

20 Most Common Prefixes Found in Frequently Used Prefixed Words

| prefix | common meaning | examples | # words | percentage |
|--------------------|--|--|---------|------------|
| un- | 1. not 2. opposite of, contrary to | 1. unhappy 2. unrest | 782 | 26.4% |
| re- | 1. again, anew 2. backwards, back | 1. rebuild 2. react | 401 | 13.6% |
| in-, im-, ir-, il- | 1. not | 1. inactive, immobile, irrational, illegal | 313 | 10.6% |
| dis- | 1. not 2. opposite of 3. remove | 1. dissimilar 2. disfavor 3. discolor | 216 | 7.3% |
| en-, em- | 1. put or go into or onto 2. to cause to be | 1. encage, embed 2. endear, emblaze | 132 | 4.5% |
| non- | 1. not | 1. nonhuman | 126 | 4.3% |
| in-, im | 1. into, inside, within | 1. inbound, immerge, illuminate | 105 | 3.5% |
| over- | 1. above, too much | 1. overuse | 98 | 3.3% |
| mis- | 1. bad, wrong 2. failure, lack | 1. misconduct 2. misfire | 83 | 2.8% |
| sub- | 1. below, under 2. secondary 3. less than complete | 1. subsoil 2. subplot 3. subhuman | 80 | 2.7% |
| pre- | 1. before, in front of | 1. prehistoric | 79 | 2.7% |
| inter- | 1. between, among | 1. international | 77 | 2.6% |
| fore- | 1. before, in front of | 1. forerunner | 76 | 2.5% |
| de- | 1. make opposite of 2. remove 3. reduce | 1. decriminalize 2. dethrone 3. declass | 71 | 2.4% |
| trans- | 1. across, beyond 2. change 3. through | 1. transatlantic 2. transcribe 3. transfer | 47 | 1.6% |
| super- | 1. above, over | 1. superimpose | 43 | 1.5% |

| | | | | |
|--------|--|---|-------|-------|
| | 2. superior 3. excessive | 2. superfine 3. supercharge | | |
| semi- | 1. half 2. partial 3. happening two times during | 1. semicircle 2. semiconscious 3. semimonthly | 39 | 1.3% |
| anti- | 1. opposite, counteracting | 1. antigravity, antibody | 33 | 1.1% |
| mid- | 1. middle | 1. midstream | 33 | 1.1% |
| under- | 1. beneath, below, less in degree | 1. underage | 25 | .8% |
| Total: | | | 2,859 | 96.6% |

Adapted from: White, T.G., Sowell, J., & Yanagihara, A. (1989). Teaching elementary students to use word-part clues. *The Reading Teacher*, 42, 302-308.

From: Sedita, J. (2009). *The key vocabulary routine*. Danvers, MA: Keys to Literacy.