

Understanding Meaning through Prefixes

In addition to suffixes at the end of words, which can indicate word class, we make use of word prefixes at the beginning of words. These prefixes do not tell us about the class of words, but they can help us understand the meaning of words.

Example: prerequisite, preconceive, prefix

The words above all have the same prefix, *pre-*, which means “before”.

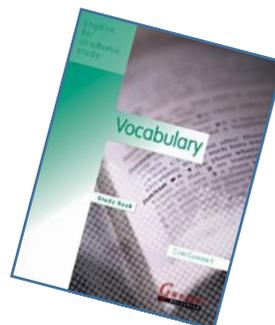
Study tip

We can remove a prefix from a word and it still remains a word. For example, the prefix *ir~* can be removed from these words: *irrelevant* (relevant), *irrational* (rational).

The following prefixes are used with a number of words in the AWL Sublist 1:

| Prefixes | Example Words | Prefix Meaning |
|----------|---------------|----------------|
| re- | recreate | again |
| in- | | |
| un- | | |
| mis- | | |
| over- | | |
| under- | | |

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Complete the following sentences using either:

- the word in parentheses; or
- a prefix + the word in parentheses.

In the case of verbs, pay attention to the ending required, e.g., -ed, -ing, -s. In the case of nouns, you have to decide whether the singular or plural form is appropriate.

Example: Old cars are often uneconomical. (economical)

Health

- Some diseases mainly affect children but can also _____ in adults. (occur)
- Because of the high prices, many AIDS drugs are _____ in poor countries (available)
- Most doctors do not accept the government's interpretation because they say the results are _____ with the data produced. (consistent)
- Compared with the problems people in the Third World have with diseases, our worries are _____. (significant)

Business and Finance

- The business community recognizes that successful companies are those that are _____ to market changes. (responsive)
- Financial reports can be _____ if people do not read them carefully. (interpret)
- Numerous cases of online fraud have forced the major banks to _____ their security procedures. (assess)
- The company _____ how much the project would cost and ended up spending \$10,000 more than they had planned. (estimate)