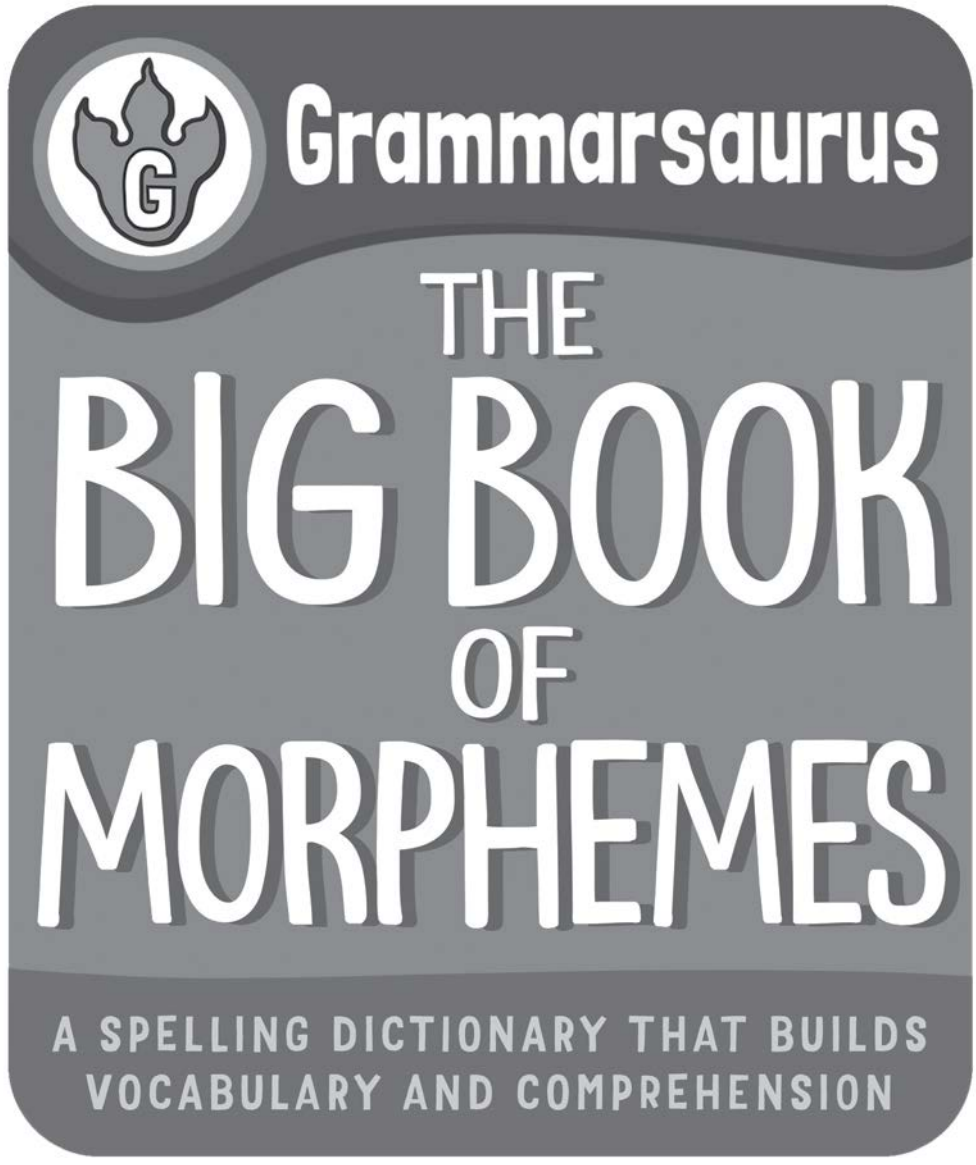


Mitch Hudson, Rebecca Sands
and Katie Turgyan

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To every pupil I've taught before, I'm sorry I didn't know this sooner as I could have helped you more!

**Mitch Hudson**

To Bella, and to every child beginning their journey into words. May you read, spell and love language by uncovering the stories words carry within them.

**Rebecca Sands**

To all curious minds – children, teachers and word lovers: I hope you enjoy the *light bulb moments* when a word's meaning suddenly comes alive.

**Katie Turgyan**

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| gloss | ary |
|---|---|
| language or explanation | related to |

**A glossary explains the language (words) used in a subject.**

| intro | duct | ion |
|---|---|---|
| inward or inside | lead | act or process |

**An introduction leads you into a text.**

| dict | ion | ary |
|---|---|---|
| say | act or process | related to |

| teach | er |
|---|---|
| instruct or pass on knowledge | one who or something that |

| suf | fix | ing |
|---|---|---|
| under, behind, away or below | join or fasten | continuing, or present participles |

| morph | eme |
|---|---|
| shape or structure | unit |

| alphabet | ic | al |
|---|---|---|
| set of written symbols in order | related to or like | action, process or related to |

| con | cluse | ion |
|---|---|---|
| with, together or an intensifier | shut or close | act or process |

**A con + cluse + ion is the act of closing something. That's why it's always near or at the end!**

| re | fer | ence |
|---|---|---|
| again or back | bear or carry | state, quality or concept |

| in | d | ex |
|---|---|---|
| into or upon | point out or proclaim | creates a noun |

**An index points to where you can find a word in a book. Your index finger is the finger you point with!**



Hello! I'm Manus the monk. Welcome to *The Big Book of Morphemes*. We're only on the contents page and morphology is already helping us to make sense of words!

**Find out more about Manus on page 3.**

# Glossary

| Term | Definition |
|---|---|
| morpheme | the smallest part used to build a word |
| base | a morpheme that carries a word's main meaning |
| prefix | a morpheme that attaches before a base or stem |
| suffix | a morpheme that attaches after a base or stem |
| stem | a word part that includes at least a base, and may also include other morphemes<br>**hopeful** (stem) = **hope** + **ful**<br>**disagree** (stem) = **dis** + **a** + **gree**<br>(Notice that we can keep building on a stem e.g. hopefully or disagreement.) |
| root | where a morpheme's spelling and meaning come from |
| connecting vowel letter (CVL)* | a morpheme used to connect two word parts together to help build a word<br>(These letters do not carry meaning.) |
| word sum | a visual way to show how a word can be broken down<br>cat + s = cats  un + help + ful = unhelpful<br>in + struct + ion = instruction |
| suffixing rule | a rule that is applied to bases and stems when a suffix is added |
| assimilated prefix | a prefix that changes its final consonant to better match the first letter of the morpheme it attaches to, making pronunciation smoother and easier<br>(For example, prefixes **com-**, **con-**, **co-**, **cor-** and **col-**.) |
| alternate base | a base that is closely related to another base because it shares a root and carries the same meaning, but has a different spelling<br><br>**vide & vise** "see"  **scribe & script** "write"  **mit & miss** "send or let go"<br>(Alternate bases are a bit like non-identical twins.) |

# Glossary in action

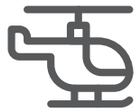
Look at these word sums to see our glossary in action:



# Introduction

Words may look different on the outside, but many of them are built from the same small parts. These parts are called *morphemes*. A morpheme is the smallest part of a word that contributes to the word's meaning.

When you learn about morphemes, you're learning a kind of *secret language* that words share.



**hel** + **ic** + **o** + **pter**



**pter** + o + **dactyl**

In both of these words, the morpheme **pter** means *"wing"*, which makes sense, because both of these things have wings. A *helicopter* has spinning blades that work like wings, and a *pterodactyl* had wings attached to its longest fingers. When you say these words out loud, you would never think that they share this connection.

That's why we study morphemes. Instead of memorising every word one by one, you can use morphemes to *unlock new words*, work out meanings and make smarter guesses when you're reading or writing. Morphemes help you to see patterns, build confidence and understand how words are connected.

This book will help you to collect morphemes and practise using them every day until you are a masterful word detective.

## A note on Manus the monk

A long time ago, Christian monks came to parts of Britain. Some of them had the tricky task of using Latin letters to write down the language that people spoke there, which was called Old English. But there was one big challenge: Old English had sounds that the Latin alphabet did not have letters for. So, scribes had to be clever! They borrowed letters such as **þ** (thorn) from an older runic alphabet. They also adapted letters to create ones such as **ð** (eth) and used existing letters in new ways.

As English changed over hundreds of years, its spelling changed too. New words arrived, pronunciations changed and some letters came and went. The spellings we use today still carry clues about how words sound, what they mean and where they came from.

Monks and other early scribes were some of the early problem-solvers who helped shape the writing system that eventually became the one we use today.

You will spot Manus throughout the book where he will pop up like this to share interesting facts about English spelling.





# How to use this dictionary

Look in *The Big Book of Morphemes* if you are...

**1.**



Curious about how a word is formed

**2.**



Needing help breaking a tricky word into morphemes

**3.**



Looking for links between words, like *attract*, *contract* and *distract*

**4.**



Checking your spelling by seeing how morphemes fit together

**5.**



Exploring the origin of a word

Note:

You will notice that we use a special icon for every morpheme throughout the dictionary. These icons help your brain make links between each morpheme, its meaning and the words it helps to build. Research shows that when we learn something using both words and pictures, it is often easier to remember. By seeing the same icon each time you meet a morpheme, you can build stronger connections in your memory and become quicker at recognising familiar word parts.

# 1. You are curious about how a word is formed

Why does *interrupt* have two letter **r**s instead of one?

Think about what the first morpheme in *interrupt* could be and look under the letter **i** until you find the morpheme **inter-**. Add **inter-** and its meaning into a word sum:

***inter*** ⊕

"between or within"

If the entry for *interrupt* is under **inter-**, then you will see the breakdown of the word. If it isn't, then look for the missing part **rupt** under the letter **r**.

Add it to the word sum and then rewrite the parts together. Does what we've built make sense? Does *interrupt* carry the meaning of breaking between something? Yes, so we are correct.

***interrupt*** = ***inter*** ⊕ ***rupt***

"between or within" "break or burst"

Now we can see that *interrupt* has two **r**s because **inter-** ends in an **r** and **rupt** starts with an **r**, so when we add both morphemes together, we get *interrupt* with two **r**s.



# 2. You need help breaking a tricky word into morphemes

How can I break *dispose* into morphemes?

Think about what the first morpheme could be and look under the letter **d** until you find the potential morpheme. It could be prefix **dis-**. Add **dis-** and its meaning into a word sum:

***dis*** ⊕

"not, opposite of or away"

We do not know the next part yet. Let's write down what is left to be found: **pose**. Let's look under the letter **p** to see whether we can see a morpheme there that could help us.

Find **pose** and think about whether this morpheme would make sense. It means "*put or place*". Add it to the word sum with the meaning underneath. We now have the word *dispose*.

***dis*** ⊕ ***pose*** = ***dispose***

"not, opposite of or away" "put or place"

When we combine prefix **dis-** with base **pose**, the word *dispose* carries a sense of *"putting or placing away"*. This makes sense because when we dispose of rubbish, we *put or place it away*.

I *dispose* of my litter every day.

We can build even more words using stem **dispose**.

e.g.

disposable
disposition
predisposed
disposal
disposing
disposes

# 3. You are looking for links between words, like *attract*, *contract* and *distract*

I think that I've spotted a common morpheme in a group of words. How can I find out whether they are linked?

Write down the group of words that you think are connected and box the morpheme that you think connects them:

**attract, contract, distract, extract**

Find **t** in the dictionary to look for **tract**.

**tract**

base



**pull or drag**

The entry tells us that **tract** is a base and that it carries the meaning of *"pull or drag"*. We can see that there are entries that can help us understand these words.

The words *attract*, *contract* and *distract* are all linked and their meanings share a common idea!

But what about the word *extract*? That doesn't have an entry, so let's build a word sum to see whether we can find it ourselves. We know that **tract** is a morpheme in this word, so the other morpheme could be the morpheme **ex**.

**extract** = **ex** + **tract**

"pull or drag"

Go to **e** in the dictionary to see whether we can find the morpheme **ex**. It's there and shows us that this morpheme is a prefix! Does the meaning of *"out or away"* make sense when combined with base **tract** in the word *extract*?

*The dentist will extract the broken tooth*. This would mean that the dentist will *"pull out"* the broken tooth. This makes sense, so we must be right! Add it to the word sum.

**extract** = **ex** + **tract**

"out or away" "pull or drag"



# 4. You are checking your spelling by seeing how morphemes fit together

**Example 1**

Have I spelled this word correctly?

**identicul**

Write the word down so we can break it into a word sum.

**identicul** =

We do not know all the morphemes in this word yet, so we can only start with the first letter and see whether we can spot the morpheme in the dictionary. Find the letter **i**. Can you spot a potential morpheme? I've spotted **ident** and it means *"the same"* – this sounds right, so let's start to build the word sum.

**identicul** = **ident** + **?**

"the same"

We can see the word *identical* in the entry for the base **ident**, and the next morphemes are **ic** and **al**. In our spelling attempt, we put 'ul', so we have spelled the word incorrectly.

**identical** = **ident** + **ic** + **al**

"the same" "related to or like" "action, process or related to"

*Identical* does mean something related to being the same, so this makes sense. Morphemes **ic** and **al** are two morphemes that you often see together, and even if it sounds like 'ul', it is spelled consistently as **al**.

Consider these words:

**magical** = **magic** + **al**

**musical** = **music** + **al**

### Example 2

Have I spelled this word correctly?

**difurance**

Write the word down so that we can break it into a word sum.

**difurance** **=**

We do not know all the morphemes in this word yet, so we can only start with the first letter and see whether we can spot the morpheme in the dictionary. Find the letter **d**. Can you spot a potential morpheme? I've spotted prefix **dif-**. It is an assimilated prefix of prefix **dis-**, which means *"not, opposite of or away"*. This could be what we are looking for. Let's add it to the word sum.

**difurance** **=** **dif** ⊕ **?**

"not, opposite of or away"

The remaining letters that we used were "urance". If you look under **u** in the dictionary, you will notice that there isn't anything there to help us. The morphemes we are looking for may not be included in the book, but it might also be because we have spelled something incorrectly. It would be helpful to think about what that might be. It might be that there is a double letter that we've missed. Maybe it is "diffurance" instead.

Let's look at the remaining part as if it is "furance" instead. Under **f** I can see base **fer**, so maybe it is that morpheme. Base **fer** means *"carry or bear"*, so let's add the meaning and then the final part **ence**, which is also in the dictionary, along with its meaning, "*state, quality or concept*". It could also be suffix **-ance,** but I can see on page 77 that the word **different** uses suffix **-ent**, and bases in the same family often use both suffixes **-ant** and **-ance**, or suffixes **-ent** and **-ence**.

**dif** ⊕ **fer** ⊕ **ence** **=** **difference**

"not, opposite of or away" | "carry or bear" | "state, quality or concept"

The word **difference** carries a sense of something being "*carried away from or set apart from another thing*". This makes sense, because if something is **different**, it is *not the same as something else*. It also explains why there are two **f**s. The first **f** is at the end of prefix **dif-** and the next **f** is from the start of base **fer**.

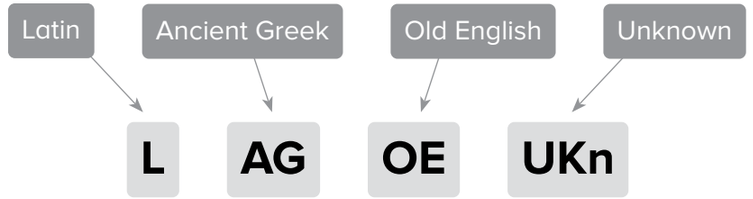




# 5. You want to explore the origin of a word

What language does this word come from?

When you look up a morpheme, you can see its root by looking at the key.




Sometimes, the meaning of the morpheme does not make much sense to us in the modern day. This is because morphemes change their meaning over time. When this is the case, we will include a "Did you know?" box to help to explain things:



The Manus the monk icon represents an *etymology* fact or a *review* fact.

Etymology refers to the study of word origins and historical roots and their journey into spelling and meaning today. These boxes will tell you a bit more about where the morpheme came from originally, and other members of its family.

The review facts are rules or links back to other morphemes.

# What if you can't find a morpheme in *The Big Book of Morphemes*?

There are so many morphemes that it would be impossible to put them all in this book and linguists are uncovering new morphemes every day! If you've used all the other strategies we've mentioned so far and you've double-checked the **index** of all of the explored words in the book on page 213 and it's still not there, then why not try and investigate all by yourself?

Here's a handy guide to do just that!

1. Check the spelling of the word in a regular dictionary or ask an adult and then write it down.

punctured =

2. Circle any suffixes you think you can spot and check *The Big Book of Morphemes* for these entries. Remember, final silent **e** may have been dropped to add a vowel suffix.

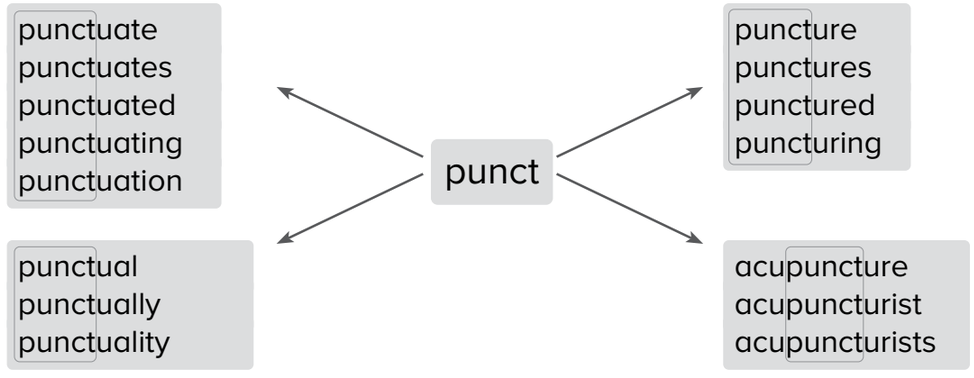
3. Write a word sum leaving a blank space for the unknown part, remembering to fill in all the parts you do know from using *The Big Book of Morphemes*.

punctured = ⊕ ure ⊕ ed

4. Once completed, you will have a good idea of what the mystery morpheme may be. In this case, it is **punct**!

punctured = punct ⊕ ure ⊕ ed

5. Explore the mystery morpheme by creating a word web of potential relatives in its family. Box the base in each word to highlight the potential common morpheme.




6. Think about the meaning of the full word to see if you can spot a common morphological meaning linking them.

| | |
|---|---|
| punctuate | originally meant to **mark with points or dots** (punctuation marks are small points used in writing) |
| punctual | arriving at an exact **point** in time |
| puncture | **pierce** something with a sharp **point** |
| acupuncture | a treatment where **needles pierce the skin** at certain **points** |

Do you notice something? This is where you make a hypothesis (an informed guess) about the meaning that you think the mystery morpheme carries. As all the words carry an idea of *"pointing"* or *"piercing"*, it would be logical to assume that this is the case. You may not be right, but you've made a very informed guess!

punct



*"point or pierce"*

(By the way, punct does mean *"point or pierce"*, so if you got the same, then you are a bona fide mystery morpheme investigator!)



# Note for teachers

If you're wondering how best to use this book with your class, check out this handy visual below:

| Spelling | Reading and vocabulary |
|---|---|
| I'm not sure how to spell the word *"decision"*!<br><br>To guide spelling by supporting children with building word sums. | It says the character is *"benevolent"*. What does that mean?<br><br>To investigate an unfamiliar word in a class text together. |
| I know that *"conduct"* is made up of **con** ⊕ **duct**. What other words are in the base **duct** word family?<br><br>To direct children to investigate a word independently or in pairs. | One of the characters is a *"merchant"*. What does that mean?<br><br>To support investigating a word family. |
| Why is there a letter **g** in *"assigned"*?<br><br>To explore the reasons behind what may seem like a strange letter appearing in a word. | Why is it called *"chronology"*?<br><br>Why is it called a *"vertex"*?<br><br>To help understand a technical term across the curriculum. |



# Suffixing rules

In the dictionary, the entries do not have the suffixing rules applied to them, as we only apply suffixing rules when we rewrite the word in our word sum. You must learn the four suffixing rules and apply them to your word sum to make sure you have spelled the word correctly.

The suffixing rules apply differently to vowel suffixes and consonant suffixes.

**vowel suffixes**

(suffixes beginning with vowels, remember **-y** is considered a vowel suffix, too!)

four rules

**consonant suffixes**

(suffixes beginning with consonants)

one rule (see rule number 4)

## The four suffixing rules:

**1. Double** the **final consonant letter** when a base or stem ends in a consonant-vowel-consonant **(CVC)** pattern, then add the **vowel suffix**.

stop + ed = stopped

stop + ing = stopping

**2.** If a **polysyllabic** base or stem ends in a **CVC** pattern with a **stressed final syllable**, **double** the **final consonant letter**, then add the **vowel suffix**.

forget + ing = forgetting

prefer + ed = preferred

**3. Drop** the **final silent e vowel letter**, then add the **vowel suffix**.

care + ing = caring

drive + er = driver

**4. Change** the final letter **y** after a **consonant letter** to **i**, then add the **vowel suffix** or **consonant suffix** (except **-ing**, **-ish**, **-ist** and **-ism**).

marry + ed = married

tidy + ness = tidiness

Please note that we **do not** apply any rules when adding a **prefix** to a base or stem. We can add prefixes without making any spelling changes.

## Applying the suffixing rules to a word sum

### Double the consonant

| ex<br>out or away | pel<br>push or drive | ed<br>past tense verb or past participles |
|---|---|---|
|  |  |  |
| **expelled (verb or adjective)** | | |

Write the morphemes in a word sum:




Because we are adding the vowel suffix -**ed** and the base ends in a CVC letter pattern, we need to double the final consonant letter **l** before we can rewrite the word the other side of the equals sign.

If a polysyllabic base or stem ends in a CVC pattern, but we don't place a stress on the final syllable, we can just add the vowel suffix.




### Drop the final silent e

| con<br>with, together or an intensifier | cluse<br>shut or close | ion<br>act or process |
|---|---|---|
|  |  |  |
| **conclusion (noun)** | | |

Write the morphemes in a word sum:




Because we are adding the vowel suffix -**ion**, we need to drop the final silent **e** vowel letter before we can rewrite the word the other side of the equals sign.



### Change y to i

| un<br>not or reverse | hap<br>luck, fate or fortune | y<br>describing | ness<br>how something feels or is |
|---|---|---|---|
|  |  |  |  |
| **unhappiness (noun)** | | | |

Write the morphemes in a word sum:




Base **hap** follows a CVC pattern. When we add the vowel suffix **-y**, we need to double the final consonant letter.

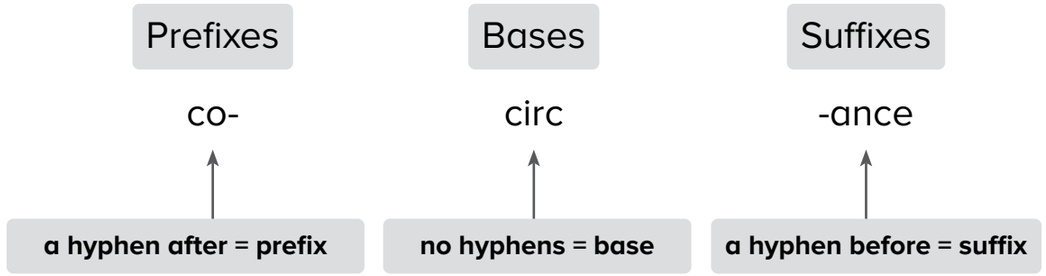



Because we are adding the consonant suffix -**ness**, we need to change the **y** after the consonant letter **p** to **i** and then add the consonant suffix.

Note:

We have chosen to include only certain word classes in our examples (e.g. *loved* as an adjective and verb, not as a noun). We have also used gerunds as examples of nouns where they function as nouns in a sentence (e.g. shopping in "Shopping is fun"). These decisions were made to focus on the word forms and uses that are most relevant and appropriate for children aged 7+.

# Morpheme overview: Contents





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# a-

prefix

**not or without**

Probable origins:

L AG OE UKn

*Did you notice that both **byss** and **bysm** mean *"bottom"*? This is because they are alternate bases that originate from the same Greek root – *byssos*!

You might see it in words like:

**a** not or without + **byss*** bottom

**abyss (noun)**
a seemingly dark bottomless pit
*The submarine journeyed into the abyss.*

**a** not or without + **bysm*** bottom + **al** action, process or related to

**abysmal (adjective)**
a terrible feeling – like falling into a dark bottomless pit
*The pasta I made was abysmal – even the dog wouldn't eat it.*

**a** not or without + **chrome** colour + **ate** cause, make or describing + **ic** related to or like

**achromatic (adjective)**
without colour
*The achromatic design had no colours, only black, grey and white.*

**a** not or without + **path** feeling, suffering or disease + **y** state, condition or quality

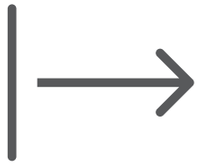
**apathy (noun)**
without emotion or feeling
*When it was time to join in, the boy showed apathy – he just didn't care!*

**a** not or without + **type** dent or mark + **ic** related to or like + **al** action, process or related to

**atypical (adjective)**
not like others of the same type
*The style of bag was quite atypical.*

# ab-

prefix



**away, off or down**

Probable origins:

L AG OE UKn

*Sometimes, instead of the prefix **ab-**, we use its assimilated form, the prefix **abs-**. The prefix **abs-** is used when the morpheme that follows starts with the letters **c**, **q** or **t**.

You might see it in words like:

| **ab** | **duct** | **ion** |
|---|---|---|
| away, off or down | lead | act or process |



**abduction (noun)**

act of taking someone away without permission

*The scientist said that the crop circle was evidence of an alien abduction.*

| **ab** | **horr** | **ent** |
|---|---|---|
| away, off or down | tremble, bristle or shudder | quality or one who |



**abhorrent (adjective)**

something so scary or bad that you want to be away from it – it gives you a strong feeling of horror or disgust

*To Max, breaking a promise was abhorrent – trust really mattered to him.*

| **ab** | **s** | **ent** |
|---|---|---|
| away, off or down | be | quality or one who |



**absent (adjective)**

non-existent or not present

*I was absent from today's lesson.*

| **abs*** | **tain** |
|---|---|
| away, off or down | hold |



**abstain (verb)**

hold off or hold back from doing something

*I chose to abstain from eating any more chocolate before I felt sick.*

| **abs*** | **tract** |
|---|---|
| away, off or down | pull or drag |



**abstract (adjective)**

something that is pulled away from real things – it's not something that you can see or touch

*Love is an abstract idea.*





# -able

suffix



**can be done**

Probable origins:

L AG OE UKn

Did you notice that suffix **-able** often forms a word that functions as an adjective when added to a sentence?

See also the related suffix **-ible**, which also carries the meaning "*can be done*".

You might see it in words like:

| **a** | **vail** | **able** |
|---|---|---|
| to or towards | strong, worthy or good | can be done |



**available (adjective)**

something that can be of help or be of service to something

*The teacher is available to answer any questions.*

| **break** | **able** |
|---|---|
| separate, destroy or interrupt | can be done |



**breakable (adjective)**

something that can be broken

*Be careful with that – it is breakable.*

| **re** | **mark** | **able** |
|---|---|---|
| again or back | boundary, sign or landmark | can be done |



**remarkable (adjective)**

something that can be noticed because it is important, special or stands out

*Her artwork is remarkable!*

| **un** | **mis** | **take** | **able** |
|---|---|---|---|
| not or reverse | badly or wrongly | grasp or seize | can be done |



**unmistakable – also spelled unmistakeable (adjective)**

not able to be grasped or understood wrongly; very clear or obvious

*That was the unmistakable/unmistakeable sound of thunder!*

| **wash** | **able** |
|---|---|
| cleanse or bathe | can be done |



**washable (adjective)**

something that can be washed

*There is paint on my shirt, but it is fine because it is washable.*

# -ably

suffix



**how**

Probable origins:

L AG OE UKn



Did you notice that the suffix **-ably** usually makes a word that functions as an adverb when added to a sentence?

You might see it in words like:

| **ad** | **ore** | **ably** |
|---|---|---|
| to or towards | speak, plead or worship | how |



**adorably (adverb)**

in a way that is worthy of affection, or delightful

*The puppy tilted its head adorably, making everyone smile.*

| **com** | **fort** | **ably** |
|---|---|---|
| with, together or an intensifier | strength, power or might | how |



**comfortably (adverb)**

in a way that provides ease, relief or relaxation

*He sat back comfortably on the sofa.*

| **con** | **sider** | **ably** |
|---|---|---|
| with, together or an intensifier | star or constellation | how |



**considerably (adverb)**

in a way that is large enough to merit attention

*An elephant is considerably larger than a cow.*

| **honour** | **ably** |
|---|---|
| recognition, respect, dignity | how |



**honourably (adverb)**

in a good, honest or respectful way

*She played the game honourably, as she didn't believe in cheating.*

| **note** | **ably** |
|---|---|
| mark, sign, character or letter | how |



**notably (adverb)**

in a way that is especially important, noticeable or worth mentioning

*She has notably improved her reading skills this year.*





# act

base



**do or perform**

Probable origins:

L AG OE UKn

You might see it in words like:

| **act** | **ion** |
|---|---|
| do or perform | act or process |



**action (noun 1 or verb 2)**

the act or process of doing or performing

1 *The superhero jumped into action to save the day.*

2 *It's time to action our plan to start building the model.*

| **act** | **ive** |
|---|---|
| do or perform | quality |



**active (adjective)**

move around, play and do things rather than being still

*I am an active person.*

| **act** | **or** |
|---|---|
| do or perform | one who or something that |



**actor (noun)**

a person who acts

*The actor read the script.*

| **re** | **act** |
|---|---|
| again or back | do or perform |



**react (verb)**

do something in response to someone else

*When something is funny, I react by laughing.*

| **re** | **act** | **ion** |
|---|---|---|
| again or back | do or perform | act or process |



**reaction (noun)**

the act of doing something in response to someone else

*The audience had a good reaction to the play.*

# -acy

suffix



**state, quality or concept**

Probable origins:

L AG OE UKn

*The word *spirit* originally came from a Latin word meaning *"breath"*. Because breathing was so closely connected with being alive, *spirit* came to mean life itself. Over time, it also came to mean a person's feelings, energy or soul.

You might see it in words like:

| **con** | **spire*** | **acy** |
|---|---|---|
| with, together or an intensifier | breathe | state, quality or concept |

**conspiracy (noun)**
a secret plan or agreement made by a group
*The police uncovered the conspiracy to treat the workers unfairly.*

| **di** | **ple** | **ome** | **acy** |
|---|---|---|---|
| two | lay, fold or twist | creates a noun | state, quality or concept |

**diplomacy (noun)**
the skill of dealing with people politely and carefully, especially to solve problems or avoid arguments
*The disagreement was resolved by using diplomacy.*

| **fall** | **acy** |
|---|---|
| deceive | state, quality or concept |

**fallacy (noun)**
a mistaken belief or idea, especially one based on incorrect reasoning
*Believing that eating sweets for every meal is healthy is a fallacy.*

| **prive** | **acy** |
|---|---|
| personal or not shared | state, quality or concept |

**privacy (noun)**
the state of keeping things about yourself a secret or protected from others
*Everyone needs privacy, especially in their own personal space.*

| **supr** | **eme** | **acy** |
|---|---|---|
| over or above | most (superlative) | state, quality or concept |

**supremacy (noun)**
the state of having the most power, control or authority over others – being the most powerful
*The king's supremacy meant that his word was final when it came to decisions.*





# ad-

prefix



**to or towards**

Probable origins:

L AG OE UKn

*Over time, the idea of *addressing* someone through speech evolved to also mean a location – the place where you would direct a letter, package or person.

You might see it in words like:

| **ad** | **apt** |
|---|---|
| to or towards | suitable or fits |

**adapt (verb)**
make something suitable – moving towards what fits best
*We can adapt the design so that it fits your idea better.*

| **ad** | **dress** |
|---|---|
| to or towards | arrange, straighten or direct |

**address* (noun ① or verb ②)**
① a speech or talk given to a group of people to direct their attention to an idea or topic
*The leader delivered an important address to the people.*
② give a speech or talk to a group of people to direct their attention to an idea or topic
*The leader wants to address the people.*
**address* (noun)**
a place where someone lives
*Please give me your address so I can send you the letter.*

| **ad** | **here** |
|---|---|
| to or towards | stick |

**adhere (verb)**
stick to something
*The label can adhere to the bottle.*

| **ad** | **mit** |
|---|---|
| to or towards | send or let go |

**admit (verb)**
letting someone enter ① or tell the truth ②
① *The ticket officer will admit the passengers.*
② *You must admit that you sometimes forget things.*

| **ad** | **vert** | **ise** | **ment** |
|---|---|---|---|
| to or towards | turn | make or become | something that happens or is done when |

**advertisement (noun)**
something made to turn people's attention to a product, event or idea
*The new advertisement on TV made us want to go!*

# age



**do or perform**

**alternate base**

*agency, agenda, agile, agitate, agonise*

see **act**

# -age

suffix



**action, process or related to**

Probable origins:

L AG OE UKn



*Did you spot that base **post** means *"fixed place"*? It was called this because, before faster technologies for sending messages were invented, riders and horses were posted at intervals to pass on messages quickly. This nod to history was kept in the modern mail system that we have today.

You might see it in words like:

| **bag** small sack or bundle | **age** action, process or related to |
|---|---|




**baggage (noun)**
suitcases and bags that you take on a trip
*We checked in all our baggage at the check-in desk.*

| **marry** wed | **age** action, process or related to |
|---|---|




**marriage (noun)**
the process of being married
*We celebrated the marriage of our friends last weekend.*

| **post*** fixed place | **age** action, process or related to |
|---|---|




**postage (noun)**
the cost or process of sending something to a fixed place that has an address
*The postage was much more expensive than we thought it would be.*

| **use** put into action or consume | **age** action, process or related to |
|---|---|




**usage (noun)**
related to the use of something
*The librarian explained the usage of the library card to borrow books.*

# -al

suffix



**action, process or related to**

Probable origins:

L AG OE UKn

You might see it in words like:

| **muse** music, song or inspiration | **ic** related to or like | **al** action, process or related to |
|---|---|---|





**musical (adjective)**
linked to song or related to music
*The school put on a musical performance.*

| **n** birth or origin | **ate** cause, make or describing | **ure** action, process or result | **al** action, process or related to | **ly** how |
|---|---|---|---|---|







**naturally (adverb)**
in a way that is easy, smooth or automatic
*Dogs naturally wag their tails.*

| **nave** boat or ship | **al** action, process or related to |
|---|---|




**naval (adjective)**
linked to or related to boats or ships
*The naval base was under attack.*

| **person** human being, character or mask | **al** action, process or related to |
|---|---|




**personal (adjective)**
linked to or related to a person
*It is important to respect personal belongings.*

| **use** put into action or consume | **u** connecting vowel letter | **al** action, process or related to |
|---|---|---|




**usual (adjective)**
normal or regular because of its high use
*I sat in my usual spot.*

# amb

base



**both or around**

Probable origins:

L AG OE UKn



*Did you know that the word *ambition* comes from Roman times?

Back then, people who wanted to be leaders or politicians would sometimes go around asking for other people's votes and support. This was called *ambitus* in Latin – it meant *"going around to gain favour"*. This was seen as an unfair way in which to be elected.




You might see it in words like:

| amb | i | dextr | ous |
|---|---|---|---|
| both or around | connecting vowel letter | right-hand side or skill | full of |



**ambidextrous (adjective)**

being able to use both hands with skill

*I can write equally well with both hands – I am ambidextrous!*

| amb | i | ence |
|---|---|---|
| both or around | connecting vowel letter | state, quality or concept |



**ambience (noun)**

the feeling, mood or vibe around you

*The restaurant had a relaxing ambience.*

| amb | ige | u | ous |
|---|---|---|---|
| both or around | do or perform | connecting vowel letter | full of |



**ambiguous (adjective)**

something that is unclear – the answer could go in different ways

*Her answer was ambiguous – it sounded like both a "yes" and a "no".*

| amb | ite | ion |
|---|---|---|
| both or around | go | act or process |



**ambition* (noun)**

the desire or drive to achieve something

*She has a huge ambition – she wants to be an astronaut!*

| amb | i | vale | ence |
|---|---|---|---|
| both or around | connecting vowel letter | strong, worthy or good | state, quality or concept |



**ambivalence (noun)**

the idea of having two strong feelings that pull you in different directions

*She felt ambivalence about moving to a new school – excited to meet new people but sad to leave her old friends behind.*





# -an

suffix



**person with a skill, belief, or linked to**

Probable origins:

L AG OE UKn

You might see it in words like:

| austr | al | i | an |
|---|---|---|---|
| south | action, process or related to | connecting vowel letter | person with a skill, belief, or linked to |



**Australian (adjective 1 or noun 2)**

1 related to Australia

*They paid in Australian dollars.*

2 a person from Australia

*The man was an Australian.*

| mage | ic | i | an |
|---|---|---|---|
| sorcery or learned | related to or like | connecting vowel letter | person with a skill, belief, or linked to |



**magician (noun)**

a person skilled in magic

*The magician pulled a rabbit out of a hat.*

| hume | an |
|---|---|
| earth | person with a skill, belief, or linked to |



**human (noun 1 or adjective 2)**

a person linked to the earth

1 *A human can talk, think and build things.*

2 *It is human to make mistakes.*

| Rome | an |
|---|---|
| the city of Rome | person with a skill, belief, or linked to |



**Roman (adjective 1 or noun 2)**

1 related to Rome

*The building had Roman architecture.*

2 a person from Rome

*The lady was a Roman.*