

WORD FORMATION

You need to read the sentence carefully to decide what kind of word is missing – is it a noun, a verb, an adjective or an adverb? In English we often use prefixes (words that go in front of a word) and suffixes (words that go at the end of a word) to change the type of word it is.

Prefixes

1 The following prefixes all give the meaning of NOT when they come before a word. We often put *il-* before words beginning with *l*, *ir-* before words beginning with *r*, and *im-* before words beginning with *p*. Take care with this rule though, as there are exceptions.

| | | |
|------|-----|-----|
| il- | un- | in- |
| dis- | ir- | im- |

Which prefix do we use to make these adjectives negative?

- | | |
|---------------|---------------|
| a satisfied | j legible |
| b relevant | k accessible |
| c patient | l responsible |
| d complete | m pleased |
| e legal | n realistic |
| f possible | o perfect |
| g comfortable | p regular |
| h honest | q literate |
| i popular | |

2 What meaning do you think these prefixes give to the word that follows? Can you think of some more examples?

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| a <i>mini-skirt</i> | f <i>underdone</i> |
| b <i>non-stop</i> | g <i>anti-freeze</i> |
| c <i>retrain</i> | h <i>ultra-conservative</i> |
| d <i>subway</i> | i <i>outlive</i> |
| e <i>untie</i> | |

Suffixes

3 NOUNS – Typical noun suffixes are:

| | | | | |
|--------|-------|-------|-------|------|
| -ation | -ion | -ness | -ship | -ity |
| -ism | -ence | -ment | -al | |

Make these words into nouns.

- | | |
|---------------|-----------|
| a happy | f popular |
| b intelligent | g friend |
| c approve | h social |
| d repeat | i pay |
| e inform | |

4 Not all nouns follow the above pattern. Make nouns from these words.

- | | |
|-----------|--------|
| a true | c die |
| b succeed | d high |

5 ADJECTIVES – Typical adjectival suffixes are:

| | | | |
|-------|-------|-------|------|
| -ible | -able | -y | -al |
| -ive | -ful | -less | -ous |

Make these words into adjectives.

- | | |
|-----------|---------|
| a wind | d peace |
| b attract | e eat |
| c hope | |

6 VERBS – Typical verb suffixes are:

| | | |
|------|------|------|
| -ve | -ist | -en |
| -ise | -ize | -ify |

Make these words into verbs.

- | | |
|-------------|------------|
| a wide | c sympathy |
| b behaviour | d clear |

In British English you will nearly always be correct if you use *-ise*.

7 ADVERBS – Adverbs are usually formed by adding the suffix *-ly* to the adjective. However, there are some exceptions.

Make these words into adverbs.

- | | |
|--------|---------|
| a hard | d peace |
| b good | e fast |
| c slow | f true |