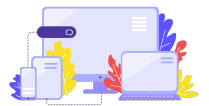




9 Negative Prefixes



Over 225 real examples with Dictionary links

a- = not; without (in nouns, adjectives and adverbs)
atheist = don't believe in any gods N atypical = not typical ADJ atypically = not typically ADV
anti- opposed to; against - the opposite of - preventing (in nouns and adjectives)
anti-hero = not a hero N antisocial = not social ADJ
dis- = not; the opposite of (in nouns, adjectives, adverbs, and verbs)
disadvantage = not an advantage N dishonest = not honest ADJ disagreeably = in a way that is not nice or pleasant ADV discover = to find something that was hidden V
il- = not; the opposite of (in nouns, adjectives, and adverbs)
illiteracy = the fact of being unable to read or write N illegal = not legal ADJ illogically = for a reason or in a way that is not sensible ADV
im- = not; the opposite of (in nouns, adjectives, and adverbs)
immodesty = lack of humility or decency N immoral = not moral ADJ immorally = in a way that is not considered to be good or honest ADV
in- = not; the opposite of (in nouns, adjectives, and adverbs)
insanity = the condition of not being sane N incapable = not capable ADJ independently = in a way that is not dependent on anyone ADV
ir- = not; the opposite of (in nouns, adjectives, and adverbs)
irresponsibility = the fact of not being responsible N irresponsible = not responsible ADJ irresponsibly = without showing the feeling of responsibility ADV

non- = not (in nouns, adjectives, adverbs, and verbs)

nonsense = not making sense N

non-alcoholic = containing no alcohol ADJ

nonchalantly = in a calm and relaxed way, showing no sign of worry ADV

un- = not; the opposite of (in nouns, adjectives, and adverbs) - (in verbs that describe the opposite of a process)

unemployment = the condition of not having a job N

unkind = not kind ADJ

unsurprisingly = in a way that does not cause surprise ADV

unable = not able V

What does it mean to call a prefix negative?

In this post, a negative prefix is a prefix whose meaning is the *opposite* <-> of the root word or against the root word.

KIND is the root word of *un*KIND. KIND and *un*KIND are direct opposites.

How to use these Prefixes

All nine of these prefixes can be added to adjectives and nouns to mean the negative or opposite of the root word.

The prefixes **a-** **dis-** **il-** **im-** **in-** **ir-** **non-** and **un-** can also be added to adverbs.

The prefixes **dis-** and **un-** can also be added to verbs.

Spelling

The negative prefix **a-** will always be used before a word that starts with a consonant

Negative prefixes that start with the letter **i** will follow these patterns.

Use **il-** before words that start with the letter **L**

Use **im-** before words that start with the letters **M** or **P**

Use **ir-** before words that start with the letter **R**

Use **in-** before words that start with any letter except **I, L, M, P, R, or U**

Over 200 Prefix Example sentences

Every vocabulary word the negative suffix in this list has a link to its meaning.

Over 95% of the links will take you to OxfordLearnersDictionaries.com which contains an **audio link so you can hear the correct pronunciation**. A natural example sentence follows each word so you can see how these words are used in English.

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The Prefix A-

OxfordLearnersDictionaries.com Prefix a-

Examples with sentences

Nouns

[atheist](#)

- The number of **atheists** is growing in America.

Adjectives

[atypical](#)

- My results were **atypical** so the doctor would like to do some further testing.

[amoral](#)

- Will seems rather **amoral**. He just acts without thinking about the consequences of the effects on other people. I don't trust him.

[apolitical](#)

- I wish there was a news program that was **apolitical**, that was just delivering the facts and not supporting any particular political group. Unfortunately, I've never seen one.

[asexual](#)

- Brenda announced to everyone at the office that she is **asexual** and not interested in dating or romance.

Adverb

[asexually](#)

- Did you know that scorpions can reproduce **asexually**?

The Prefix Anti-

OxfordLearnersDictionaries.com Prefix anti-

Examples with sentences

NOUNS

[anti-hero](#)

- The Incredible Hulk is very powerful but hard to control, many think of him as more of an **anti-hero** because of this.

[antimatter](#)

- Scientists believe that most of the universe is made up of **antimatter**.

[antiparticle](#)

- Antimatter is made up of **antiparticles**.

[antitoxin/antivenom](#)

- After Patrick was bitten by the cobra, he was taken to the hospital immediately and given **antivenom**.

[anti-war](#)

- People are getting frustrated with all the fighting in the **antiwar** movement is gaining in popularity.

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ADJECTIVES

[anti-aircraft/anti-tank](#)

- Government spent millions of dollars on **anti-aircraft** and **anti-tank** weapons to use in this war.

[anticancer](#)

- New **anticancer** drugs are being developed all the time.

[anticlimactic](#)

- I thought the movie was pretty good but the ending was very **anti-climactic**. I felt disappointed when it was over.

[antifungal](#)

- I went to the drugstore to buy some **antifungal** cream for my itchy and cracked feet.

[anti-lock](#)

- All new cars have **anti-lock** brakes to help prevent accidents when stopping suddenly.

[antivirus](#)

- I just bought some new **antivirus** software for my computer.

[anti-vax](#)

- The **anti-vax** movement has been in the news a lot this week.

The Prefix Dis-

[OxfordLearnersDictionaries.com Prefix dis-](#)

Examples with sentences

NOUNS

[disagreement](#)

- After a long conversation we work there are **disagreements**. Now everything is fine.

[disapproval](#)

- The president's **disapproval** rating has gone through the roof.

[disbelief](#)

- The TV news programs showed all the damage caused by the hurricane. I watched in **disbelief**.

[disease](#)

- Modern medicine cannot treat more **diseases** than ever before.

[disinformation](#)

- There's a lot of **disinformation** on the internet these days.

[disillusion](#)

- There's a growing **disillusion** with various news outlets. It's hard to know who you can trust.

[disinterest](#)

- With online shopping becoming more and more popular there's a growing **disinterest** in actually going to a store. Why go out when you can get everything you need delivered to

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your house?

dislike

- The new job seemed nice but Nancy took an instant **dislike** to one of her co-workers.

disorder

- Randy suffers from a rare blood **disorder**. He needs to take three kinds of medicine every day.

disqualification

- If an athlete is found with drugs in their system this leads to immediate **disqualification**.

disrespect

- The boss wasn't happy with the **disrespect** being shown to him by the staff.

ADJECTIVES

disagreeable

- Nancy found the attitude of her co-worker to be very **disagreeable**.

discomfort

- Bruce was suffering from some **discomfort** in his back. He bought a new chair for his office with more support.

discontent

- It was a widespread feeling of **discontent** with the new strict policies at the office.

distasteful

- I did like his art at all. I found his paintings to be unattractive and **distasteful**.

ADVERBS

disrespectfully

- I wasn't happy with the way she **disrespectfully** spoke to me.

VERBS

disable

- The burglar was able to **disable** the alarm and get inside the warehouse.

disagree

- I understand what you're saying but I'm afraid I **disagree** with your plan of action.

disapprove

- Her parents **disapproved of** her boyfriend but she didn't care, she was in love.

disarm

- A mugger with a knife tried to take my money last night. I surprised him, I was able to **disarm** him, and I held him down until the police came.

disassemble

- The mechanics had to **disassemble** my entire engine to fix the problem. This repair job is going to be expensive.

disband

- After the third album, the group **disbanded** they can each pursue solo projects.

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discolor

- After being outside in my backyard for 3 years all my patio furniture has **discolored**.

disconnect

- Before I install a new range on my stove I need to **disconnect** the gas.

discontinue

- I heard the company is going to **discontinue** this product. I should buy as much as I can well they still make them.

discredit

- The lawyer worked hard to **discredit** the witness for the other side.

disillusion

- I want to prepare my children for the real world when they move out on their own. I may have to **disillusion** them but it is necessary.

disinfect

- You should always **disinfect** the kitchen counter after you have been preparing any kind of raw meat.

dislike

- Amanda has a kind heart, she doesn't **dislike** anyone.

dismount

- After the race the jockey **dismounted** and accepted the trophy the first place.

disobey

- Children shouldn't **disobey** their teachers at school.

disorient

- Climbing to high altitudes can **disorient** you. The air becomes very thin.

disown

- His parents **disowned** him after his third trip to jail.

disprove

- Science is a very strict discipline. Scientists are always trying to **disprove** their own theories.

disqualify

- Having drugs in your system will **disqualify** you from the competition.

disregard

- Toby **disregarded** the message and went to the meeting anyway.

disrespect

- He **disrespected** his boss by showing up to the meeting after he was told not to.

distrust

- I **distrust** most politicians.

The Prefixes In-/Im-/Ir-/Il

OxfordLearnersDictionaries.com Prefix in-/im-

OxfordLearnersDictionaries.com Prefix ir-

OxfordLearnersDictionaries.com Prefix il-

Examples with sentences

NOUNS

[illiteracy](#)

The education policies will help lower the **illiteracy** rate in the community.

ADJECTIVES

[illegal](#)

It's **illegal** for politicians to take money from private companies in exchange for favors.

[illegible](#)

My doctor's handwriting is completely **illegible**.

[illiterate](#)

The number of **illiterate** adults in the population is declining. People have better access to education than ever before.

[illogical](#)

I don't understand what you're trying to accomplish here. Your plan seems completely **illogical**.

ADVERBS

[illegally](#)

That blue car has been **illegally** parked for the last 2 weeks. I should call the city and get it moved or taken away.

The prefix IM-

NOUNS

[imbalance](#)

Your depression may be the cause of a hormone **imbalance** in your body. It is common in people your age.

[impatience](#)

There's a growing **impatience** with the government's inaction. People expect more from their politicians.

[impermanence](#)

The **impermanence** of the beautiful cherry blossoms in Spring makes us appreciate it even more.

[imperfection](#)

The museum curator noticed a small **imperfection** in the statue.

[impossibility](#)

Once I accepted the **impossibility** of a perfect life I've been much happier. No matter how good or bad a thing seems, I find something to appreciate about it.

ADJECTIVES

[immature](#)

The new hire was kind, but a little bit **immature**.

[immeasurable](#)

The damage caused by the earthquake and the following tsunami was **immeasurable**.

[immobile](#)

I had to wear a cast for 3 weeks to keep my arm **immobile** while the bone healed.

[immodest](#)

Renee wasn't shy, her **immodest** dress was a clear sign.

[immoral](#)

I think what happened in that country was **immoral**.

[immoveable](#)

He was an old expression that asks: "What happens when an **irresistible** force meets an immovable object?"

[impatient](#)

I like my boss, I think he's clever. His only downside is he's often **impatient**. This can be frustrating for me when I'm working on a task for him.

[imperfect](#)

Things don't always go the way you hope but we live in an **imperfect** world. We can only do our best.

[impolite](#)

I'm curious to know how old Reiko is but it's **impolite** to ask.

[impossible](#)

I have a lot to do this weekend it seems **impossible** that I will get everything done. I'll do my best and do as much as I can.

ADVERBS

[Impatiently](#)

She waited **impatiently** by the door for the package to arrive.

[imperfectly](#)

I think the company's message is **imperfectly** understood by our customers. We can communicate our message more clearly.

The prefix IN- NOUNS

[inability](#)

Carlos's **inability** to take action left him being fired by the company.

[inaction](#)

There's a growing impatience with the government's **inaction**. People expect more from their politicians.

[inactivity](#)

Inactivity is not good for you, you need to move and stretch your body everyday.

[inaccuracy](#)

There were many **inaccuracies** in the report and it has to be redone.

[indigestion](#)

After dinner John was suffering from **indigestion**. He ate too much.

[inequity](#)

Inequity in the justice system is a real problem.

[immorality](#)

The **immorality** of war always makes me feel uneasy.

[insensitivity](#)

Leon's **insensitivity** makes it hard for him to connect with other people.

[intolerance](#)

My sister has lactose **intolerance**. This means that her body can't handle the sugar that

naturally occurs in milk.

[invalid](#)

He became an **invalid** in his old age and needed constant care.

ADJECTIVES

[inaccurate](#)

I'm sorry to say but men of your findings are **inaccurate**.

[inadmissible](#)

This evidence is **inadmissible**. It was collected without going through the proper legal channels.

[insanity](#)

The defendant claimed **insanity** at his trial.

[incapable](#)

He felt that with all the news coverage of his arrest he was **incapable** of having a fair trial in the city.

[inadequate](#)

The bank loan was helpful but he still had **inadequate** funds to continue operating his business.

[inadvisable](#)

Filing for bankruptcy is **inadvisable**. Having a bankruptcy filing on your record will make many things harder for you in the future.

[inanimate](#)

I know that the statue is **inanimate** but its position seems different today. Could you have moved by itself?

[inappropriate](#)

I got in trouble at work today for telling an **inappropriate** joke in the break room to my coworkers.

[inarticulate](#)

It's hard for me to share my feelings, I feel I'm **inarticulate** when talking from the heart.

[incapable](#)

I swear that child is **incapable** I'm doing anything without being asked.

[incomplete](#)

The report is going well but it's still **incomplete**. I'll need a few more days to finish it up.

[inconceivable](#)

The idea of time travel is completely **inconceivable**.

[inconclusive](#)

After two weeks of investigation, the result was still **inconclusive**.

[inconsiderate](#)

You bought dinner for yourself but not for anyone else? That was very **inconsiderate** of you.

[inconsistent](#)

“The Walking Dead” is a fun TV show but I've always felt the powers and abilities of the zombies are inconsistent. Sometimes they run fast and sometimes they don't, sometimes they're very strong and sometimes they are not. It's confusing.

[incorrect](#)

My answer the question 4 was **incorrect**.

[indecisive](#)

I don't think Andy would make a good manager, he's very **indecisive**. That's not a good quality to have in a leader.

[indefinite](#)

The band decided to cancel the remaining shows of their tour and go on an **indefinite** hiatus after their drummer became ill.

[indistinguishable](#)

The cafe is expensive coffee is **indistinguishable** from the instant coffee that I drink at home.

[ineffective](#)

So far all the changes have been **ineffective**. We have not seen an increase in productivity among the employees.

[inefficient](#)

I bought a small space heater to warm up the room in the winter but it's **inefficient**. I shouldn't have bought such a cheap machine.

[inexpensive](#)

Sometimes **inexpensive** can mean lower quality. I should have bought a better quality heater for my room.

[infallible](#)

The plan is good but no plan is **infallible**.

[inhospitable](#)

The air, the temperature, and the conditions at high altitudes are very **inhospitable**.

[illegitimate](#)

His claims to the family fortune are **illegitimate**. They won't hold up in court.

[insecure](#)

People who are **insecure** can't complain a lot.

[insensitive](#)

I don't want to be too **insensitive** but you have to stop feeling sorry for yourself and take responsibility.

[insubordinate](#)

His actions were **insubordinate** caused him to get fired.

[insufficient](#)

The check bounced due to **insufficient** funds.

[intolerant](#)

Cues from an older generation that was less understanding and more **intolerant** of others.

[intransitive](#)

Intransitive verbs are words that don't take a direct object.

[invalid](#)

He was turned away at the border because his passport was **invalid**.

[invariable](#)

Rodger could always get by on his good looks and **invariable** charm.

[invisible](#)

The party was crowded with people dancing and having fun. I stood in the corner and I felt **invisible**.

ADVERBS

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[immorally](#)

The court ruled the company acted **immorally** and was responsible to pay damages to the plaintiffs.

[independently](#)

I can work well **independently** or as part of a team.

[invariably](#)

Increased poverty **invariably** leads to higher crime rates.

The prefix IR- NOUNS

[irregularity](#)

The accountant found some **irregularities** in the financial records of the company.

[irresponsibility](#)

This looks like another case of corporate **irresponsibility**.

ADJECTIVES

[irreconcilable](#)

The couple claimed **irreconcilable** differences at the divorce hearing.

[irregular](#)

During the examination the doctor discovered that Clovis had an **irregular** heartbeat and schedule him for more tests..

[irreplaceable](#)

This watch has been passed down from my grandfather to my father to me and now to my son. It is **irreplaceable**.

[irresponsible](#)

Most people are **irresponsible** when they are teenagers. I know I was!

ADVERBS

[irresponsibly](#)

Clinton acted **irresponsibly** when he used company funds to throw a party.

The Prefix Non-

OxfordLearnersDictionaries.com Prefix non-

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Examples with sentences

NOUNS

[non-smoker](#)

- Jennifer will only date **non-smokers**. She hates the smell of tobacco.

ADJECTIVES

[non-alcoholic](#)

- Penelope is pregnant so she only had **non-alcoholic** drinks at the party.

[nondescript](#)

- When I worked as a stunt performer there was a category called ND stunts. ND means **non-descript**. You are not a stunt double so you didn't have to look like an actor, you just had to be in the background performing some action.

[non-fiction](#)

- I like to read **non-fiction** books, especially biographies of famous people.

[non-governmental](#)

- NGO means **non-governmental** organization. This is a private organization that deals with social or political issues.

[non-negotiable](#)

- My hourly rate is **non-negotiable**. I don't change it.

[non-profit](#)

- James likes to volunteer for **non-profit** organizations.

[non-slip](#)

- I just bought a new **non-slip** bath mat to use when I come out of the shower.

[non-specific](#)

- Politicians can talk for hours without saying anything important. They are masters at being non-specific in their promises.

[non-smoking](#)

- I'd like a table in the **non-smoking** section please.

[non-stick](#)

- I just got a set of three new **non-stick** frying pans. I can't wait to use them.

[non-stop](#)

- This bus will take you from here right to the shopping mall **Non-Stop**.

[non-toxic](#)

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- All children's toys must be **non-toxic**. Especially for children under the age of 3. They love to eat things!

non-traditional

- My wife and I had a **non-traditional** wedding. We just went to City Hall & some papers.

non-violent

- The protest was large but **non-violent**. The protesters were very peaceful.

non-verbal

- Some of the most important parts of our communication are **non-verbal**. That's why it's harder to talk on the telephone in your second language than it is to talk in person.

ADVERBS

nonviolently

- Mahatma Gandhi achieved independence from Britain through peaceful protests. The radical change was achieved **non-violently**. There was no war or fighting between the two sides.

The Prefix Un-

OxfordLearnersDictionaries.com Prefix un-

Examples with sentences

NOUNS

uncertainty

- Many people working from home face **uncertainty** about if and when they will have to return to the office.

unrest

- Civil **unrest** has led to violence in the city's capital.

unemployment

- **Unemployment** is on the rise in the country. Job creation is the government's priority right now.

ADJECTIVES

unable

- My sister-in-law is getting married this weekend so I'm **unable** to help you move on Saturday.

unacceptable

- The working conditions here are **unacceptable**.

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unaware

- Gregory was **unaware** that anything had happened until I phoned him.

uncertain

- These are **uncertain** times so it's important that people work together and support each other.

unemployed

- Oliver has been **unemployed for 7 months** now.

unchanged

- My old neighborhood remains **unchanged** after all these years.

unclear

- It's **unclear** whether the company will lay off people in the Spring. Everyone is hoping that they will not.

uncomfortable

- My desk chair is very **uncomfortable**. I think it's time to buy a new one.

uncommon

- It's not **uncommon** to see a line of people waiting to get into this restaurant. I'm going to have to try it one day.

unconscious

- The boxer lay **unconscious** in the middle of the ring for 2 minutes. When he got to his feet and looked okay everyone cheered.

unexpected

- The rain was **unexpected**, I didn't bring my umbrella with me so I got wet on the walk home from the station.

uneasy

- When I heard the news of the accident I felt very **uneasy**. I was in the same location 20 minutes earlier.

unfair

- If you have suffered **unfair** treatment from your boss or supervisor at work, don't hesitate to contact to HR and file a complaint.

unfamiliar

- The city was **unfamiliar** to me so having Google Maps on my phone was very helpful.

unfortunate

- It's **unfortunate** that the game was canceled due to rain. Sometimes life is unfair.

unhappy

- The team was excited to play tonight so everyone was **unhappy** about the cancellation.

unknown

- The cause of the plane crash is still **unknown**.

unlawful

- The officer's actions were declared **unlawful** and all charges against the defendant were dropped.

unlikely

- It's **unlikely** to rain tomorrow but we will close the stadium roof just to be safe. We don't want to cancel another game due to bad weather.

unlimited

- At this restaurant you can get **unlimited** refills of your drink.

unnecessary

- I hate these Friday afternoon meetings, they're completely **unnecessary**.

unofficial

- The Prime Minister made an **unofficial** visit to South Africa last month.

unpleasant

It was an **unpleasant** smell coming from the basement.

unpopular

- The mayor has become **unpopular** over the last 3 months.

unrealistic

- The mayor's plans for cleaning up the downtown area are **unrealistic**. There isn't enough money in the budget.

unreasonable

- My company just started mandatory overtime for all employees. I think that's **unreasonable**.

unrelated

- These two issues are **unrelated**. Let's stay focused on the meeting topic.

unsatisfactory

- The team's performance was **unsatisfactory** today. The coach is calling for an extra hour of practice every week for the next 2 months.

unsuccessful

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- His first attempt to climb the mountain was **unsuccessful**.

unwanted

- His romantic advances were **unwanted**.

unwilling

- The company is **unwilling** to make changes. I think this will hurt them in the long run.

unusual

- It's cool today, this weather is **unusual** for August.

ADVERBS

undoubtedly

- It's Friday so Keith will **undoubtedly** be late. Just like every Friday.

unfortunately

- **Unfortunately** the store was out of Pepsi so I bought Coke light instead.

unexpectedly

- Stewart showed up at the party **unexpectedly**. I thought he was out of town.

unusually

- It's **unusually** cool today, this temperature is rare for August.

VERBS

unbutton

- I started to **unbutton** my shirt and I realized that I hadn't closed the changeroom door. I was so embarrassed.

undo

- It's too late to **undo** the damage. We need to make sure this never happens again.

untie

- My cousin always wears velcro shoes. He hates to tie and **untie** his laces.

unzip

- Brett **unzipped** his leather jacket in class while the teacher was talking. It was so loud.

FAQ

Are all prefixes negative?

No. In English, there are many different prefixes with different meanings. For example -

Sub- = under/below

“Let’s take the **sub**way to save on parking.” (The subway is a train that travels *underground*.)

<https://worldenglishblog.com/the-prefix-sub/>

Re- = again

“My boss asked me to **re**do this report.” (Do the report *again*.)

<https://worldenglishblog.com/the-prefix-re/>



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Negative Prefixes

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