

Common Prefixes

PREFIX	% of All Prefixed Words	MEANING	EXAMPLES
Un-	26	Not, opposite of	unaware, unbelievable, unsure
Re-	14	Again	redo, replay
Im-, in-, il-, ir-	11	Not	impossible, incapable, illogical, irregular
Dis-	7	Not, opposite of	dishonest, disgraceful, discover
En-, em-	4	Cause to	enable, emblaze
Non-	4	Not	nonstick, nonfiction, nonexistent
In-, im-	3	In, into	inject
Over-	3	Too much	overtime, overeat
Mis-	3	Wrongly	misunderstand, misuse
Sub-	3	Under	subsurface, subway
Pre-	3	Before	prepay, preschool
Inter-	3	Between	international, interact
Fore-	3	Before	forethought
De-	2	Opposite of	decaffeinated, dehydrate
Trans-	2	Across	transatlantic
Super-	1	Above	superhero, supermodel
Semi-	1	Half	semiannual, semicolon
Anti-	1	Against	antiwar, antisocial
Mid-	1	Middle	midyear, midnight
Under-	1	Too little	underweight, underpaid
All others	3		

Top 20 prefixes from Carroll, J. B., Davies, P., & Richman, B. (1971). The American heritage word frequency book. Boston: Houghton Mifflin; as cited in White, Sowell, & Yanagihara, 1989.