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Common English morphemes

Prefixes	Meaning	Examples
To do with measurement	क्षा के कि	
bi-	twice	bicycle, biscuit (twice cooked)
di-	two	digraph, dioxide
en/em	intensify	enrage, encourage, empathy (em when followed by p and b)
hemi-	half	hemisphere '
hex-	six	hexagon
hyper-	excess	hypertension, hyperactive
hypo _:	below/under	hypoallergenic, hypothesis
mega-	big	megaphone, megabyte
micro-	small	microscope, microwave
mono-	one	monopoly, monotreme, monorail
multi-	many	multiply, multimillionaire
octo-	eight	octopus, October
pent-	`five	pentagon, pentathlon
quad-	four	quadrangle, qu <u>a</u> dbike
semi-	half or part	semifinal, semicolon
super-	more than	superman, supernatural
tri-	three	triangle, tricycle, tripod
ultra-	extreme.	ultramarathon, ultraviolet
uni-	one, singular	unicycle, unisex, uniform
To do with time		
fore-	before	forehead, foreword
meso-	middle	Mesozoic, Mesopotamia
mid-	middle	midday, midnight
neo-	new	neolithic, neonatal

Prefixes	Meaning	Examples
paleo-	old	paleolithic, paleozoic
post-	after	postnatal, postmatch
pre-	before	prenatal, pregnant (pre – gnant = birth)
prim-	first	primary, primate
proto-	first	prototype, proton
re-	repeat	review, renovate (nova = new)
To do with negation		
a <i>or</i> an	without/lacking	amoral, apathy, anarchy
anti-	opposite	antiseptic, anticlimax
contra-	against	contrary, contraband
counter-	against	counterclaim, counteract
de-	do the opposite of	decode, defrost
dis-	reverse	disrespect, disagree, dislike, display – disply = unfold
dys-	bad	dysfunctional, dyslexic
ех-	former/out !	ex-wife, exclude (to keep out), exclaim (to cry out)
in, im, il, ir (dependent	opposite – mostly used for	in – describable
on the first letter of the following morpheme)	multimorphemic words from Latin or French	in-decisive
im-form and b	*,	immobile, impossible
il-forl		illegal
ir-for r		irregular
mis-	wrong	mislead, mistake .
non-	not	nonsense, nonverbal
pseudo-	fake	pseudonym, pseudoscience
un-	opposite – mostly used for	unhappy, unlock
	short, single-morpheme base words	un-able (single morpheme) but in – ability (two morphemes) abil – ity
To do with location and mo	vement	
a – from Old English	on	afloat, awash
ad-, ac- (dependent on the first letter of the following morpheme, ac for c)	towards	accommodation, advantage

		State
co-, com-, con- depending upon the first letter of the following morpheme co for vowels, h and g com for p, b, m	g together	cooperate, compete, correlate, collocate, confederate (federate = league), confuse (to fuse together so the parts are indistinguishable)
colforl		
, con for the rest		
epi-	upon	epicenter, epidermis (dermis = skin)
in-	in	internal, include
infra-	beneath	infrastructure, infrared
inter-	between	intermission, interrupt
intra-	inside	intravenous, introvert
omni-	everywhere	omnipresent, omnipotent
pan-	everywhere, all-	panoramic, pandemic
para-	alongside	paramedic, parallel
peri-	around	periscope, perimeter
sub .	under .	submarine, subtitle, subway
Suffixes	Meaning and function	Example
-able/-ible	Having the characteristic of x, likely to be x (x being the base word) Changes verbs or nouns to adjectives 'able' more commonly added to free morphemes	comfort – comfortable agree – agreeable horr-ible – (horr[or]) terr-ible – (terr[or]) in-cred-ible
•	'ible' is more commonly added to bound morphemes	
-acy/-cy	Having the quality of x	intricate – intricacy
	acy – Changes adjectives ending in ate to abstract nouns cy – changes adjectives ending in ant and ent to	accurate – accuracy urgent – urgency pregnant – pregnancy
	nouns	(Continued)

to make

around

be-

circum-

bewitch, belittle

circumference, circumstance

COMMON

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MORPHEMES

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Suffixes	Meaning and function	Example
-age	The result of x	leak – leakage
	Changes verbs to nouns	break – breakage
-age	A quantity of x	acre – acreage
	Nouns to nouns	mile – mileage
-al	Having the property of x	music – musical
	Changes nouns into adjectives	magic – magical
-al	The act of x	survive [§] survival
	Changes verbs into abstract nouns	revive – revival
-an	Of or resembling x	Australia – Australian
	Changes nouns to adjectives	reptile – reptilian
-ance, -ence	The act of x	appear – appearance
	Changes verbs to abstract	relevant – relevance
	nouns	differ – difference
,		reside – residence
-ant, -ent	A person who does x	participate – participant
	Changes verbs to nouns	celebrate – celebrant
		study – student
		preside – president
-ary	ls a part of x	moment – momentary
	Nouns to adjectives	second – secondary
-ate	To cause x	term (end) – terminate
	Verb ending	anim (life) – animate
-ate	Full of x	passion – passionate
	Adjective ending	fortune – fortunate
	Changes nouns into adjectives	
-ate	To have the	prime – primate
	characteristics of x	carbon – carbonate
	Noun ending ,	
-ation	Used with some verbs with no verb suffixes	inform – information
•	Changes verbs into	adapt – adaptation
	abstract nouns	

	*	
-cation	Used with verbs ending with the verb suffix 'ify' Changes verbs to nouns	purify – purification classify – classification
-dom	State of being x	wise – wisdom
-dom	Changes nouns to abstract	free – freedom
	nouns	
-ed	For adjectives – to be in a state of x	interest – interested bore – bored
•	Changes verbs to adjectives .	
-ee	The person who	employ – employee train – trainee
J	Usually changes verbs into nouns	uam-trance .
-eer	Person who deals with x	mountain – mountaineer
	Noun to noun	auction – auctioneer
-en	For verbs	dark – darken
	To become x .	cheap – cheapen
	Changes adjectives to verbs (verbs must be monosyllabic)	• · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·
-en	For adjectives	wood-wooden
	To have the characteristic of x	ash – ashen
	Changes nouns to adjectives when the noun is monosyllabic	
-er	Person who does x	teach – teacher
	Changes verbs into nouns	sing – singer
-ese	Belonging to x	China – Chinese
į.	Changes nouns to adjectives	legal – legalese
-esque	Having the style of	statue – statuesque
	Changes nouns into adjectives	picture – picturesque
-ess '	Female name for x	lion – lioness
	Nouns to nouns	prince – princess
-ful ·	Full of x	beauty – beautiful
:	Changes nouns to adjectives	peace – peaceful

Suffixes	Meaning and function	Example
-hood	State of being x	child – childhood
	Changes nouns into abstract nouns	neighbour – neighborhood
-ic	To have the characteristic of x	romance – romantic metal – metallic
	Changes nouns into adjectives	
-ify	Cause to be x	pure – purify
	Adjectives into verbs	glory - glorify
	Most often used with adjectives of one syllable and adjectives which end in a vowel sound	N
-ing	To extend x	meet - meeting
	Changes verbs to nouns	gather – gathering
-ing	To have the	bore-boring ,
	characteristic of x	interest – interesting
	Changes verbs to adjectives	
-ion	State of x	act – action
1	· Changes verbs to nouns	direct – direction
-ish .	To become like x .	boy-boyish
	Changes nouns to adjectives	style – stylish
-ism	A system of beliefs	race – racism
	related to x Noun to noun	age – ageism
-ist	Person connected with x	pyschiatr (healing the soul) –
	Noun to noun	pyschiatrist
		dent (teeth) – dentist
-ity	To have the quality of x	agile – agility
	Changes adjectives to nouns	fragile – fragility
-ise/-ize; NB: -ise preferred	To cause to be x	popular – popularise
in Australian and British English; -ize preferred in	Changes adjectives or	final – finalise
US English	nouns to verbs	victim – victimise
	Used with root words with more than one syllable, and which end in r, l, n, m, y	memory – memorise

-ive	Characterised by x	act – active	
	Changes verbs to adjectives	persuade – persuasive	
-less	Withoutx	hope – hopeless	
•	Changes nouns to adjectives	fear – fearless	
-let	A smaller version of x	pig-piglet	
	Noun to noun	drop – droplet	
-ling	Related to x – sometimes	earth – earthling	
	offspring of x	duck-duckling	
: : <u>-</u>	Noun to noun		
-like	Having the characteristic of x	child – childlike gentleman – gentlemanlike .	
<i>j</i>	Nouns into adjectives (to describe the noun)		
-ly	Having the characteristic	friend – friendly	
,	ofx	love-lovely	
	Nouns into adjectives 'ly' began as a contraction of		
	the suffix 'like'.		
-ly	Having the	quick-quickly	
	characteristic of x	angry – angrily	
	Adjectives into adverbs		
-ment	The act of doing x	settle – settlement	
	Changes verbs to abstract nouns	achieve – achievement	
-ness	To have the condition of x	ill – illness	
	Changes adjectives to abstract nouns	happy – happiness	0
-oid	Having the shape of x	andr (man) – Android	0
•	Changes nouns to , adjectives	tab (tablet) – tabloid	M M O N
-ous	Full of x	fame – famous	m Z
	Changes nouns to adjectives	venom – venomous	1 G L I S
-proof	Keeps out x	bullet – bulletproof	I
	Changes nouns to adjectives .	water – waterproof	О R P
-ry	A broader description of x	dent <u>i</u> st-dentistry	H M
•	Nouns into broader nouns	baker – bakery	A E S
	(occupations, places, collections)		
		(Continued)	107

(Continued)

Suffixes	Meaning and function	Example
-ship		The same of the sa
-2111b	A relationship with x Changes concrete nouns	friend – friendship partner – partnership
	into abstract nouns	partitet – partitetsilip
-some	Like/to have the	awe – awesome
	characteristics of x	trouble – troublesome
*	Nouns to nouns	
-teen	Ten more than x	six – teen
		seven – teen å
-th	State of x	deep – depth
	Changes adjectives to nouns	strong – strength
-ty (a contraction of 'ten')	x multiplied by ten	six-ty
		seven – ty
-ty	To have the condition of x	royal – royalty
\	Changes adjectives to nouns	novel – novelty
-ward	In the direction of x	home – homeward
		south – southward
- y	Full of x	mist – misty
	Changes nouns to adjectives	rain – rainy
-y, -ie	Affectionate diminutive	dog-doggy
	of x – usually applied to monosyllabic words	mum – mummy
	A particularly Australian	barbecue – barbie
	trait is to reduce	football – footy
	multisyllabic words to one syllable and then add the	
	'ie' or 'y'	
-y	In a state of x .	jealous – jealousy
	Adjectives to nouns	honest – honesty
Base words	Meaning	Example
andr-	man/humankind	android, philander
anthrop-	human	philanthropy, anthropology
aqua-	water	aquarium, aquatic
arch-	chief/leader	monarchy, archbishop, architect
aster/astro-	star	astronaut, astronomy
atmos-	gas	atmosphere

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aud-	hear	audio, audience
auto-	self	autograph, autobiography
bene/bon-	good	benefit, bonus
bio-	life	biology, biography
chron-	time	chronology, chronic, crony
crat-	rule	democrat, autocrat
cred-	believe/trust	credit, incredible
demo-	people	democrat, demographic
dict	speak words	predict, dictionary
dont/dent	teeth	dental, orthodontist
drome	road	aerodrome, dromedary
eco-	home	economics, ecology
fend	ward off	defend, fence
fin	end	finish, definite
-form	shape	transform, uniform
frac-	break .	fraction, fracture
geo-	earth	geometry, geology
gno ·	to know	ignore, recognise
-gon	corner	pentagon, hexagon
grad-	step	grade, graduate, gradual
-graph .	write	autograph, telegraph
happ	luck	happenstance, mishap
homo-	same	homophone, homosexual
hon-	worthy	honest, honour
hydr	water	hydraulic, dehydrate
inter-	* between	interview, interrupt
iatr	medical treatment	paediatric, psychiatrist
journ .	day .	journal, journey
kilo-	thousand	kilometre, kilobyte
lex	word	dyslexia, lexicon
lith-	stone	lithograph, lithosphere
mal-	ill/wrong	malfunction, malady
mar-	sea	marine, submarine (Continued)

Base words	Meaning	Example
metre	measure	metric, kilometre
nová	new	novice, renovate
nym, onoma	name	synonym, onomatopoeia
ortho-	correct/straight	orthography, orthodontist
pathy	feeling	sympathy, pathology
-pel	push .	repel, expel
phil-	love	philosophy, philanthropy
-phobia	fear	hydrophobia, arachnophobia
-phon	voice/sound	telephone, symphony
phot-	light	photograph, phötosynthesis
polis-	city	police, politics
port	carry	porter, transport
psych-	spirit .	psychology, psychiatrist
pus/pod	foot	octopus, podiatrist
quest	ask	request, question
-rupt	break	bankrupt, interrupt
-saur	lizard	dinosaur, brontosaurus
spect ,	view/observe	spectator, inspect
-sphere	round	hemisphere, atmosphere
strat-	layer	stratosphere, strata
techno	craft/skill	technical, architect
tele-	over distance	television, telescope
vis-	seeing	vision, vista
viv-	alive ·	vivid, revive
-volv	roll	revolve, evolve
ZO .	life	zoology, Mesozoic

Appendix – spelling rules

This table provides a list of spelling rules that students in primary school need to learn. There are always exceptions to the rule, some of which have been listed.

Rule	Exceptions	Examples	
Short vowel sounds Generally, to spell a short vowel sound, only one letter (vowel) is needed, except for the /e/ sound in bread, lead, tread	said	bed top lip lipstick	bread lead tread
i before e 'i' before 'e', except after 'c' or when pronounced /ay/ as in weigh or /i/ as in height	weird	thief deceive chief receive friend)
Dropping Drop the silent 'e' at the end of words if adding a suffix that starts with a vowel (-ing, -ate, -al, -y, -able).	manageable changeable	challenge – challenging fortune – fortunate like – likable have – having shine – shiny change – changing	
Doubling Double the last letter of a base words that end in a short vowel followed by a single consonant, if adding a suffix.		sit – sitting hop – hopping begin – beginning rot – rotting	
Doubling For words that end with a single consonant, that are stressed on the last syllable, double the last letter before adding a suffix.		begin – beginner prefer – preferring	
Doubling In two syllable words that have one middle consonant sound after a vowel sound, double the middle consonant.		rabbit (but not habit)	
Doubling – the FLSZ rule If a single syllable word ends with a short vowel then an 'f' 'l', 'z' or 's', the final consonant will be doubled.		fill pill pass puff fizz	

Doubling Double 'I' when it is preceded by a short vowel, if adding 'ing' and 'ed' In American spelling, the 'I' is not		travel – travelled model - modelled	
doubled			
Changing Change to 'y' to 'i' when adding a suffix to words that end with a consonant plus 'y', except when adding the suffix '-ing'	dryness	happy – happiness sloppy – sloppiness	baby – babying empty – emptying
		pity - pitiful	
Plurals 's' or 'es' Use 'es' rather than 's' for words ending in ch. sh, ss, x, z	pianos	rich - riches lash – lashes mass - masses	hero – heroes tomato – tomatoes
Use 'es' for most words ending with 'o'		fox – foxes quiz – quizzes	

For a full list of spelling generalisations, rules and tips, go to: http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/words/spelling-rules-and-tips.

Another useful website is:

 $<\!\!\!\text{http://www.phonicslessons.co.uk/englishspellingrules.html}\!\!>\!\!.$