

What is a prefix? A prefix is a small but meaningful group of letters added in front of a root word that adds to the meaning of the word. Knowing the meanings will help students unlock the meanings of hundreds of words. It is a good idea to learn the meanings of the prefixes so when students encounter them in new vocabulary words they will have a greater understanding of them. Explain the prefixes as the student encounters them.

A suffix is a group of letters added to the end of a root word that adds to the meaning, such as **er** and **ing**.

When dividing longer words into syllables, first look for any prefixes and suffixes added to the root or base word.

Most Common Prefixes

Prefix	Meaning	Example

un	not, opposite of	unhappy
re	again, back	return

in, im, ir, ill	not, opposite of	indirect
dis	not, opposite of	discover
en, em	cause to	enjoy
non	not, opposite of	nonfiction
in, im	in, or into	inside
over	too much, above	overgrown
mis	wrong	misunderstand
sub	lower, under	subway
pre	before	prepared
inter	between, among	interstate
fore	before, the front	forehead
de	down, opposite of	descend
trans	across, over, beyond	transfer
super	over, above, on top of	superstar
semi	half, partly	semicircle
anti	against, opposed to	antifreeze

mid	middle	midday
under	too little, lower, below	underarm
ex	former, out, out of	exhale ex-judge
bi, bin	having two, twice	bicycle, biannual
co	together with	co-worker, cooperate
post	after, or following	postpone postwar
tri	three	triangle, tricycle, triplet