, auditorium
	-tion	state or quality of	starvation, inspiration, tension
	-cy	state or quality of	accuracy, bankruptcy, conspiracy
	-dom	state or quality of	freedom, boredom, wisdom
	-eer	person	engineer, puppeteer, auctioneer
	-ectomy	surgical removal of	tonsillectomy, appendectomy

	-ent	one who	superintendent, resident, regent
	-eur	one who	chauffeur, masseur
	-hood	state or quality of	childhood, falsehood, neighborhood
	-i	plural	alumni, foci, syllabi
	-ism	doctrine of	capitalism, socialism, patriotism
	-wright	one who works with	playwright, shipwright
	-ology	study of	biology, etymology, psychology
Adjective	-able	Is, can be	comfortable, durable, perishable
	-acious	inclined to be	audacious, loquacious, spacious
	-ant	inclined to be	vigilant, pleasant, defiant
	-ative	inclined to be	demonstrative, talkative, pejorative
	-ic	characteristic of	comic, poetic, historic
	-y	characteristic of	fruity, sunny, chewy
Verb	-ble	repeated action	stumble, squabble, mumble
	-ed	past tense	wanted, hated, looted
	-en	made of	strengthen, fasten, frighten
	-ify	to make	terrify, falsify, vilify
	-ize	to make	standardize, computerize, pulverize
	-ly	resembling	slowly, kindly, seriously
Adverb	-ward	direction	forward, backward, onward
	-ways	manner	sideways, crossways

Examples of words broken down by roots/prefixes/suffixes:



Subatomic means: relating to particles smaller than an atom.



Microeconomics refers to: the study of smaller components of a national economy such as individual businesses or consumers.

pseudo **scientif** **ic**
/ | \
false knowledge having characteristics of

Pseudoscientific refers to: methods or theories based on faulty scientific procedures or lacking supporting evidence.

super **cali** **fragilistic** **expiali** **docious**
/ | | | \
above beauty delicate to atone educable

In the movie *Mary Poppins*, this word is defined as “something to say when you have nothing to say.” But using knowledge of prefixes/suffixes, it could be defined as: atoning for educability through delicate beauty.

For more information on roots, prefixes, suffixes, and how words are formed, go to: www.Prefix.Suffix.com. There’s even a root word search engine to help you understand a word’s meaning. Any good dictionary will also have words broken down into their individual components.