

# PREFIXES

**Prefixes** are letters which we add to the beginning of a word to make a new word with a different meaning. Prefixes can, for example, create a new word opposite in meaning to the word the prefix is attached to. They can also make a word negative or express relations of time, place or manner.

Here are some examples:



BASE WORD	PREFIXED WORD	MEANING
Possible	<b>Im</b> possible	Opposite
Able	<b>Un</b> able	Negation
Payment	<b>Non</b> payment	Opposite/negation
war	<b>Pre</b> war	Time (before)
Terrestrial	<b>Extra</b> terrestrial	Place (outside of/ beyond)
cook	<b>over</b> cook	Manner (too much)

-I'm sorry I was **unable** to attend the meeting.

-**Non-payment** of fees could result in a student being asked to leave the course.

-Has anyone ever really met an **extraterrestrial** being? (meaning a being from another planet).

-The meat was **overcooked** and quite tasteless.

## WE USE THESE PREFIXES MOST COMMONLY IN NEGATION:

**DE-, DIS-, IL-/IM-/IN-/IR-, MIS-, NON-, UN-:**

-What he said was very **impolite**.

-As a result of the doctor's mistake, the symptoms of the illness were **misunderstood**. (understood wrongly)

-In the past, the cause of this disease was **unknown**.

- The refugees also need **non**-food items such as tents and blankets. (items which are not food).

**-less** is the most common suffix for negation:

- Too many people are **homeless** in this city.
- We just have **endless** meetings at work – they're so boring.

COMPLETE THE SENTENCES WITH THE NEGATIVE FORM OF THE VERB IN CAPITALS.  
REMEMBER TO USE THE CORRECT FORM OF THE VERB.

1. You must not \_\_\_\_\_ your seatbelt until the plane has landed.  
**FASTEN**
2. I'm sorry to \_\_\_\_\_ you, but you haven't passed the test.  
**APPOINT**
3. You must be careful with the saw. If you \_\_\_\_\_ it, you could injure yourself. **USE**
4. I couldn't \_\_\_\_\_ my shoelaces, because the knots were too tight. **TIE**
5. My surname is very unusual, which means that many people \_\_\_\_\_ it. **SPELL**
6. I saw George at the party an hour ago, but now he seems to have \_\_\_\_\_. **APPEAR**
7. I was so tired that I fell asleep on my bed without getting \_\_\_\_\_. **DRESS**
8. We were told that the test was today, but we must have been \_\_\_\_\_ as we had a normal lesson. **INFORM**

ADD A PREFIX **UN**, **DIS**, **IN**, **IM** OR **MIS** TO FORM THE OPPOSITES OF THESE WORDS. IN SOME CASES, MORE THAN ONE ANSWER MAY BE POSSIBLE.

Ability	Agreement	Appear	Experienced
i _____	_____	_____	_____
Formal	Happiness	Helpful	Honest
Honest	Like	Likely	Patient
Predictable	Prepared	Reliable	Satisfied
_____	_____	_____	_____